



A PROJECT OF THE IOWA CATTLEMEN'S LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

# CARCASS CHALLENGE

## ABOUT

Iowa's only fed cattle competition that showcases the elite genetics our state produces. Iowa Cattlemen's Association's (ICA) Carcass Challenge was created to highlight Iowa's beef business, raise non-dues ICA revenue, and provide leadership and learning opportunities for the Iowa Cattlemen's Leadership Program (ICLP). These cattle are brought into a singular feedlot where they are fed in a manner in which a high percentage of these cattle are ready for optimum harvest in 190 days. The cattle have time to adjust during a two week warm up period and are then weighed and evaluated for beginning test data analytics. From there, cattle go on test in a typical feedlot setting and pushed toward a harvest date of mid to late May. Cattle are ranked and recognized based on standard industry metrics. Cash prizes and special awards are presented to donors of the top steers in retail value per day on feed, average daily gain, ribeye area, marbling score, and chef's choice.

## ICLP:

The ICLP consists of a series of educational sessions designed to develop leadership qualities in young cattle farmers. ICA prepares action-packed agendas for each session that touch on key beef cattle industry topics as well as to enhance leadership skills. The goal of the ICLP is to train future leaders of Iowa's cattle industry. The program is an initial opportunity to be more active in the association, and building to fulfill a future leadership role in ICA.



Elanco Animal Health is a proud sponsor of the ICA Carcass Challenge.

ICLP participants are educated on the structure and function of ICA. Participants undergo training and educational seminars to enhance their communications skills, strengthen their awareness of the legislative process, and diversify their knowledge of the Iowa and U.S. beef cattle industries. ICLP participants will be expected to lead recruitment efforts for the ICA Carcass Challenge. This unique networking opportunity provides support for educational and leadership activities for Iowa cattlemen across the state. ICA's ICLP graduates consistently take on new leadership roles within the industry, improve their own operations as a result of ICLP, and truly serve as ambassadors for the next generation of cattle producers.

## LOCATION

The steers will be fed at the Iowa State University Beef Nutrition Farm. We thank ISU and the farm staff for the management, care, and handling of the steers. The Beef Nutrition Farm is located approximately five miles northwest of the ISU campus. The mission of the farm is to provide facilities and support for research aimed at optimizing nutrition and management of beef cattle in Iowa.

## awards

Retail Value per Day on Feed	Champion	\$5,000
Retail Value per Day on Feed	Remaining Top 10%	\$250-500
Largest Ribeye		\$250
High Marbling Score		\$250
Chef's Choice Award		\$250
Average Daily Gain		\$250

## QUESTIONS? Contact Joe DeVries

joe@iacattlemen.org | C: 641-425-7373  
Office: 515-296-2266 | Fax: 515-296-2261  
More information at [www.iacattlemen.org](http://www.iacattlemen.org)

# 2026

## guidelines

### DONOR REQUIREMENTS

- Must submit a Carcass Challenge commitment form by Oct. 19, 2025 and return to ICA.
- Deliver steer to Iowa State University or steer pickup location on Nov. 19, 2025 and transfer ownership to ICA. When the steer arrives:
  1. There must be a complete delivery information sheet that includes steer description, pedigree, and all **vaccinations** given in the last 21 days.
  2. If at all possible, please include a veterinary-signed Iowa Certificate of Health and/or a Green/Gold Tag PreConditioned Certificate.

### STEER REQUIREMENTS

- Spring-born 2025 steer calf weighing 750 pounds.
- No dairy breed type cattle.
- No evidence of warts, ringworm, lice, or mange.
- Castrated for at least 30 days prior to delivery.
- Dehorned and healed from dehorning.
- Steers should be weaned, acclimated to bunk feeding, and consuming a weight-appropriate mixed ration prior to delivery.

