

FARM and RANCH TRIAL HERDING PROGRAM

SECTION 1 - PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

The Farm/Ranch Herding program provides a chore oriented venue in which to display the miniature Australian Shepherd's practical skills as an all around farm and ranch dog.

SECTION 2 - ELIGIBILITY

The Farm and Ranch Trial Program is open to all herding breeds or crossbreeds of the herding breeds. To be eligible for titles, entrants other than MASCA Registered miniature Australian Shepherds must have a MASCA Tracking Number.

SECTION 3 - LIVESTOCK

1. Classes of livestock will be cattle, sheep, goats, ducks and geese. Cattle will have the designation (c), sheep will have the designation (s), goats will have the designation (g), ducks or geese will have the designation (d).
2. There must be a minimum of 5 head of stock (ducks, geese) or 10 head of stock (cattle, sheep, goats) used in all aspects of the course.
3. The number of runs allowed per head of stock will be a maximum of three (3) per day.
4. After a group of stock has run the course, they are required to rest at least 1 run before being used again.
5. Maximum runs allowed per trial will be determined by length of run, number of stock available and the time necessary to complete that course in a manner that doesn't overwork or stress the stock.

SECTION 4 – FARM and RANCH HERDING DIVISIONS

1. There are three Farm and Ranch Herding Divisions: Levels 1, 2 3. Titles are earned in a division when two (2) qualifying scores are received from two different courses on the same type of stock in each division and class.
2. The host organization is required to offer the following divisions without priority to any division:
 - a. Farm and Ranch Started Dog (F/R-L1) is for dogs nine (9) months of age or older on the day of the trial
 - b. Farm and Ranch Open Dog (F/R-L2) is for dogs nine (9) months of age or older on the day of the trial.
 - c. Farm and Ranch Advanced Dog (F/R-L3) is for dogs nine (9) months of age or older on the day of the trial.

Any dog titled as a Farm and Ranch Level 3 Dog may continue to compete in the Level 3 Farm and Ranch Herding division for that class.

FARM and RANCH TRIAL HERDING PROGRAM

SECTION 5 – THE FARM and RANCH TRIAL COURSE

1. Required Chores

Because of the varying setups of farms around the country, no two farm/ranch trial courses will necessarily be the same. Each course should be designed to showcase the working ability of the miniature Australian Shepherd in the day to day chores that happen on many farms and ranches. The course should try to represent practical work type situations where a dog needs to move stock in an efficient and stress-free manner.

The chores will increase in difficulty for the Open and Advanced dogs. Increased difficulty can include: length of gather, sorts of marked animals, advanced pen/chute work, handler lines or posts, use of drives, and use of chores that are specific to the open and or advanced divisions.

There are 5 required chores for a Farm and Ranch Trial course.

a. **SORTING** (always the first chore): At least one sort is required during the course regardless of division.

Level 1: 5 (ducks/geese) or 10 (cattle, sheep, or goats) will be gate sorted to a separate pen from the other 5 (ducks, geese) or 10 (cattle, sheep or goats) head of stock. The dog and handler may work together during sorting.

Level 2: Ducks/Geese- A sort of at least 3 out of 5 marked animals (the other 2 do not have to be marked). 5 total head of stock are required to continue the course.

Points will count for only 2 unmarked animals that have been sorted.

Cattle/Sheep/Goats- A sort of at least 5 out of 10 marked animals (the other 5 do not have to be marked). 10 total head of stock are required to continue the course.

Points will count for only 5 unmarked animals that have been sorted.

The work required includes the sorting of the animals and moving them to a separate pen. The dog and handler may work together during sorting.

Level 3: Ducks/Geese- A sort of 5 marked animals is required to continue the course. **Points will count only for the marked animals that have been sorted.**

Cattle/Sheep/Goats- A sort of 10 marked animals is required to continue the course.

Points will count only for the marked animals that have been sorted.

The work required includes the sorting of the animals and moving them to a separate pen. The dog and handler may work together during sorting.

b. **PEN WORK**: A minimum of two pens are needed for pen work. The work will include, but is not limited to, moving the stock from one pen to another, with quiet and efficient movement through a gate.

The dog should work primarily on its own in the pens.

c. **CHUTE WORK**: The stock must be put into the chute, moved through the chute, and out of it. The chute must restrict the forward movement of the livestock in such a way as to funnel down to manageable numbers to doctor or load a trailer or squeeze. Chute work will include using, but not limited to, either a loading chute, or a chute leading up to a squeeze, or sorting gate.

The dog and handler may work together during the chute work.

FARM and RANCH TRIAL HERDING PROGRAM

d. **GATHER** (This can be done in conjunction with the Pasture Work):

Started: Minimum area must be large enough for a 100 foot gather (cattle, sheep or goats) 25 foot gather for (ducks/geese); this minimum gather is the distance between dog and stock.

