All American Quarter Horse Congress
Horse Bowl Contest 2026

GENERAL RULES:

1. Team and contestant eligibility
    a. Each state is invited to enter two (2) 4-H, two (2) FFA, and two (2) breed association teams of four (4) or five (5) contestants. One team member will be designated as the alternate if five contestants are entered. The team may be selected by any procedure that the state deems to be appropriate. Team members must be enrolled in 4-H or FFA in the state they represent. Contestants may not have participated in an official, post secondary Hippology, Horse Bowl, or Horse Judging contest, nor have been in training in preparation for one of these contests.
    b. Any official equine breed association may also enter one (1) team of four (4) or five (5) contestants.
    c. Contestants must be at least 14 years of age on January 1st of the current year, and not be more than 18 years of age on January 1st of the current year.
    d. Contestants (including team alternate) may also participate in either the Congress Hippology or Horse Judging contest in the same year.
    e. Contestants are eligible to compete in this contest in subsequent years as long as they were not the high individual overall or on the high team overall.
    f. The team and contestant eligibility must be certified by the State 4-H or FFA Leader, State Horse Extension Specialist, or Breed Association Representative.

2. Questions
    Each team must **email 60 questions (in a Microsoft Word document)** not previously used in past national competitions directly to the Superintendent by **September 1st** of the current year. **PLEASE NOTE:** If no questions are submitted, the team will **NOT** be allowed to participate in the contest!!!

    Questions should be distributed between the following categories:

    1. HISTORY, EVOLUTION & ZOOLOGICAL SCHEME
    2. EQUINE REPRODUCTION & GENETICS
    3. EQUINE BREEDS, COLORS, MARKINGS
    4. MANAGEMENT – to include foot care & shoeing, parasites, health, diseases, injuries & lameness, safety, transportation, psychology, training & housing.
    5. ANATOMY & PHYSIOLOGY OF THE HORSE
    6. EXHIBITION OF HORSES
    7. HORSE JUDGING
    8. TACK & ALL OTHER APPOINTMENTS
    9. FEEDING HORSES & NUTRITION
    10. GAITS OF THE HORSE
    11. FITTING & GROOMING HORSES

    Questions and the correct answers shall be typed in a Microsoft Word document using the sample format below. Questions should come from the official sources only and must include the reference source and page number. Entries will not be processed until questions are received in the correct format from allowed references.

    Q: What is another name for acute laminitis?
    A: Founder
    Source: Evans
    Page: 226

    Please try to make your questions innovative and interesting and your answers accurate and complete. Please don't merely record questions word for word directly from the references! Try to put the "key word" of the question towards the end, and no true/false questions.

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REFERENCE MATERIAL:

NEWHOR
Illustrated Dictionary of Equine Terms, New Horizons Education Center, Inc.
Alpine Publications, PO Box 7027, Loveland, CO 80537 Phone: 800-777-7257

KAINER
The Coloring Atlas of Horse Anatomy
Dr. Robert Kainer and Dr. Thomas McCracken
Alpine Publications, PO Box 7027 Loveland, CO 80537 Phone: 800-777-7257

AYHC
Horse Smarts: An Equine Reference & Youth Activity Guide- by the American Youth Horse Council
AYHC, 1 Gainer Rd, McDonald, NM 88262
www.ayhc.com Phone: 817-320-2005

LEWIS
Feeding and Care of the Horse (2nd Edition)
Lon D. Lewis, Williams and Wilkins
PO Box 1496, Baltimore MD 21298-9724 Phone: 800-638-0672

SUPPLEMENTAL REFERENCES:
Schneider Saddlery – To request a free catalog visit www.sstack.com or call 1-800-365-1311.
Big Dee's Tack & Vet Supplies - To request a free catalog visit www.bigdweb.com or call 1-800-321-2142.
Dover Saddlery – To request a free catalog Visit www.doversaddlery.com or call 1-800-406-8204.