### NUTRITION PROTOCOL

- We anticipate all steers weighing around 750 pounds upon arrival. We will work with the feedlot to build rations for an ending weight of 1,425 to 1,450 pounds.
- Steers will be on a two-week acclimation period prior to initiating the feedlot performance test with an on-test weight. The acclimation period allows each individual steer to adapt to pen conditions and normalize to diet and weight.
- Steers will be fed for 190 days. Once the steers are finished with their 2 week acclimation period we intend to have them spend 150 days on a finishing ration.
- Cost of gain will be important but not a limiting factor for this contest.
- Steers will be ultrasounded twice. We will utilize this scan projection data to track how steers are performing throughout the contest.

### HEALTH PROTOCOL

#### PRE-ARRIVAL:

- Steers will be weaned no later than Oct. 19, 2025 with a delivery date of Nov. 19, 2025.
- Cattle will require the Green/Gold Tag vaccinations listed between the dates of Sept. 15 to Oct. 28. A veterinary signed Green/Gold Tag certificate is not mandatory this year, but this is something we are looking to require in the future.

1. Required Green Tag Vaccinations: IBR, BVD, BRSV, PI-3, seven-way Clostridia, Mannheimia haemolytica, and Histophilus somni.

- Calf must come with a completed health sheet in order to receive information back from the challenge.

#### ARRIVAL:

- Processing will be Nov. 21, after arrival.
- Processing on arrival will include: 5-way modified live viral, paste dewormer, lice control pour on, an intermediate steroid implant, and a preventative antibiotic dose.
- ISU will be conducting a blood draw, deep pharyngeal swab, and BVD PI test.
  1. Any positive test results will result in immediate removal from the competition.

#### TREATMENT PROTOCOLS:

- Pull and treatment reports will be communicated between ISU and ICA.
  1. Animals will be treated and returned, unless a sick pen is needed.
- All deaths will be posted and reported to ICA, as well as the donor notified.
  1. Neither ICA, nor ISU will be held liable for any sickness or any death loss of the Carcass Challenge steers. Cattle will be monitored closely to avoid health issues.
- If a steer becomes chronic, ICA will be consulted on railing the steer.
- Steers that don't fit projections from the scan and weight data will be addressed at the halfway point for railing the steer.

### TIMELINE

Commitment form turned in .....	October 19, 2025
Delivery date .....	November 19, 2025
On-test weight and scan .....	December 3, 2025
Mid-test weight and scan .....	February 27, 2026
Carcass Challenge Open House .....	March 13, 2026

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Donor Steer Weights .....	750 lbs.
Time on Feed .....	Nov. 19, 2025 - May 28, 2026 (190 days)
Carcass Challenge Banquet .....	June 2026

# 2026

## donor form

SUPPORT ICA. DONATE TODAY!

# CARCASS CHALLENGE

## DONOR INFORMATION:

Please list **ALL** donors and breeders as you want listed for this steer on all materials.

(Ex.: Steer #1: County Cattlemen's Association, George Henry, and First National Bank)

Steer #\_\_\_ donated by:

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## COMMUNICATION CONTACT:

Please list **breeder** information below:

(This is where the steer will be picked up by an ICLP member)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please list **additional partner(s) or donor(s)**:

(These contacts will receive all program communication, please indicate by circling which)

Partner(s) or Sponsor(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Partner(s) or Sponsor(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## AGREEMENT:

☐ **YES! I agree.**

I agree to donate & deliver a feeder steer following the given guidelines for the ICA Carcass Challenge for weaning, weight, and vaccinations, to Iowa State University or designated pick-up site on Nov. 19, 2025. At delivery, I understand the ownership of the steer will be turned over to the Carcass Challenge program and the funds raised by the marketing of the finished steer will be used in the ICA general fund to strengthen Iowa's beef business through educational programs and leadership development.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Steer Recruiter: \_\_\_\_\_

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joe@iacattlemen.org | 641-425-7373

### RETURN FORM TO:

Iowa Cattlemen's Association, c/o Carcass Challenge  
2055 Ironwood Court, Ames, IA 50014

Phone: 515-296-2266 | Fax: 515-296-2261  
More information at [www.iacattlemen.org](http://www.iacattlemen.org)