



Calvert 4-H Updates 5/1/2020

I hope all of you and your family members are healthy during our current COVID-19 challenges. As many of you know, we have *some* answers about the MD State 4-H offerings, but other questions remain. Below is a summary of where we are, presently. Please note that we will communicate any changes to you as we are made aware.

*All UME in-person programs are canceled through the **end of June**. This is per Dr. James Hanson, UME Associate Dean/Associate Director and Dr. Nia Fields, MD State 4-H Program Leader.

*UME offices are **CLOSED** and employees are teleworking through May.

*MD State 4-H Shooting Sports Instructor Training will be **rescheduled** for the Fall of 2020. Dates TBA.

*The MD Association of Fairs and Shows **has not made any announcements** about county fairs nor about the State Fair at this time. Logically, their decision will be determined by the way the COVID-19 situation continues to evolve. There is a possibility that fairs will be canceled, so all should be prepared for that. Please note, however, that we have **NO OFFICIAL WORD** at this time.

***MD 4-H Market Hogs, Lambs and Goats will NOT be weighed in for 2020**. There will be no Average Daily Gain requirements to exhibit at the MD State Fair. It is unclear at this point if Market Hogs, Lambs and Goats will be tagged or not. All animals should have official USDA identification tags from breeders. That information will be **required** when you complete the online project registration forms. To access the Calvert County 4-H Market Hog, Lamb and Goat Forms, go to <https://forms.gle/1j5xSSfvTJRrvfEz5>. Be sure to only put one species on each form. Our May Calvert 4-H Weigh-in and Tagging will NOT be held, in accordance with UME 4-H guidelines. **Project Registration Forms** should be completed online by **6/1/2020**.

*All other 4-H Animal Science Projects (except breeding livestock) must be registered by **6/1/2020**. This includes **dogs, horses, alpacas, cavies, poultry breeding birds and rabbits**. Project registration forms for alpacas, cavies, poultry breeding birds and rabbits is available at <https://forms.gle/egSBh2jJ7BXW4P3t8>. The Dog Project Registration Form is available at <https://form.jotform.com/201135434365145>. The Horse Project Registration Form is available at <https://form.jotform.com/201135618321141>.

***4-H Livestock Breeding Project Registrations** are due on **7/1/2020**. The electronic form link is <https://forms.gle/1j5xSSfvTJRrvfEz5>. Be sure to correctly designate what species/type project on the form.

*MD 4-H is canceling ALL camps for 2020. This includes the **Calvert 4-H Outdoor Discovery Camp**. While not optimal, and we will miss seeing our 4-H camp participants, this is the safe thing to do. This decision is in accordance with MD State 4-H protocols.

There will be a **4-H Volunteer Check-in** on Wednesday, May 6, at 7 PM. This is not a UME-Calvert 4-H Volunteer Association Meeting, but just a check-in. To participate, please register by going to <https://umd.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAuc-6vrTwjHdPvuB9Oht8K8xleicRws34b>. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

*Life is UNCERTAIN. I have been asked numerous times if families should undertake **4-H Market Hog, Lamb, or Goat Projects for 2020**. Each family must look at their individual situation to determine whether or not to undertake a market project. Since it is not certain there will be a State Fair or the Calvert County Fair, this year is a riskier one than usual. Ask yourself some questions and take serious inventory of your situation before deciding what to do.

- FIRST, if there is ANY question whether your family has the financial resources and time to commit to properly feed and care for the animal(s), the answer is **NO**.
- If your family is not willing or able to *potentially* harvest and consume the meat, the answer is **NO**.
- If your family is not willing to start NOW to put together a *marketing plan* as to how you will sell the animal(s) if the product is not consumed by the family, the answer is **NO**.
- If you are depending on a high price to “make it big” at the MD State Fair 4-H Livestock Auction or at the Calvert County 4-H Livestock Auction, the answer is **NO**.
- If the only reason your family is involved in the 4-H Market Livestock Project is for participation in the county fair, the answer is **NO**.

ON THE OTHER HAND . . .

- If your youngster is looking to learn, grow and see “real life,” maybe the answer is **YES**. After all, COVID-19 is not anything that we could have predicted, just as life is.
- If your 4-H member is all about the “daily work” with their animals, and they don’t really care whether there is a fair exhibition opportunity or not, perhaps the answer is **YES**.
- If your family has the resources and will make the commitment to properly feed and care for the animal and is involved for the Positive Youth Development potential of market livestock projects, perhaps the answer is **YES**.
- In other words, nobody can make the decision for your 4-H member and for your family. It’s a discussion and analysis that needs to occur for EACH family and their 4-H member individually. Only you know the dynamics and situation of your family. **Good luck with the analysis!**

Be safe & stay healthy!

Elaine Long Bailey

4-H Educator