QUESTION TYPES:

1. **Regular Questions** are worth two (2) points during one-on-one competition, when only one member of each team may respond. Regular questions during one-on-one competition will be addressed to only one member of each team, beginning with the contestants in the #1 chairs (nearest the control operator) on either team and progressing with subsequent questions going to the contestants in #2, #3, and #4 chairs, respectively, until the one-on-one competition is completed. There will be an equal number of one-on-one questions per contestant per match.
    a. The moderator will clearly indicate the start of one-on-one play by announcing the chair number of the contestants eligible to respond, prior to reading the question.
    b. Toss-up/Bonus questions will not be used during the one-on-one competition.

   The regular questions are worth one (1) point during **Open** questions, when any member of either team may respond. These questions count toward individual and team scores. **All incorrect answers during the one-on-one and open play receive a (-1) deduction.**

2. **Toss-up Questions** are worth one (1) point and are open for response to any member of either team. The toss-up question is only used in the OPEN part of the match. If there is a correct answer to the toss-up question, a bonus question will be attached. Toss-up questions are generally a little more difficult than regular questions, and may have two or three required answers. All answers are required to be correct. **All incorrect answers receive a (-1) deduction. Toss-up questions will only be used when bonus questions are included in a round.**

3. **Bonus Questions** will be worth three (3) points. They are attached to a correctly answered toss-up question. When multiple answers are required, (3) points will be awarded if ALL of the required answers are correct. No points will be awarded or taken away if there is less than the required number of answers, or if there are no correct answers. No part of the bonus question will be repeated, nor will any

additional information be given to the contestants relative to the question. **Bonus questions will only be used during the final few rounds of competition.**

a. A bonus question attached to an unanswered or incorrectly answered toss-up question will be transferred to the next regular open question (which becomes the new toss-up question), until a correct answer is given.
b. The team should allow the moderator to read the complete bonus question. The team will be given 10 seconds to confer. The acknowledger will call time at the end of 10 seconds. The team captain or designee must then start giving the required number of answers within 5 seconds. Team members may feed answers to the captain/designee during the 30-second answering period.
c. If the match ends with an unanswered bonus question, the bonus question will not be utilized.

4. The number of questions used per round will be up to the contest management, but must include at least four (4) one-on-one questions and sixteen (16) open questions. The number of questions may be increased in later matches.

5. **Response Penalty** – if any contestant, other than the designated contestants, responds to a one-on-one or regular question, that team will lose two (2) points. **A contestant that responds more than twice to a one-on-one or regular question directed to another contestant will be replaced at the panel by their team alternate. If an alternate is not available, the remainder of the match will be played with less than a full team, and all one-on-one questions normally addressed to the eliminated contestant will be addressed to the contestant in the opposite numbered chair. The dismissed contestant may return to further matches in the contest unless it was their third offense. A third such penalty will disqualify them from the competition. The (-2) penalty will continue to apply for the second and third offence.

READING & ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS:

1. The moderator will read all questions – identify the type and number of questions and designate the chairs eligible to respond when necessary. Five seconds will be allowed for starting a response. If an answer is not given or is wrong, the moderator will give the correct answer, and the next question read. If the answer given is the same or means the same as the expected answer, it will be accepted. If the answer is different than the expected answer, it will be referred to the judge(s) for a decision.

2. Once a contestant activates a buzzer, they must be ACKNOWLEDGED before they can answer the question. After they have been acknowledged, the contestant has five (5) seconds to start a valid answer. First answers given will be considered valid answers. It is the responsibility of the acknowledger to determine if an actual answer was started within the 5-second time limit.

3. An acknowledgement penalty of one (1) point will be deducted from the team score if a contestant answers a question before being acknowledged.
   a. The first answer(s) given will be accepted as the official answer, including multiple response questions. Repeating the questions will not be considered the initiation of the answer.
   b. If a question was read to completion, the judge(s) may ask the contestant to explain, expand, be more specific, or clarify their answer.

4. If a question is INTERRUPTED during the reading of it, the moderator will stop reading as soon as a buzzer is activated. The contestant responding has five (5) seconds after being acknowledged to begin their answer. If the answer given is correct for the way the question was written, it will be accepted. If the answer given is correct for only the portion of the question heard, but wrong for the way the question was written, the answer will not be accepted. If the question was interrupted, the judges will not be allowed to ask for any type of clarification of the answer given.

