



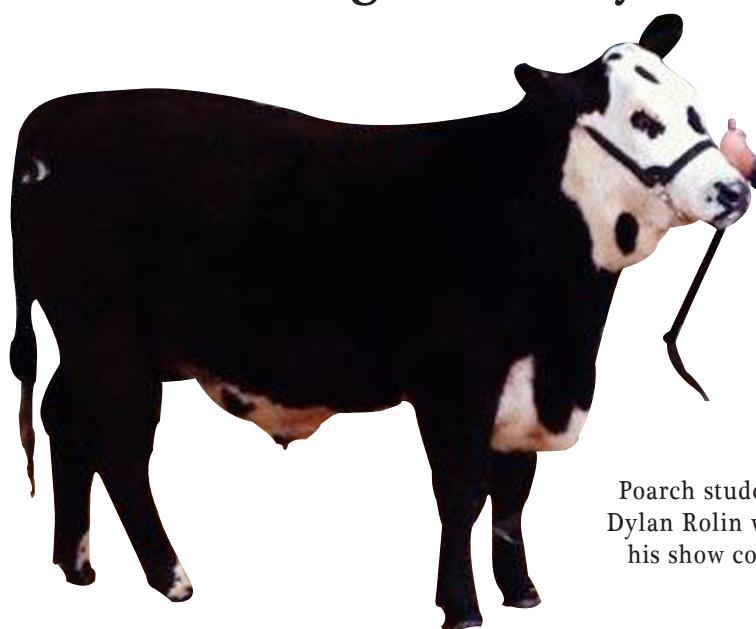
PERDIDO RIVER FARMS



Poarch students DJ Rolin, Jaycelyn Chunn, Wyatt Rutherford and Jason Davis.

Taking the 4-H bull by the horns

Perdido River Farms hosts events throughout the year



Poarch student Dylan Rolin with his show cow.



Every year, Perdido River Farms (PRF) hosts a variety of 4-H events for children from Poarch and all over Escambia County to learn from and participate in. And fiscal year 2015 was a busy one.

Poarch Creek Indians Children's Services Coordinator Christyn Sells said the main 4-H events at Perdido River Farms are all linked to the Poarch Creek 4-H Steer program through PCI Education, in conjunction with the farm. Students learn discipline, care taking and responsibility by participating in 4-H programs.

"We have also had chick chain meetings and the Escambia County Hog program meeting there as well, where participants from all over the county have been able to attend (Tribal and non-Tribal)," she said.

This adds additional visibility, further showcasing PRF's exemplarity cow/calf operation. Earlier this year, the farm was recognized by the Alabama Cattlemen's Association, receiving the state environmental award.

"We are very proud to be hosts and sponsors of these events," General Manager John English said. "Not only does it educate and help our youth, but the whole county participates as well."

Sells said meetings often are swapped between Escambia County Extension Office and Perdido River Farms to make sure all youth in the county are able to participate in events, since each location is at the opposite end of the county.

"We have also had calf grooming clinics for all county participants," Sells said.

Each year, Poarch Creek youth receive their project steers the last week in August, and the animals are housed at the farm for the duration of the project. Sells said the children engage in a six- to seven-month process working their animals, which entails training, feeding and tending to the steers until the show in March.

In the spring, Poarch youth participate in a cattle battle show in preparation for the Escambia County show, which PRF hosts every March.

During the 2015 Escambia County Steer and Heifer Calf Show on March 5, 21 exhibitors showed almost 50 animals in 15 classes of cattle, with 12 participants from the Poarch Creek 4-H Club in the exhibit. Ten of the 12 Poarch children took home a ribbon, winning first through sixth place in their respective categories.

After the show, the animals were sold at a premium sale.

Sells said the Poarch Creek 4-H club will begin its new steer program season this September at Perdido River Farms.

"And we will do it all over again," she said.