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Maryland 4-H Requirements and Tools For Exhibiting 4-H Meat Goat Projects

When preparing to show livestock in 4-H, the Maryland 4-H program rules and guidelines and those of your county, can seem overwhelming at times. If you carefully read all of the rules and guidelines and have open communication with your 4-H Extension educator, 4-H Meat Goat Department superintendents and your club leader, it becomes an easier process to ensure a positive experience.

Each County 4-H Livestock Program is Unique

It's important to ensure that you are meeting all the program requirements in order to show (breeding or market goats) and potentially sell your market goat.

- 1. Animal ownership In order for your market goat or breeding goat project to be eligible to show for the current year, it must fit within the ownership deadline of the Maryland 4-H program.
 - Market goats must be owned by June 1st of the current year.
 - Breeding goats must be owned by July 1st of the current year. If you are exhibiting a breeding goat, the association registration (original) papers must be in the name of the 4-H member exhibiting and stamped by the association by July 1st to be eligible to exhibit the goat(s) in the current year.
 - Commercial goats must be owned by July 1st of the current year. Your commercial goats will need to have the proper 4
 -H paperwork (Livestock Registration Form (Figure 1)) and a Maryland 4-H commercial goat ear tag by July 1st of the current year to be eligible to show. Most commercial goats will be tagged at the county's goat weigh-in (check with your Extension office for weigh-in/tagging date).



4-H Members learning how to show at a state goat workshop.

Take note of deadlines in your county 4-H program, particularly if the county has an earlier county fair. In that case, ownership deadlines may be set sooner than the state deadlines.

2. Livestock registration form – The Maryland 4-H Program requires that the owner of each 4-H market goat or commercial goat complete a Livestock Registration Form (Figure 1). The form will ask you for your contact information, local 4-H club and your 4-H age. If you are keeping your animal at a location other than your home, you need to include the address of the farm where your 4-H goat project is housed.

In the box at the top of the form, check off if you are weighing a market goat or a commercial goat. If you plan on tagging a market goat and a commercial goat, you need to complete a separate form for each animal. You will need to complete as much information as possible, including:

- Official U.S. tag number This will be a U.S.
 Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved Scrapie
 Tag. This tag will start out with the letters of where the animal was born. Example: If the market goat was born in Maryland, the tag will start with MD followed by a four-digit number assigned by USDA. There will also be a personal tag number associated with the Scrapie tag (the breeder of the goat should obtain this tag).
- Personal ear tag/tattoo number The breeder may only
 have a Scrapie tag on the goat you bred or bought. Many
 breeders now use Scrapie tags with a personal farm
 number as identification for the breeder's records.
- *Breed* (examples Boer, Crossbred, etc.)
- Sex (male or female)
- *Bred and owned* Indicate if you plan to show a kid born from a doe you own or if you bought your goat.
- *Date of birth* What day was your goat born?
- 4-H tag number Leave this column blank since a 4-H ear tag number will be assigned when you attend the county weigh-in and tagging.
- Tag day weight The goat will be weighed and the information recorded at weigh-in. This will be considered your animal's beginning weight for your market goat project.
- Signatures required The 4-H member and parent/legal guardian must sign the front of the form to confirm the information. Signatures are also required on the back of the form from the 4-H member and parent/legal guardian

acknowledging they have read and agree to abide by the Maryland 4-H Animal Science Code of Ethics (Figure 2).

Depending on which county 4-H program you are enrolled in, there may be a charge for the number of ear tags you will need for tagging day. The cost of the tags is minimal. The local Extension office will have information regarding any charges by the county.

- 3. Livestock weigh-in and tagging All counties hold an initial weigh-in and tagging for market goats and commercial goats. Dates will vary around the state and are available from your local Extension office. You will need to help with the care of your goat at the weigh-in/tagging. Some tips to help improve your weigh-in experience:
 - Paperwork Complete all your paperwork before
 arriving at the weigh-in/tagging. Check with your local
 Extension office to see if you need to pre-register for
 weigh-in and tagging. Most offices will request your
 Livestock Registration Form beforehand to ensure they
 have ordered enough tags.
 - Halter break your goat project -- Work with your goat before weigh-in to assure it is halter broken. A properly trained animal helps you get through the weigh-in line quickly and safely and keeps volunteers working at the weigh-in safe.
- Communication During weigh-in/tagging, you will be
 asked questions related to your project and given
 directions that may be as simple as moving vehicles and
 trailers or allowing other families behind you to move into
 the weigh-in/tagging line. If someone is not listening and
 paying attention, the weigh-in process will take longer for
 everyone.
- Tagging Ensure that your animal has been properly tagged based on the information you provided (Figure 3).
- 4. Animal Husbandry Quality Assurance (AHQA)