The handler may help their dog by positioning themselves up to 1/2 the distance between the dog and stock.

Open: Minimum area must be large enough for a 150 foot gather ((cattle, sheep or goats) 50 foot gather for (ducks/geese) this minimum gather is the distance between dog and stock.

The handler may help their dog by positioning themselves up to 1/2 the distance between the dog and stock.

Advanced: Minimum area must be large enough for a 200 foot gather for (cattle, sheep or goats) 75 foot gather for (ducks/geese) this minimum gather is the distance between dog and stock.

In the Advanced Class, the handler must stay at the handler's post.

e. **PASTURE WORK** (minimum 2 acres up to 5 acres):

Started: The handler and dog will either fetch or drive the stock out into a pasture a minimum distance of 100 feet for (cattle, sheep or goats) or 25 feet for (ducks/geese). The handler will then call the dog off the stock, walking a minimum of a 100 feet for (cattle, sheep or goats) and 25 feet for (ducks/geese). The handler will then send the dog to gather the stock.

The handler may help their dog by positioning themselves up to 1/2 the distance between the dog and stock.

Open: The handler will have the dog drive the stock out into a pasture, a minimum distance of 150 feet (cattle, sheep or goats) or 50 feet (ducks/geese). The handler will then call the dog off the stock, to a point that is a minimum of a 150 feet for (cattle, sheep or goats) and 50 feet for (ducks/geese). The handler will then send the dog to gather the stock.

The handler may help their dog by positioning themselves up to 1/2 the distance between the dog and stock.

Advanced: The handler will have the dog drive the stock out into a pasture, a minimum distance of 200 feet (cattle, sheep or goats) or 75 feet (ducks/geese). The handler will then call the dog off the stock; to a handler's post that is a minimum distance of 200 feet for (cattle, sheep or goats) and 75 feet for (ducks/geese). The handler will then send the dog to gather the stock.

The handler may not leave the handler's post.

Level 1 will perform only the mandatory chores for their total points.

FARM and RANCH TRIAL HERDING PROGRAM

Trial Location Specific Chores: Along with the 5 mandatory chores, 1 other chore specific to the course location is used for Open dogs and 2 other chores specific to the course location are used for Advanced dogs.

Suggested chores are listed below. Other chores, not listed below, may be used with approval from the Herding Committee.

Footbath simulation

Loading into Trailer

Barn work

Blind Gather

Natural Obstacles (pond, creek, hill, trees)

Bridge

Shed

Hold at/in a designated area

Removal of halter/ribbon/collar

Field work (5 acres to no larger than 10 acres)

Scale (weigh stock)

Each of the 5 Started/6 Open/7 Advanced chores must be attempted during the course of the trial, however depending on the course design there may be situations where previous chores must be completed in a certain order to continue. These situations must be clearly described in the flyer for the trial. **The sort is always the first chore assigned.** During any chore, time will be called by the course director for overworking, running, inappropriate gripping or stressing the stock.

2. Time

The minimum time required for a Farm/Ranch Trial Course is 15 minutes. A Farm/Ranch Trial Course should imitate real work and be designed to move stock in an easy and efficient manner. There should be adequate time allotted to each course depending on the complexity of the chores, and/or Division. When running the course, each handler will be given a 10 minute warning and a 3 minute warning before time has expired

3. Points

The total number of points available is 50/60/70 for cattle, sheep or goats, and 25/30/35 for ducks or geese.

	Cattle, sheep and goats	Ducks or geese
Sort Work:	10 Points	5 Points
Pen Work:	10 Points	5 Points
Chute Work:	10 Points	5 Points
Gather Work:	10 Points	5 Points
Pasture Work:	10 Points	5 Points

Location Specific Task(s): 10 Points Open 20 Points Advanced 5 Points Open 10 Points Advanced.

Ties are broken by time used. If time used is the same, then ties are broken by the time used to sort the stock.

A score of zero on a chore results in a non-qualifying run.

FARM and RANCH TRIAL HERDING PROGRAM

4. Qualifying Scores:

Farm/Ranch Trial Dogs must earn 70% or more of the total points (35 of 50, 42 of 60, and 49 of 70) and (18 of 25, 21 of 30, and 25 of 35).

5. Participant Criteria:

The main objective in farm and ranch work is to get the chore done in the most efficient and stress-free manner possible. Moving the stock with little or no weight loss, stress or injury is the purpose of using good working dogs.

Attitude, obedience, power, and teamwork are necessary components in the make-up of an effective farm or ranch dog.

SECTION 6 – SANCTIONING

A MASCA Trial Sanctioning Form is required, along with the following:

- a. A complete description of the course and the order in which the tasks must be performed for each division (Started, Open and Advanced)
- b. A complete diagram of the course which includes the pens, chute, sorting area, gather layout, natural obstacles, and any additional tasks (along with the required level of either Open or Advanced).
- c. The size of the chutes, pens, gates, and gather areas.
- d. A copy of the flyer for the trial.

