



4-H CAVY PROJECT



Did you know that a cavy is what we commonly know as a guinea pig? In the cavy project, you can learn about selection and raising your animals, but also dive into health issues, management practices, and careers!

- Learn the basic principles of animal science by owning, caring for, and keeping records on one or more head of cavies.
- Explore knowledge of sound breeding, feeding, and management practices.
- Learn about the important breeds and varieties of cavies and their characteristics.

Starting Out *Beginner*

- Learn the different types of breeds and their ideal weight groups.
- Determine the use of your cavy projects.
- Develop a cavy care management plan.
- Identify cavy equipment and its uses.
- Locate and name parts of a cavy.
- Learn proper feeding techniques.
- Discover proper cavy

Learning More *Intermediate*

- Learn to judge cavies and give oral reasons.
- Design a plan for preparing cavies for show.
- Learn proper grooming techniques.
- Learn proper techniques for ear tagging cavies.
- Learn about diseases and environment concerns.

Exploring Depth *Advanced*

- Learn about cavy breeding programs and genetics.
- Manage your caviary.
- Determine pregnancy and palpation techniques.
- Design a caviary.
- Identify bones on a skeleton.
- Evaluate cavy health.
- Complete a cavy pedigree and registration paper.

The activities above are ideas to inspire further project development. This is not a complete list.

4-H THRIVE

Help Youth:

Light Their Spark

A spark is something youth are passionate about; it really fires them up and gives them joy and energy. Help youth find

Flex Their Brain

The brain grows stronger when we try new things and master new skills. Encourage youth effort and persistence to help

Reach Their Goals

Help youth use the GPS system to achieve their goals.

Goal Selection: Choose one meaningful, realistic and demanding goal.

Pursue Strategies: Create a step-by-step plan to make daily choices that support your goal.

Shift Gears: Change strategies if you're having difficulties reaching your goal.

Reflect

Ask project members how they can use their passion for this project to be more confident, competent and caring. Discuss ways they can use their skills to make a contribution in the community, improve their



Expand Your Experiences!

Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

- Research the nutritional needs of cavies and compare to nutritional needs of humans and other mammals.
- Explore the need for bio-security measures when handling animals. Create a list of

Healthy Living

- Discuss the benefits and practice of washing your hands before and after handling your cavy.
- Discuss your cavy's life expectancy, what to look for when they get older, and how

Citizenship

- Use the confidence obtained through shows and expos in all aspects of life.
- Bring your cavies as therapy for sick and disadvantage individuals.
- Use showing/raising of cavies as a cultural exchange with other nations.

Leadership

- Teach others the importance of caring for another animal.
- Become a role model for others by taking the position of junior/teen leader.

Resources

- American Cavy Breeders Association
www.acbaonline.com/
- American Rabbit Breeders Association
www.arba.net/
- American Red Cross Pet First Aid/CPR
www.redcross.org/pets
- Service Animal
[//en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Service_animal](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Service_animal)
- Animal Assisted Therapy
[//en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animal-assisted_therapy](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Animal-assisted_therapy)
- Healthy pets
www.cdc.gov/healthypets
[//vetmed.illinois.edu/pet_col-umns](http://vetmed.illinois.edu/pet_col-umns)
- www.avma.org/firstaid/procedures.asp
- California State Fair
www.bigfun.org

Connections & Events

Presentation Days – Share what you've learned with others through a presentation.

Field Days – At these events, 4-H members may participate in a variety of contests related to their project area.

County & State Fair - Enter your cavy or cavies and show the judge what you have learned in showmanship!

Curriculum

- [book] Guinea Pig: A Kid's Guide to Raising and Showing
 - ARBA Standard of Perfection
<http://www.arba.net/>
 - Learning Lab Kit: Rabbit
 - Pet Pals Level 1 (4H 563A)
 - Scurrying Ahead Level 2 (4H 563B)
 - Scaling the Heights Level 3 (4H 563C)
- Available from <http://www.4-hmall.org/Product/4->

4-H Record Book

4-H Record Books give members an opportunity to record events and reflect on their experiences. For each project, members document their experiences, learning and development.

4-H Record Books also teach members record management skills and encourage them to set goals and develop a plan to meet those goals.