5. The judges will be allowed to verify an answer, or the validity of a question. If verification cannot be made, the question will be replaced.

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PLAYING TEAMS AND ALTERNATES:

1. Only four contestants shall be seated at the panel at any one time. Seat position must be declared prior to competition and youth must remain in this seat for the duration of the entire contest. The only exception is when an alternate replaces a seated player during a match or the competition. See #2 below.
2. During any match, only one alternate may be replaced at the panel when:
    a. The moderator, team captain, team coach deems it impossible for one of the seated members to continue.
    b. The captain/coach of a team requests the replacement of a team member.
3. The team member removed from a match becomes ineligible to return to that particular match. The team member removed and the replacement member are both eligible to participate in further matches. A five-member team is strongly recommended.
4. Members removed from the game table for disciplinary reasons, may not come back to any more matches in the competition.

DOUBLE ELIMINATION:

1. Teams – Each team will play in a pre-determined position according to a random drawing of teams.
2. A total of two (2) losses are needed to eliminate a team from further competition.

SCORE KEEPING:

1. The point value of correct responses, bonuses, penalties are as follows:

Correct Answer – One-on-one Regular Questions	2 points
Correct Answer – Open Regular Questions	1 point
Toss-up Question – All answers required	1 point
Bonus Question – All answers required	3 points
Bonus Question – All incomplete, incorrect or no answer	0 points
Team Participation – 4 correct answers	2 points
All Incorrect Answers to Regular and Toss-up Questions	-1 point
Response Penalty – No answer started in 5 seconds	-2 points
Response Penalty – Contestant not acknowledged	-1 point
Response Penalty – Out of Turn	-2 points
Response Penalty – Out of Turn, second time in same match	-2 points & Elimination from Match
Response Penalty – Out of Turn, third time in contest	-2 point & Elimination from Contest
“Official” protest not upheld	-1 point

2. During the second portion of the match, all regular/open questions will be worth one (1) point, open to all members seated at the game table. All toss-up questions will be worth one (1) point and all bonus questions will be worth three (3) points, if the number of required answers given is correct.

TEAM PARTICIPATION POINTS:

1. In order to encourage full team participation, each team member will have a bonus card at the game table. When a member gives a correct response to a regular, or toss-up question, that member will then turn their card around to face the score keeper(s). A bonus worth two (2) points will be awarded to the team, when all four bonus cards face the score keeper(s). The value of the question (1 or 2 points) will be added to the score of the team and the 2-point bonus will also be added to the score, thus making that question worth 3 or 4 points to the team depending on the value of the question.
2. When an alternate comes to the game table, if a bonus card is showing for that chair, it must be forfeited (turned around) and earned by the contestant coming into the game

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3. When a team bonus has been earned once – the bonus cards will be turned around ant the team has an opportunity to earn it again. A team may earn this bonus as many times as possible within a match

INDIVIDUAL SCORES:

1. Scores will be kept for each individual contestant, with the high 10 individual contestants to receive special recognition.
2. Only those contestants who have participated in three or more matches will be considered for the top individual awards.
    a. The high three match scores for each individual will be sued in cases where individuals participate in more than three matches
3. Ties for individual awards will be broken on the basis of:
    a. First tie breaker – High average score for the entire contest.
    b. Second tie breaker – High individual match scores.
    c. Third tie breaker – Total number of points earned in the contest.

TIME OUTS:

1. The team captain, coach, or any staff member may call for a "time out" for clarification of a rule, score, to seat an alternate, or to allow for any unexpected problem. The "timeouts" may be called only after a question has been answered and before the next question starts.

HOLDING ROOMS:

1. All teams, alternates, and coaches must remain in the designated holding area until it is their turn to play.
2. After their round match is played, they must go to an appropriate designated area, until the conclusion of the round in progress.
3. After the round is completed, all teams/alternates and coaches (not eliminated from the contest) must return to the designated holding area to await their next match.
4. All coaches in the holding area are responsible for the supervision of their teams. These rules are a matter of ethics and require the cooperation of all team members and coaches.

