

## **General Timeline to assist with holding an Area Range Judging Contest**

Your county has been selected to be a host for an Area Range Judging Contest. These Contests are the backbone of the State Range Judging Program. The Area Contests serve as both an introduction to Range Judging competition for many of the students and as a practice for the State Range Judging Contest for the remainder. All of the Agricultural Education Instructors and a great many of the students take these competitions very seriously and some of the students will continue to pursue Range Science as a program area in colleges and Universities. The Nebraska State Range Judging Committee is willing to assist your County in any way possible to ensure that you are adequately prepared to manage such an event. There is a committee member assigned to help with each Area Contest. Guidelines for holding an Area Range Judging Contest can be found on pages 33 to 41 in the UNL Publication “Range Judging Handbook and Contest Guide”, UNL Extension Publication EC150 or on line at [www.ianrpubs.unl.edu](http://www.ianrpubs.unl.edu).

The first step is to form a Contest Committee. This committee should include a UNL extension educator, an NRCS conservationist and a representative of the Natural Resources District. Others can be added to the committee and certainly will be necessary to provide the necessary technical assistance and volunteers needed to hold the contest.

The Area Committee’s first responsibility is to select a (more or less firm) date for the contest. The Nebraska State Range Judging Contest is strongly encouraged to be held on Tuesday and Wednesday during the last week of September, to avoid possible October conflicts with Land Judging Contests. Generally, the Area contests are scheduled during the first three weeks in September to allow for adequate student participation and a period of instruction for the High School Ag. Ed. Instructor. Report this date before April 1 (the earlier the better) to the Chair of the State Range Judging Committee to allow for notification of the participating schools before the end of the current school year.

The next responsibility will be the selection of two (or more) possible locations for the actual contest. The Contest Sites will need to be un-grazed or grazed very early in the calendar year to provide adequate plant species vigor at the time of the Contest. The site will need to be native Rangeland with, at least two Range Sites present and a reasonably good diversity of plant species. Typically your NRCS committee member will be helpful in providing the technical assistance necessary in determining the possible locations for the Contest. Consideration will also need to be given to the distance from the Contest Site to the Registration and Scoring areas and to possible off road parking for school buses and vans. The tentative site selections for the Contest will need to be made in the May-June timeframe, with final selection made in the July-August time frame. Possible locations for the Contest will need to remain confidential information within the Area Committee

in order to not provide an advantage for local schools that may be competing in the Area Contest.

Several Committee meetings will need to be held over the spring and summer with primary concerns being, publicity (both before and after the Contest), locating adequate volunteers to assist with registration, in the Scoring Room and at the Contest Site and possible donors for refreshments for after the Contest. It may also be desirable to have some sort of educational program after the lunch period to occupy the students until the conclusion of the scoring.

Scoring Cards and Ribbons will need to be ordered from the State Range Judging Chair at least 45 days in advance of the contest. Allow for two (2) copies of Card I and one (1) copy of Card II for each participant. [These items will be provided by the Nebraska State Range Judging Committee.] An estimate of the number of possible participants can be made based on last year's Area participation, which can be provided by the State Range Judging Committee Chair. In most cases, arrangements may also be made to have a Judging Contest box, containing Station and Plant markers, from the State range Judging Committee. There is usually a Contest Box near your Area unless it is being used elsewhere on the day of the Contest.

At least two (2) weeks prior to the Contest, final Contest Site selection and a firm list of volunteers available for Scoring and Site help will need to be completed by the Area Committee. In most cases the NRCS Office can provide the technical expertise to set up and manage the Contest, but complete instructions can be found in the Contest Guide portion of the "Range Judging Handbook and Contest Guide". If additional technical assistance is required for your Area, please contact the Nebraska State Range Judging Committee Chair. In most cases, a member of that Committee will try to attend every Area Contest each year.

Please call me if you have any questions:

Daryl Cisney  
(308)289-3048 personal cell  
(308) 289-1478 work cell

I will try to do what I can to help make Hosting an Area Range Judging Contest a satisfactory experience for all those involved in the Contest experience.