Good Afternoon Gator Nation!!!

Our Newsletter is running a bit early this week. I will be out of state through Sunday to attend my Mother’s 90th birthday. We have a few very significant updates, please read these carefully:

* **24-Hour Barn Keys**
* **First FFA Meeting**
* **Barn Construction**
* **End-of-the-Year Mandatory Barn Clean-Up Update**
* **Houston Calf Scramble Progress Show (4-5 November)**
* **Current Ear Tag Orders**
* **Cattle Hoof Trimming**
* **Steer Weights**

**Activity Calendar**

Please remember and consider bookmarking the FFA Activity Calendar for your conveneince: <https://dickinson.ffanow.org/AETcalendar.aspx?ID=72461> .

Changes and updates are made to this calendar frequently in order to keep everyone as up to date as possible.

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**24-Hour Barn Keys**

Anyone who is currently holding 24-Hour Barn Access Keys needs to turn them in immediately. They are currently all checked out and there is no excuse for them being out at present. Going forward, if you sign out a 24-Hour Barn Access Key, please return it to an Ag Teacher or deposit it in the black box immediately. Please do not hang on to these keys. We need them for situations that we cannot plan for and it is a huge inconvenience when we need them and do not have them.

**First FFA Meeting**

During classes on Wednesday, September 6th, all ag class students will be attending an informative meeting during their respective class periods in the Auditorium. The meeting will be led by the chapter officers and all ag teachers will also be present to answer questions.

That evening, we will also be holding our first monthly Chapter Meeting. This will also serve as the “Information Meeting,” the meeting that in recent years we have hosted in the DHS LGI, however this year it will be at 6:30 in the DHS Vintage Gym.

**Barn Construction**

As previously mentioned, things are beginning to start to wrap up. We have had to ask that some of the arena penned calves be temporarily moved again, and we thank your compliance with these necessities. Our contractors are doing the best that they can to try to make this an unintrusive as possible, but some instances need immediate attention. We thank you again for your flexibility and cooperation.

Additionally, please be aware and cognizant. We have had a few instances where nails, screws, and construction odds & ends have been found in common areas as well as the parking lot. This has been made known to our contractors. Please be careful when parking, especially in highly trafficked areas. Also, please continue to notify me if you are finding any of this material in the barn common areas.

**End-of-the-Year Mandatory Barn Clean-Up Update**

Originally, we had scheduled the weekend of 27-28 April 2024 as the dates for our mandatory barn clean-up post fair, the clean up everyone must participate in and meet all requirements to have their deposits returned. We have since discovered that the 2024 DHS Prom has been moved to that weekend. We will now move the clean-up to the weekend of 3-4 May 2024, following the same format:

Students will still be required to load out animals for their return to the fairgrounds for processing on the morning of Saturday, 27 April @ 9:00 am. (Prom Day)

Prior To Friday, 3 May – all pens must be entirely cleaned and all personal items removed from lockers / storage areas, etc. Being that all animals will be loaded out the week prior to this, all pens and storage areas must be cleaned, and all personal tack and items removed by Friday afternoon, 3 May.

Saturday- 4 May – Barn Clean-Up will commence this morning. All specie areas, common areas, and trailers and equipment will be cleaned. Deposits will not be released until all areas are completed, verified by specie advisors and barn keys are checked back in and verified. Deposits can also be withheld if your pen/storage area were not cleaned, and personal tack not removed prior to Saturday morning.

**Houston Calf Scramble Progress Show**

For those of you who caught at the 2023 Houston Livestock Show & Rodeo, we need a list of those who are planning to attend and show at the Progress Show 4-5 November. Please keep in mind that this show will take place at the Washington County Fairgrounds in Brenham, TX; not at the NRG Center. There are a lot of moving parts to be able to make this trip possible. If you are planning on showing in Brenham, please e-mail me directly letting me know. ([mrobinson@dickinsonisd.org](mailto:mrobinson@dickinsonisd.org)) Likewise, if you are planning on attending this, I highly recommend booking your hotel rooms as early as possible as Brenham is not a huge city and space will fill up fast.

**Current Ear Tag Orders**

Per County Extension, these are the ear tag orders that they have received as of 11 am on Monday 8-28. *If you have ordered tags between then and now, your name will not appear on this list.* They do not update us daily on this.



**Cattle Hoof Trimming**

Due to extremely limited space with construction, any animals needing hoof trimmings will likely need to be taken to Santa Fe’s Barn for Mr. Dunn to do there. I am putting together some prospective times where I can haul some calves over. Please stay tuned for more information. If you cannot make this next trip, we can try to schedule him to come to the new barn to do a big trimming, provided we have enough people interested. We need a minimum of 10 head for a house call.

**Steer Weights**

For those of you raising steers we need to start meeting weekly (very briefly) in order to take weights and a progress picture of your calf. I would like to start this next Thursday, 7 September, right after school. If you are available, please come to the barn after class, we will weigh your steer, take a quick picture and that will be all. In the weeks ahead, we can use your weight data to project your calf’s weight at showtime / make adjustments accordingly, etc. The key to this working is consistency.

Next Thursday, 7 September Galveston County Ag Teachers and 4-H Advisors will meet at the fairgrounds for the annual rules meeting. I will be leaving the barn a little early to attend. I hope to take all of the rules for each livestock division, ag mechanics, youth art, and judging contests scan them in and add them to the chapter website for everyone’s convenience as soon as possible.

There is a very high amount of activity on the near horizon. Please stay tuned, and we will continue to do our best to keep everyone informed of upcoming events and important dates. A few quick Items to mention, just for reference:

* 2024 Fort Worth Stock Show & Rodeo entries will be opening up on 15 September. If you want to get your paperwork knocked out early, please see me at the barn on Thursdays, and we can take care of this. REMEMBER, Fort Worth entries have a different due date (15 November) than the rest of the Texas Major Shows.
* We will be conducting our annual Fresh Country Fundraiser for the benefit of the FFA. We will have more information and a flier for your in next week’s newsletter.

Lastly, if you know other students or parents, please help us and encourage them to go to the Dickinson FFA Website and register. This will add them to this e-mail list as well as keep them in the loop with all that is going on with the chapter in person, as well as the web. Thank you all for your time and attention. Please let us know if you need an assistance or have any questions.

**GO GATORS!**

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Very Respectfully,

Mitch Robinson

Mitch Robinson

Ag. Teacher / Barn Manager

Dickinson High School, Dickinson Independent School District

[mrobinson@dickinsonisd.org](mailto:mrobinson@dickinsonisd.org)

(281) 299-6400 Extention: 7858 school

(979) 412-0778 cell

“A farmer never plowed a field in his mind.”

~Unknown

**Mitch Robinson**

**Ag Science Teacher / Barn Manager**

**Dickinson High School - Dickinson ISD**

P.O. Drawer Z

Dickinson, TX  77539

281-229-7858

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