CONTEST PROCEDURES:

1. Teams are assembled and seated at their respective panels, with the designated team captain seated in the #1 chair, nearest to the middle or the control operator. Each contestant is given the opportunity to check the equipment.
2. All team members will have a participation bonus card facing the contestant. They will be blank to the Score Keeper(s) until that contestant gives a correct response to a question. At that time the card will be turned around to face the Score Keeper.
3. The designated set of questions for each round is opened by the moderator and verified with the judge's panel before starting the game. Prior to reading a question, the moderator will announce the number, type of question and the contestants eligible to respond. Each succeeding question will be read in this manner, until all of the questions for that match are read. The correct answer will be given for all unanswered questions or wrong answers.
4. Contestants, who respond to a question, will receive the appropriate points applied to a particular question. Appropriate penalties will be deducted as warranted.
5. If the time (5 seconds) in which a member may buzz in to answer a question elapses without a contestant activating a buzzer, there will be no loss or awarding of points to either team. After the response time has elapsed, the answer will be given, and the next question read.

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6. If the buzzer is activated and an answer is not started within the 5 second allowable time, there will be a minus 2 point penalty imposed against the contestant who activates the buzzer and their team.
7. If the judge(s) elect to not use a game question, it must be replaced by another question so that the total number of questions to be asked will remain equal in each match.

INFORMATION RESOURCES:

1. No source of information is infallible. At times there may be answers given that are in agreement with the recommended reference books, which in fact are erroneous or out of date. Every effort is made to eliminate such questions, however, in the event on slips in, the judge may agree to:
    a. Accept the answer and give an explanation of the correct or up-dated information for future use of the question.
    b. Accept only the correct answer.
    c. Replace the question to the appropriate contestants.

MATCH TIES:

1. In the event of a match tie, it will be broken with five (5) tie breaker questions. If a tie remains, the first team to earn a point (or because of a loss of a point by the other team, has one (1) point advantage) will be declared the match winner based on the scores.
2. The team cannot use Tie-breaker points toward making a team bonus.

TEAM PLACINGS:

1. Team awards will be given to five places and based on the predetermined procedure of play.
2. Every team will participate in a minimum of two matches.
3. The rank of teams will be determined on the basis of their position within the double elimination bracket. After two losses, the teams eliminated in the same round, will be placed on the basis of the higher scores in the eliminating round. Third place to the highest score, fourth place to the next high score and so on.
4. Subsequent breakers – 1) Total average of all games played in double elimination games that include bonus questions; 2) Highest match score in double elimination games with bonus questions included; and 3) Total score of the top two matches in double elimination games including bonus questions.

EQUIPMENT FAILURE:

1. It shall be the responsibility of the moderator to assure each contestant that all equipment is operating correctly at the start of each match. Back-up units will also be available.
2. If the device being used ceases to function during a match or is believed to be malfunctioning, a “time out” will be called by any contestant, the staff, or by either coach.
3. If after checking the device it is determined that there is an equipment malfunction/failure the faulty part(s) or unit will be replaced and play resumed.
4. Scores accumulated to the point of the “time out” shall stand and all further points awarded during the remainder of the match added to or subtracted from this total.
5. If the judges or moderator deem it advisable, points awarded for the two questions asked immediate prior to determination of the equipment failure, maybe recalled and two additional questions used.
6. Under no conditions shall there be a replay of match in which there was an equipment failure.

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RECORDERS AND CAMERAS:

Recording devices such as tape recorders, video cameras or movie cameras may not be used during the competition. Photographs will only be allowed before or after a match. Cell phones or any other communication devices MUST be turned OFF while in a contest room. Failure to do so may result in disqualification.