The flyer must contain the following information:

1. Host Club/member in good standing, location and date(s) of trial(s)
2. Course Director
3. Course description for each division
4. Diagram of the course
5. Maximum time for each division
6. When bitches in heat can run
7. Maximum number of runs
8. Run order draws- during the handler's meeting or before the trial
9. Type(s) of stock
10. Pre-entry opening and closing dates
11. Any other additional affiliate rules regarding entries.

SECTION 7 - DISQUALIFIED AND/OR EXCUSED DOGS

1. Excused Dogs: Should a Course Director excuse a dog from a run, the scribe will enter a zero and "TC" on the score sheet. Dogs will be excused for the following:

- a. Over-running - unnecessary running of stock around the course or into the fence.
- b. Incompetent work or lack of progress. If a contestant and his dog are unprepared and are unable to accomplish the task, time may be called even if no harm is being done to the stock.
- c. Mistreatment of Stock. Dogs and handlers may not repeatedly strike, prod or otherwise abuse the stock in order to cause it to move. Exceptions will be made in stock situations requiring protection for the welfare of the handler and/or dog.
- d. Unnecessary gripping - gripping in a severe manner. Grips should be either on the head or on the legs of the stock. Body, neck, belly, back, and ham are all unnecessary grips. A severe grip would be intentional wool pulling, hanging on, slashing or jerking a leg(s) out from under the animal. In

FARM and RANCH TRIAL HERDING PROGRAM

the case of ducks/geese, any mouthing, gripping, running over, or pouncing on the duck or goose is unnecessary.

e. Training aids:

1. Wearing or attached to the collar.

2. Anything other than a stock stick or staff 3' to 5' long.

f. Handler taking hold of their dog to discipline it while in the arena or on course.

g. If, in the opinion of the Course Director, the dog is unsound or suffering from an injury

2. Disqualified Dogs:

Should a Course Director disqualify a dog from competition, the Course director will state the reason on the score sheet and give a brief written report of the dog's action on the dog's score sheet. This report shall also be submitted to the MASCA board.

Dogs will be disqualified for the following:

a. Attacks (to set upon in a violent way) on any person, dog or livestock.

b. Mauling (to handle roughly and injure by rough treatment) including broken bones.

c. A dog that is so out of control that it cannot be caught.

When a dog has been disqualified under this section, the dog may not compete any further that day or in any trial or inspection. The owner must then submit an application to the MASCA board for reinstatement. The MASCA board will assign someone to evaluate the dog in a neutral area a minimum of 100' by 200'. Upon completion of the inspection and evaluation by the inspector, the owner will be notified by the MASCA board of the decision to be reinstated.

3. Bitches in Heat:

Bitches in heat may be barred from the trial arena during regular competition at a sanctioned trial. At the option of the host club/member in good standing, bitches in season may be permitted to compete in order or after the last run in the last regular class and division of the day. The host club/ member in good standing must stipulate in the premium list or flyer and in their sanctioning request whether bitches in heat will be allowed to compete. If the host club/ member in good standing elect not to permit bitches in heat to compete, they must permit, at the owner's option, either a refund of the entry fee or substitution of a dog owned or co-owned by the Owner of the bitch in heat.

SECTION 8 - REGULATIONS

All other rules and regulations listed in the MASCA Herding Program will apply for the Farm and Ranch trials.

Any contestant may call time on themselves at anytime, if the situation warrants it. Once a handler calls time on their run, the dog is immediately put back on leash and the handler and dog should exit the arena.

The Course director will assign this run a "no score" and write on the score sheet "HCT" (Handler called time).

This is greatly appreciated by the stock provider and the MASCA Board.

FARM and RANCH TRIAL HERDING PROGRAM

SECTION 9 – PLACEMENTS AND AWARDS

Determining Winners and Places:

1. High points will determine the winner and subsequent places for each trialing level.
2. Ties will be resolved by the lowest time elapsed for the entire run, and then by the median time.
3. Ribbons or Patches and awards will be given through 4 places in:
Farm and Ranch Levels: 1, 2, 3.
4. Qualifying Ribbons or Patches will be given for all qualifying scores in:
Farm and Ranch Levels: 1, 2, 3.
5. High In Trial can be given for:
Farm and Ranch Levels: 1, 2, 3.

There will be separate HIT's awarded for Aussies (MASCA, ASCA, NSDR, and AKC) from other breeds (i.e. Border Collies, Shelties, Miniature American Shepherds etc.). HIT's will also be given for other breeds.

HIT can be given daily or accumulated over the number of days the trial is held. The hosting club makes that decision.