 Program Maryland 4-H members are required to
 participate in the AHQA online program to ensure they use
 best management practices in caring, grooming and
 showing safely and ethically. The program is designed to
 be completed one time per 4-H age division (junior,
 intermediate and senior).
 - Junior members (8-10 years old as of January 1st) must

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MARYLAND 4-H LIVESTOCK REGISTRATION FORM



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Figure 2. The 4-H member and parent/legal guardian must sign to acknowledge they read and agree to abide by the Maryland 4-H Animal Science Code of Ethics

Figure 3. Everyone who comes into weigh-in/tagging with a market goat(s)/commercial goat(s) will receive a new Maryland 4-H ear tag in their animal's ear





Market goats—Blue Maryland 4-H ear tag

Commercial goats—Purple Maryland 4-H ear tag

- 1. Fair entry system To be eligible to exhibit at fairs, you must pre-enter your market goat(s)/breeding goat(s). Most fairs use an online entry system and your county Extension office will release the information when the entry system is opened. When making your entries, you will need to complete the following steps:
 - Register as a 4-H member exhibitor. The 4-H project must be registered in the member's name;
 - Enter the correct classes for your goat projects, especially if you are exhibiting several goats. Make sure that your market goats/breeding goats are entered into the correct divisions. Enter extra classes such as showmanship, bred and owned divisions (if applicable) and if offered, rate of gain (market goats only);
 - Enter the correct Maryland 4-H ear tag number (market goat(s)/commercial goats). for each animal;
 - Market goat classes will ask for the animal's beginning weight and at date of weigh-in. Make sure to enter the date and weight your goat was when you attended the county weigh-in/tagging day;
 - When you have finished entering all classes for your goat project and you are ready to check out, make sure to pay any costs associated with the entry and confirm that you are entered. You should print out a confirmation number for your entry, along with receiving a confirmation email. Keep these in your records just in case there are problems with the fair entry system.

2. Health papers – The Maryland Department of Agriculture requires that all livestock entering fairgrounds in the state have a Certificate of Veterinary Inspection (CVI or health papers). You will need to have a veterinarian come to the farm where your animals are kept and inspect them for good health.

Make sure to have the following information written down for the veterinarian:

- •Name, address and phone number of the 4-H member;
- •Name, address of fairgrounds and date of the first fair;
- •Information on the livestock being inspected (ear tag numbers (4-H and farm numbers, if applicable), USDA Scrapie tag number, breed, sex, date of birth.

When the veterinarian completes the health papers, you will receive a pink copy. Keep the papers with your records and they must accompany your goat project to all shows. If you are showing in Maryland, the health papers are valid for 120 days and you must complete a health check on your goats before entering the fair. This will be verified by filling out the back of your health papers (self-certification) prior to each fair or show.

If you are planning to exhibit your goat project outside of Maryland, you will be required to have a new set of health papers for interstate exhibits. You will follow the same procedures as above, but these health papers are only valid for 30 days and are for the specific fair/show at which you are exhibiting.

3. Rate of Gain (ROG) (market goats only) – Maryland 4-H does not have a set ROG that your market goat must achieve to be eligible for most fairs and livestock sales. However, your county may require a rate of gain for the market goat project. You will find that information in your county Meat Goat Department rules and county livestock rules.

To calculate ROG, use the following formula:

•Calculate number of days from initial weigh-in through the final weigh-in at county or state fair (when calculating your days include day of both weighins);

- Subtract initial weigh-in weight from final weigh-in weight;
- •Divide the total weight gained by number of days between weigh-ins to get the daily ROG for the market goat.

EXAMPLE

Initial weigh-in – May 8th, the market goat weighed 43lbs. Final weigh-in – July 30th, the market goat weighs 71lbs.

