



Dear Youth Livestock Exhibitor,

We first want to thank you for your interest and participation in the Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) certification program. We understand that you have inquired about extending your certification for an additional year as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. We realize that these are uncertain times. As fairs, exhibitions and/or livestock shows have cancelled, or may be canceling in the near future, youth livestock enthusiasts will not be able to complete their project in the traditional sense. We also understand that requirements set in place for your project year, such as YQCA certification, may have been completed by a portion of the members and not the entire group of participants by the time of these decisions.

The YQCA Board of Directors has determined that it will not allow an extension of 2020 certifications beyond the 12-month valid certification period. Nor will YQCA issue a refund on completed certifications due to the current circumstances. We firmly believe in the value of this livestock industry education. It not only benefits your individual livestock project, it aligns with the industry standards set forth by YQCA's national partners who have supported this curriculum. Whether or not a fair, exhibition or livestock show occurs, the animals that have been purchased and cared for with the intent of exhibiting at these events will still enter the food chain. YQCA certification is one of many tools that help you through the management and care of your animal. This certification provides the building blocks leading youth to produce a safe wholesome food animal product that has been cared for appropriately, meeting animal well-being standards. The YQCA curriculum builds on itself, and is meant for annual participation.

We have carefully aligned YQCA with adult programs offered from our industry partners that are designed to build awareness and provide direction for appropriate management practices of food producing species. Some livestock market channels require certification (BQA and PQA Plus) for adult producers. YQCA certification for youth is recognized as an equivalent to the adult education programs mentioned above, thus meeting market channel expectations for animals raised in their care. This leads us to the value of YQCA as more than a show requirement or a hoop to jump through. It is a program designed to establish behavior that will protect the image of the livestock industry and provide a safe wholesome food product for consumers. Participating in YQCA annually provides the skills youth will need if they choose a career in livestock production, and it will afford the knowledge to be an informed consumer.

We wish you continued success in your livestock project beyond these trying times. Thank you again for your continued interest in YQCA.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jodi Sterle
YQCA Chairperson