

- THE COTULLA RANCH RODEO &amp; WILD HOG FUTURITY -

# 40 years of Ranch Rodeo

**TERESA VILLARREAL**

The moment Garth Brooks sings about boots & chaps and cowboy hats, there's only one word that comes to mind... Rodeo.

That's right, it's rodeo time! Celebrating 40 years, the La Salle County Hog Cook-Off and Fair is proud to entertain audiences near and far with its annual rodeo. Everyone is anticipating the thrills and spills of professional riders from South Texas ranches, cattle companies, and free yards. All teams compete by invitation only and strive to win for a chance at cash and prizes.

Beginning with the Wild Hog Futurity, spectators gather around to watch this entertaining pig race that could earn the winners cash prizes. The pigs, having been auctioned the previous day, are gathered in pens at one end of the American Legion Arena. They are released and sent scurrying around a fenced course. The first pigs to reach the other end of the arena are soon captured and crowned winners.

What makes this contest one-of-a-kind is watching how these little runners get across. The pigs vary in size and weight, and while some have speed, others take their time getting across. The arena is soon energized by the sounds of roaring cheers from the crowd that fill the arena.

This event will be taking place Sunday, March 10 at 1:30 p.m.

Soon thereafter, the Ranch Rodeo begins!

Wild Hog Sacking is a hilarious, crowd-pleasing contest that requires two teammates to catch a hog and place it in a tow sack. A cowboy on horseback then rides across the arena as fast as possible (without dropping the wriggling animal)



to a pen that is set up at the other end. The sack is then handed to other team members who release the hog into the pen.

Steer Roping & Tying is a traditional cowboy challenge that requires mounted cowboys to work together to rope a steer and lay it on its side. The team must then cross-tie the steer's legs as quickly as possible.

Steer Roping & Branding is a similar challenge of skill and timing. Riders must start behind a designated line. The clock starts as soon as the steer is released from the chute. The cowboys on horseback head and heel the steer and lay it on its side. From there the cowboy on foot "brands" the steer. The fastest time determines the winner.

Wild Hog Roping & Tying is one of the biggest attractions the ranch rodeo offers.

Hog hunting is a favorite pastime of many in the South Texas Brush Country. Armed with only a rope, riders must catch the wild hog and cross-tie its legs. They must then place it onto an animal hide, which is then towed out of the arena while a contestant holds it down. A cowboy might be a little nervous about getting up close and personal with an angry wild hog, but this adrenaline-pumping event never disappoints its fans.

Wild Cow Milking provides an interesting, humorous twist to the everyday duties of farmers and ranchers. Team members must rope a wild cow and proceed to quickly milk the cow until there is sufficient milk in a bottle to show the judges. Once the task is completed, they must run with the bottle to the end of the arena on foot and cross the finish line.



- THE CHILDREN'S WILD PIG SCRAMBLE

## Scrambling Up Some Fun

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During the ranch rodeo, the highly entertaining Wild Pig Scramble takes place. Hundreds of kids aged ten and under gather in the arena and wait for a cattle trailer to drop off over a dozen baby pigs. Running in every direction possible to avoid capture, these piggies are very fast and make it hard for these kids to catch them. Those who are able to catch their baby pigs are allowed to take the little cuties home.

There is no advance registration needed for children to join the scramble, as long as they are the appropriate age and have the ability to enter the arena to chase the pigs.

The Ranch Rodeo happens Sunday, March 10 at 2 p.m., so come prepared for an afternoon of fun, food, excitement, and an all-around good time!