



UC 4-H Agricultural Livestock (Animal Science) Education

We are proud of our rich history and that our research-backed youth development programs engage young people in reaching their fullest potential.

Since 1902, UC 4-H has been helping young people (aged 9 to 18) raise, care, breed, and show agricultural livestock animals. Thousands of young people enroll in UC 4-H animal science projects annually (like beef, sheep, swine, goats, chickens, quail, rabbits, turkeys, horses).

The science knowledge and skills learned in UC 4-H animal science projects benefit youth from urban, rural, and suburban communities, not just those who decide to pursue an agriculture education or enter an agricultural career.

These UC 4-H animal science projects result in improved scientific literacy and positive youth development. Youth learn skills that provide the foundation for successful, healthy development such as leadership, public speaking, goal setting, responsibility, empathy, and caring.



I have now completed three swine projects while in 4-H ... My first year I learned the basics of caring for pigs, but this past year I have learned about being competitive and what it takes to get there...I know that if I were ever to have a problem while raising pigs I could call my swine leader and he would be there to help me...I have learned how to administer shots to animals and I feel confident when I do so.

– Tyler, senior 4-H member from Napa County

Care and Treatment of Animals

In UC 4-H animal science projects, youth take responsibility for the care and treatment—husbandry and welfare—of their animals. UC 4-H expects that animals will be cared for and treated in a responsible manner. Youth learn the proper care and treatment of animals as developed through research and industry-tested practices. Youth learn and practice bio-security measures to reduce the risks of disease transmission.

UC 4-H encourages fairs, shows, and exhibitions to provide hand washing facilities, manage human-animal interactions, and inform visitors about safe conduct with animals.

As a requirement for entry, all animal exhibitors complete *Youth for the Quality Care of Animals* training.

UC 4-H projects help youth learn about animal husbandry but UC 4-H does not own, nor is responsible, for animals directly.

Livestock Exhibition at Fairs

- Fairs provide opportunities for members to showcase, exhibit, and demonstrate their project work, received feedback, and be recognized for their accomplishments.
- Fair participation, however, is not a requirement for UC 4-H involvement, nor should fairs be considered as a validation of the learning experience.
- UC 4-H livestock project members have the choice to not sell their market animal.
- California's fairs are managed independently from UC 4-H and governed by the [California Department of Food and Agriculture \(CDFA\) Fairs & Expositions](#).

Preparing for the Fair

- Each fair will define their rules which can be more restrictive than CDFA state rules.
- UC 4-H members should confirm requirements – and understand terminology (see box below) – specific to the livestock auction (e.g., rules for declaring intent to sell).
- UC 4-H members should learn about: purpose of raising livestock animals and their importance in agriculture; quality of care they need to provide to their animals; what they have learned while preparing their animals for fair; and differences in public opinion about raising market animals for fair.

During the Fair

- UC 4-H members need to clean their animal's pen each morning so bedding is fresh; make sure clean water is always available for their animals; check on their animals throughout the day to ensure they have water, can move around pen freely (if not in tie-out barn) and is not experiencing any distress (e.g., blanket caught on leg, water bucket tipped over, etc.); and secure animal pens with gate latches during day and overnight.
- UC 4-H projects should display or provide educational material(s) about quality animal care and husbandry practices.
- UC 4-H encourages youth to engage with fairgoers asking respectful, curious, and genuine questions about their project.
- UC 4-H advises youth to report any person(s) that are making them uncomfortable to an adult or fair management especially if they are doing the following: asking very direct or aggressive questions, taking video or excessive pictures of children without permission.



LIVESTOCK TERMINOLOGY AT FAIRS

MARKET ANIMAL: Beef, sheep, swine, goat (large animals) and poultry, quail meat pen, rabbit meat pen, single fryer rabbit and turkeys (small animals), raised for the purpose of becoming food products for consumers.

MARKET READY: A term that defines the amount of fat cover a market animal has and determines if an animal is ready to be harvested.

TERMINAL SALE: A sale in which the market ready animals exhibited at the Fair are to be sent to a processing facility and harvested following the conclusion of the auction/fair. Transportation to the processing facility is organized by the Fair.

NON-TERMINAL SALE: A sale in which the market ready and/or breeding animals may be picked up alive by the buyer following the conclusion of the auction.