

# Manatee County Cattlemen's Association



## Herdsmen Award

### How do I win this awesome belt buckle?

(Official award buckle design is a surprise and will be personalized with a title and year)

1. Register your interest in participating in this evaluation by going to [Forms – Manatee County Cattlemen's Association \(manateecattlemen.com\)](https://manateecattlemen.com). Participants must be registered by August 31, 2025, to be eligible to win.
2. Read the application carefully and be sure to update your calendar with the announced visit date. (You are required to be in attendance for the first announced visit on September 14, 2025) Contact MCCW, Kim Bierds, with any schedule conflicts at 941.685.0860.
3. Read the following **Guidelines** to understand what you will be judged on each of the three visits by our committee.

#### Guidelines

Remember, this evaluation is to help exhibitors become the best herdsman for their current project and in the future. Please reach out to any Cattlemen or Cattlewomen member to ask questions about the care of your project. Your FFA Advisors and/or 4-H Leaders are ready to help you to succeed with your project. It is your responsibility to ask for help when needed!

**Water** – fresh water should always be available and clean! (No floating/sinking feed/hay, no algae)

**Feed** – your project hopefully is cleaning up the feed that is offered at each feeding. Any leftover feed should be discarded, and feed bucket should be cleaned before next feeding. Animals do not like old feed! Clean up feed particles that have been dropped outside of the bucket also to avoid attracting rodents. Is the area where you store your project feed neat and clean? Is feed stored in a way that keeps it away from rodents and moisture, etc....? What do you feed your project? Purina, SunGlo, MannaPro,

PreCon, Finisher? Supplements? How much feed at each feeding? (Pounds, not scoops!) How much hay does your project get/eat?

**Pen** – Keep your project pen clean and dry. Remove excess piles of manure. A dirty pen = dirty animal = exposure to more germs = more stress on animal. Humans do not eat in the bathroom for health and safety reasons, and your animal should not eat in their bathroom either. Make every effort to keep fresh sand/bedding/grass in the pen for your project. It is hot here in Florida! Do you have a fan that keeps your project cool? If yes, be sure to keep it clean and keep all cords secured out of reach of your animal and humans. (We understand that nature does not give us warnings of when it is going to rain and cause flooding, etc. Judges will consider circumstances out of your control.)

**Safety** – Be sure to wear closed toed shoes when working with your project. Know the proper place to stand near your project to avoid getting kicked, panned, or otherwise in an unfavorable condition. Do not wrap ropes/leads around hands. Are all tools stored safely away from your project and the area where you access the pen? Rakes should be stored with the tines pointed towards a wall, are garden hoses strewn out on the ground or neatly placed on or next to a wall, etc....

**Handling** – Keep your animal clean and groomed. Animal husbandry is a vital part of your project and is key to properly handling your animal. Working with your animal everyday is the best way to become comfortable with one another. On the first announced visit, you will be asked to catch and halter your animal and walk/lead him around the pen. (When you walk in a circle, make sure you are turning away from yourself). Judges are not expecting a championship walk at this time. Judges are watching to see that you are comfortable with your animal and that you are holding the lead rope correctly in order to be successful and not injure yourself or your animal. Know how to correctly tie your animal up with a quick release knot. Can you set up your steer? Use a show stick?

**Questions** – know your animal and what its basic daily needs are. What breed is your steer? Why did you pick this steer? When did you get this steer? How much did your steer weigh at weigh in? How much weight must your steer gain to get into the fair? How much feed are you feeding? (pounds) What type of hay do you feed and how much? Is your record book up to date? Have you taken any pictures of your project and what you are learning? Does your steer have a personality? Who will you ask for help if you think your steer is sick or not feeling well? What times do you feed each day? (These are just sample questions!)

**Final notes** – you are not expected to be perfect all the time. The first announced visit is the time to really shine since you know exactly when we will arrive to evaluate you and your project. Judges will take into consideration the amount of time you have had your steer, your age group, etc....

**Good Luck!**