Number of days between weigh-ins = 83 days

Market goat gained = 28 lbs. (End weight – beginning weight = pounds gained)

Final ROG = 28 lbs./83 days = .33 lbs. per day

- 4. Minimum/maximum weights Check with your local county or state fairs on the weight requirements for market goat projects. Each county may have requirements for what your market goat needs to weigh when it arrives at the fair. Weight requirements are often used to determine if your market goat is eligible for the local 4-H livestock sale.
- 5. Project records Accurate recordkeeping is an important part of raising your 4-H goat project. Using the Maryland 4-H Market Livestock Project Record or the Maryland 4-H Breeding Livestock Project Records (Figure 4) will help you keep appropriate records and give thought to what you are learning throughout the year. You will be asked to complete the following information for your goat project:
 - Goals At the beginning of raising your market goat(s)/ breeding goats, what goals did you set for yourself for the year and did you achieve them?
 - Learning What did you learn throughout the year about your goat project?
 - Improve or do differently? What would you like to improve on next year or need to do differently for your project in the future?
 - *Life skills* Using the life skill wheel provided on the project record, what skills did you learn and how did you learn it?
 - Project activities What activities did you attend that

Figure 4. Front page of the Livestock Market Project Record Form and the front page of the Large Animal Breeding Project Record, which is requirement of 4-H goat projects ¹

EXTENSION Solution to your community
Maryland 4-H Animal Science – Livestock Market Project Record
Name
Member's Signature Date Parent's Signature Date Please indicate your Animal Science Project Area
□ Beet/Dairy Steer □ Market Goat □ Market Sheep □ Market Swine What goals did you set for your project this year and did you achieve them?
2.
What were two things you learned from completing this project this year? 1.
2.
What is one thing you would like to improve or do differently with your project next year?
MARYLAND EXTENSION Solutions to good consensity
Maryland 4-H Animal Science – Large Animal Breeding Project Record
Maryland 4-H Animal Science – Large Animal Breeding Project Record Name 4-H Age
Maryland 4-H Animal Science – Large Animal Breeding Project Record
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Maryland 4-H Animal Science — Large Animal Breeding Project Record Name
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Maryland 4-H Animal Science — Large Animal Breeding Project Record Name

¹ These records can be found on your individual county extension websites on the Maryland 4-H website (https://extension.umd.edu/4-h/4-h-program-areas/animal-science-resources).

- relate to your goat project, such as goat workshops, livestock judging, Spring 4-H Show, county fair, etc.?
- Project communication Most counties require 4-H
 members to have some sort of communication about
 their projects. This could be a speech about "Why I
 Chose to Show Market Goats" or a demonstration on
 "What Equipment I Need to Show My Meat Goats."
 Most of the time you can give your speech or
 demonstration at a club meeting, county demonstration
 or public speaking event.
- Exhibits Where did you exhibit your market goat(s)/ breeding goats? Write down all the shows you went to and each class you entered.
- Information on project animals Keeping records on each goat you raise is important so you know where you started and where you will end with the project.
- Expenses ---
 - Feed A daily expense during your project year.
 - Other expenses There are many other expenses to think about with your goat project from equipment to entry fees for shows.

Health records – You should keep records of every veterinarian visit and exactly what was needed, even if it's a vet visit for health papers.

Income --

- Sale income At the end of your market goat project, you will have income from either a county/state livestock sale, selling your goat at the stockyards, or a private treaty sale.
- Other This includes premium money you have received from exhibiting at fairs.
- 6. Livestock sales (market goats) Each county livestock sale is handled differently and will have different requirements. Most sales will have similar rules for required weight ranges. Market goats may also need to make the rate of gain requirements.

Some sales will stipulate that you must complete project record forms for the current year to be eligible for the next year's



Figure 5. Member shearing her goat at 4-H goat field day

livestock sale. Always read the livestock sale rules to ensure you are meeting the requirements to sell your 4-H market goat

- 2. Spring 4-H shows Throughout the state, regional shows are held for 4-H members. These shows offer a chance for 4-H members of all ages and experience levels to bring their goats. By participating in regional shows, 4-H members learn how to prepare their equipment and goats for their county and state fair.
- 3. Livestock skillathon It's important to consider other options to enhance your experiences in the 4-H goat project. One way to expand the learning process is through the livestock skillathon program which emphasizes the variety of items needed to raise livestock. The skillathon program gives you a chance to learn about livestock breeds, equipment, meat cuts, feed (grains and hay), animal quality assurance and opportunities to learn about judging. The program helps 4-H members understand the different parts of their goat project.



4. Livestock judging – Participating in livestock judging will Source: help you learn more about the qualities that make good quality cattle, sheep, swine and goats. Through judging, you will not only learn how to place classes of livestock but you will gain important public speaking skills through reasons.

Animal Science Guidebook. February 2011. https:// www.extension.umd.edu/4-h/4-h-program-areas/animal -science-resources

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The information presented has met UME peer review standards, including internal and external technical review. For help accessing this or any UME publication contact:

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