

Rabies, Quarantine, Rules Do Not Block Kerra From Manheim Farm Show

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Lancaster Farming Staff

MANHEIM (Lancaster Co.) —

For Kerra Allen, a first-place standing in Lancaster County's Shepherd's Lead Line could not have been more amazing. The 12-year-old thought her dream of even entering the contest was an impossibility because their farm was quarantined when a rabid skunk was killed on the property last Saturday afternoon.

That was the day the Allen's pet dog's continual barking brought them running. The dog stood face to face with a skunk. Because it was high noon and the skunk was within 20 feet of the house, Kerra's dad, Allen, was suspicious the skunk was rabid. After he killed it, Allen had it tested.

On Monday, the Department of Agriculture confirmed that the skunk was rabid. The skunk showed puncture marks on its nose that indicated that it had been in a fight. Although it cannot be proved, officials suspect that it might have had a fight with one of the Allen's farm animals. All animals on the Allen farm are quarantined until February.

The Shepherd's Lead Line at the Manheim Farm Show was only hours away when Kerra was notified that her sheep Bubba would not be allowed to participate.

Crushed, Kerra saw her plan disintegrate of not only winning the lead line but also of competing and selling her market lamb. When Farm Show officials, Jay Mylin and Sue Donches, heard of her predicament, they hurriedly made allowances. She could participate, they decided, if she could borrow a sheep that was halter broken for the lead line.

At 7:30 p.m., Kerra and her mom scanned the pens of sheep housed in the Farm Show barns in search of an eligible sheep. For lead line competition, not only does the sheep need to be halter broken but also be representative of the best of the breed. In the lead



Manheim Farm Show Queen Marci Harnish, who is also Pennsylvania Alternate Dairy Princess, hands a blue ribbon to Kerra Allen for her first place win in the Lancaster County Lead Line.

line competition, the shepherd must dress in a 100 percent wool outfit. Entrants are judged on poise and presentation along with the control and appearance of their sheep.

Thanks to the Frank Stoltzfus family of Elizabethtown, Kerra borrowed one of their sheep. Fortunately, the sheep cooperated by walking sedately by Kerra's side

during the competition. The sheep became rowdy and uncooperative as soon as the show was over, but by then Kerra was clutching the first prize.

Kerra modeled a navy riding jacket with red, navy, and white plaid skirt. The sheep she led sported a matching Woolrich tie.

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The Lancaster County Leadline includes Sarah Zurin, third; Kerra Allen, first; and Angle Erb, second.

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