Livestock Projects

What are Livestock Projects?

Livestock projects include: Beef and Dairy Cattle, Sheep, Hogs, and Meat and Dairy Goats. These animals can be exhibited at different shows including, Spring Show, County Fairs, State Fair, breed shows, and/or Jackpot Shows. Market animals are sheep, goats, hogs or cattle that 4-Her’s raise and plan to sell at their county fair as a high quality meat animal. Breeding animals are animals that the 4-Her’s raise and use to produce more high quality livestock, either for breeding projects or bred and owned market projects. The beef project takes the most time, land and commitment because you have the calf a lot longer than any other project. The beef project requires the most feed, as well. The lamb, goat, and swine market projects are about a 4 month project. They are a good project if the child is just starting out in 4-H.

What is required for the Livestock Projects?

- All livestock has to be registered with the county 4-H Office by the set deadlines. Forms are sent out around the time that registration is due. Breeding animals must be registered by July 1st. Steers must be registered by January 1st. Market Sheep, Goats, and Hogs must be registered by June 1st. (Call your county 4-H office to find out how to register your market animals. The breeding registration form can be found in Appendix F)
- The 4-Her is required to complete Quality Assurance courses online and in the county office based on which species they would like to show (Beef, Sheep, Swine, or Goats). These classes are required if you are beginning a livestock project, starting a new species, and when you go from one age category to the next (Junior to Intermediate, Intermediate to Senior.) The website to complete Quality Assurance is https://webtools.moo.umd.edu/AHQA/.
- At the end of the year the 4-Her MUST complete a Project Record Book. (Both forms (breeding and market) can be found in Appendix F.)

Do I have to own my own livestock?

No, you are not required to own your own breeding livestock. You can lease them from someone else and use them. The Breeding Animal Leasing Guidelines and Form can be found in Appendix F. **All market projects MUST be owned by the 4-Her, they can NOT be leased.**
What is required to take my livestock to a show?

- **ALL LIVESTOCK** must have a veterinary visit within 60 days of the first show and a vet signed Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI); an example of the CVI can be found in Appendix F. The vet should check for parasites, like lice; any signs of lameness; and any signs of disease. DON’T be afraid to insist the vet check for certain things to be thorough. The vet is then responsible to give you the YELLOW copy of the CVI and they take the white and pink copies to turn in to MDA and for their records.

- **BEEF** animals are required to have an official identification (premise id tag), that is either a metal tag or USDA 840 tag; farm ear tags or tattoos are not acceptable as official identification. If you are a beef breeder, contact the Maryland Department of Agriculture to obtain your premise ID number and the metal tags. Once you get the premise ID number from MDA, you can then choose to use that to order USDA 840 tags from accepted dealers. This is instead of the metal tags provided by MDA. Cattle should get a Shipping Fever Vaccination as well.

- **SWINE** are required to have an official identification (premise id tag), that is either a metal tag or USDA tag; farm ear tags or notches are not acceptable as official identification. If you are a swine breeder, contact the Maryland Department of Agriculture to obtain your premise ID number and the metal tags. Once you get the premise ID number from MDA, you can then choose to use that to order USDA tags from accepted dealers. This is instead of the metal tags provided by MDA. Charles County 4-H does get tags for the market swine that also act as official identification.

- **SHEEP AND GOATS** must have official Scrapies identification, either tags or tattoos. Scrapies tags contain a premise identification number for the flock and the animal’s individual identification number. The premise number should be the state abbreviation with either letters or numbers after. (ex. MD1990 OR MDWHF.) This premise number MUST be included on the CVI.

- **LAMBS** must be sheared prior to going to the show. Shearing is not allowed on the grounds of the show.

- A Self-Certification form must be completed prior to taking your livestock to the show and before every different show you attend. (The form can be found in Appendix F.)

- If your livestock are going out-of-state to a show, they are required to have an Interstate Certificate of Veterinary Inspection issued within 30 days of the show. Also, check with state to see what else may be required in order to show.
What is Available to further my Knowledge on Livestock?

- **Livestock Judging** - Learn to evaluate livestock (beef, swine, sheep, and meat goats) for quality and carcass traits. Learn the different parts of livestock (loin, hock, rib, etc.) You will judge conformation and give oral reasons to support your placing. You can participate as an individual or as a team or you can participate to learn more about the livestock project. Seniors have the opportunity to attend the National Contest if they place high enough at the State Contest, held at State Fair.
- **Livestock Skillathon** - Learn to identify meats, breeds, equipment, and feeds. You will also learn current event based on the livestock industry, livestock anatomy, judging hay and wool, and much, much more. You can compete as part of a team, an individual, or just to learn more about livestock. The top ten seniors at the state contest, held in March, have the opportunity to compete for a spot on the State Skillathon team that competes in the National Contest in Louisville, KY.

If you are interested in getting involved with Livestock Judging or Skillathon, contact your county 4-H Office to discover when and where the county practices meet and how to join in the fun!