PROTEST/VERIFICATION OF QUESTIONS AND/OR ANSWERS:

1. Verification of a question and answer is permissible.
2. Only protests that are made in a courteous, respectful manner will be acknowledged.
3. Protest must be made before the reading of the next question.
4. An "Official" protest of a question or the answer to a question may be called for by a team captain or the official team coach(es). The judge and moderator will consider the protest. Their decision in all cases will be final.
5. If an "Official" protest is acknowledged, play will be stopped, and the designated official(s) will consider the protest and make a decision. A one (1) point penalty will be assessed to the team making the protest if the protest is not upheld.
6. To sustain a protest, the judge and moderator must agree, to keep or replace a question, or to determine the validity of an answer.
7. If the protest is sustained by the officials, the moderator and score keeper(s) will take one of the following actions:
    a. If the question is determined by the officials to be a poor question, it will be replaced and open to a specific chair on each team or to all contestants seated at the game table, depending on the type of play (one-on-one or open).
    b. If the answer to the question received a call for verification, the designated judge(s) will determine the validity of the answer. Points will then be awarded or subtracted as appropriate.
    c. If a question was protested after an answer is given, the designated judge(s) will determine the validity of the protested question. If the validity of the question is allowed, points will be awarded or subtracted as appropriate. If not, the question will be replaced.
8. All protest/challenges will be acknowledged by the contest staff.

ABUSE OF THE PROTEST PROVISIONS:

1. In this competition, every effort will be made to be fair and courteous and understanding to the contestants and the coaches.
2. Abuse of this protest provision by any contestant, or coach, will result in one or more of the following:
    a. Dismissal of team coach from the contest area.
    b. Dismissal (or replacement) of any contestant from the competition.
    c. Dismissal of an entire team from the competition, with forfeiture of points or standing.
3. Spectators, parents and visitors may not protest any question, answer or procedure during the contest. They may, however, submit in writing to the contest officials any suggestions, complaints or protests at the conclusion of the contest.
4. Any contestant, coach, family member, friends or spectators, exhibiting un-sportsmanlike conduct, behavior or actions detrimental to the contest, will be subject to dismissal from the immediate contest area.

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GAME OFFICIALS AND EQUIPMENT:

1. **Moderator** – The moderator shall assume the responsibility for reading questions and will inform the contestants who is eligible to respond to a question, before the question is read. The moderator will accept all answers that are the same or mean the same as the expected answer to the question. Any answers different than the expected answer, will be considered by the moderator and the judge(s) to make a decision to accept or reject the given answer.

2. **Judge(s)** – The judges (minimum of two – moderator may be one of the two) will consist of knowledgeable horsemen. Judges should give reasons for not accepting an answer to a question. The judges will rule jointly on the acceptability of any question or answers to all questions. In case of a challenge of a question or answer, the judges must agree on accepting or rejecting the question or answer, and agree on the actions to be taken.

   If an answer was not clearly heard, the contestant may be asked to repeat their answer. If a question was read to completion, and the answer given is different than the one expected, if it is technically or logically correct you may accept the answer. If the answer given is "in the ball park", the judges may request the contestant to be more specific, expand, explain or clarify their answer. If the question was interrupted, the judges may not ask for any kind of clarification. The answer is either correct or incorrect according to the way the question was written.

   All answers given must be correct for the way the question is written. Any answer may be correct for a portion heard of a question that was interrupted, but wrong for the way the question was written. The judge may not ask any questions, and the answer will be counted as a wrong answer. If the answer is correct for the way the question was written, it will be accepted.

   All of the game questions will have a reference code and page number. The required reference books will be available to look up information or to verify answers.

3. **Time Keeper(s)** – The time keeper(s) will monitor all time intervals and designate when the time of response has been exceeded, and will handle all controls of the game equipment. It is strongly recommended that neither the moderator nor the judge be the time keeper. It will be their responsibility at the beginning of the match to assure each contestant that their equipment is working Properly.

4. The Contest Chairman will have final authority over all procedures and protests.

5. **Score Keeper(s)** – An individual shall be used to keep accurate team and individual scores. The team scoring will be visible to the team and the coach on a blackboard, overhead projector or flip chart. The team results and individual scores will be listed on a master score sheet in order to determine the order of future play, awards, or if the team is eliminated.

EQUIPMENT:

1. Game Panels – An appropriate device will be used which will provide a clear indication of the first contestant to respond to a question. A means of keeping the times indicated in these rules must be provided.