

University of California Cooperative Extension

4-H ANIMAL SCIENCE PROJECT GUIDE

Beef

The purpose of the 4-H animal science program is to provide an opportunity for personal growth and development of the young person. A secondary purpose is to teach 4-H members how to feed, fit, select and manage the animals they own. In the process of feeding and caring for an animal, 4-H members have the opportunity to develop many positive life skills.

The 4-H project leader can be of great assistance in developing the member's initiative, pride, and abilities as well as an appreciation toward animals. As a leader you will find a host of "tools" to use in developing the members skills; some of these are:

- ✦ 4-H lending library
- ✦ Resource leaders and community members
- ✦ Junior/teen leaders
- ✦ State and national breed associations
- ✦ County fairs and shows
- ✦ County trainings and events
- ✦ Members' parents
- ✦ Project proficiencies

As a 4-H project leader you will recognize that:

- not every idea will come directly from the project literature.
- each member is an individual and will have a unique learning style.
- if an adult does any part of the work necessary for a successful project the youth does not have that opportunity.
- members may need help halter breaking a steer or sheering a lamb. The idea is for parents and leaders to allow the member do all they are capable of doing.
- junior/teen leaders make excellent assistants. (In general, the junior leader assists an adult leader and an adult leader assists a teen leader.).

The following month-by-month guide will hopefully provide the first year leader with ideas for successful projects, as well as reminders for the experienced leader. It should be recognized that these are only ideas and are not intended as a strict set of rules to follow throughout the year. You, as a 4-H volunteer, may desire to change some of these ideas to another month, use these as a spring board for other ideas, or in some cases not use them at all. The *Project Leader Worksheet* will assist you in planning your project for the upcoming year.

Each member should receive instruction on selection, housing, feeding and routine care of the animal *before* it is purchased. This way the members will better understand the cost, time commitment and responsibility they are accepting.

BEEF

SEPTEMBER

1. Contact UC Extension 4-H office for list of who is enrolled and who will serve as a Junior/Teen Leader in Market and Breeding Beef.
2. At first project meeting collect an up to date, Medical Release Form (4-H 1109) for each participant.
3. Alert members and their parents to steer sales, and other resources to secure market steers.
4. For steers and heifers already purchased, review internal and external parasites and controls.
5. Instruct members on vitamin/mineral deficiencies and vaccinations.
6. Instruct members on breeds, conformation and selection.
7. Discuss how to participate in the Proficiency Program and County Presentation Day.

OCTOBER

1. Continue assisting members in locating and buying market and show animals.
2. Discuss with members and parents the cost of market animals, figure a feeding budget, and possible loan sources if necessary.
3. Discuss feeding program, grooming, and halter training.
4. Review rate-of-gain and market weight.
5. Assist members in starting project record keeping.
6. Discuss fences, feeders, watering systems, and shelter.
7. Review the importance of feeding, on time, every day, seven days a week.
8. Alert members to spray animals periodically for lice.
9. Check 4-H Lending Library for project reference materials.

NOVEMBER

1. Contact UC Extension 4-H office for an updated list of who is enrolled in the project and who will serve as a Junior/Teen Leader.
2. Review with members what is, and the importance of, adequate winter quarters.
3. Review with each member their personal goals for this project.
4. Consult with breeding project members about winter pasture and shelter.
5. Be sure calves are on proper feed.
6. Dehorn all steers if not previously done.
7. Discuss permanent identification, and different methods of identification.

DECEMBER

1. Plan project tour to see how animals are progressing, and are broke to lead and tie.
2. Check that hoof and other routine maintenance is up-to-date.
3. Check what, and how much, feed each animal is receiving.
4. Begin holding practice judging activities or skill-a-thon.
5. Review proper methods for safely transporting animals to shows or fairs.
6. Have each member assemble a barn emergency kit for both animals and humans.
7. Discuss breeding procedures with breeding projects members.

JANUARY

1. Discuss the importance of exercise, and why all animals need some exercise.
2. Continue judging activities/skill-a-thon, using live animals when possible.
3. Discuss topics and ideas for County Presentation Day.
4. Have members report on rate-of-gain.
5. Maternity quarters should be discussed, for members with breeding projects.

FEBRUARY

1. Have members continue training calves to lead, tie and practice setting them up.
2. Check that members have entered County Presentation Day.
3. Arrange for a field day with another project to have practice judging/skill-a-thon.
4. Have members report on rate of gain.
5. Plan a community service activity related to the project.
6. Review signs of illness and medicine to have on hand.

MARCH

1. Review conformation, show quality, and wholesale meat cuts.
2. Arrange a field trip to the Junior Grand National Livestock Show or other livestock shows.
3. Start planning educational display for Lake County Fair.
4. Discuss bio-security and how to keep animals healthy and safe.
5. Discuss project record completion, and other requirements for showing or selling at Lake County Fair.

APRIL

1. Plan project tour to check fences, pasture, shelter, etc., for all project animals.

2. Stress “misting down” steers and heifers in the evenings and wet curl. Brush until dry.
3. Each member should attend/participate in a minimum of one hour of animal ethics training.
4. Discuss the Mandatory Steer Day for Lake County fair (see exhibitor Handbook).

MAY

1. Stress keeping animals cool in warmer months to come.
2. Discuss fly control and arrange for animals’ hooves to be trimmed
3. Continue recording rate-of-gain.
4. Hold fitting and showing activities.
5. Encourage members to attend up-coming fairs and show.
6. Have members start marketing to buyers for the Lake County Fair Jr. Auction.
7. Advise members of special fair awards and recognition.

JUNE

1. Encourage member to continue grooming as previously outlined.
2. Advise members of “due date” on project records, and procedure for fair entry form signature.
3. Encourage members and parents to read the Lake County Fair Exhibitor Handbook.

JULY

1. Help members create a “check list” of supplies to take to fairs.
2. Set up barn work schedule for members to have at fairs.
3. Discuss feeding, watering and stall maintenance at the fair.
4. Make sure members have entry forms complete and turned in on time.
5. Sit down with Junior/Teen Leader to discuss “wrap-up” of year’s activities.

AUGUST

1. Continue fly control in breeding projects.
2. Finish educational display for Lake County Fair.
3. Plan for group competition at fairs.
4. Discuss possibility of irrigated pasture to be sown in fall.
5. Continue project records and encourage members to re-enroll in project.
6. Continue recruiting buyers for the auction.
7. Discuss requirements, tips and ideas for the Lake County fair:

- a. Showmanship, uniform requirements.
- b. Proper methods for safely transporting animals to fair.
- c. Weigh-in, thank you notes and awards ceremony
- d. Everyone selling at auction needs to be a Runner
- e. Clean Stall and Educational Display Award
- f. Stay in uniform after they have sold their animal and help the duration of the Jr. Livestock Auction.

Several of the animal science projects have Project Proficiencies as a part of the learning experience. They provide youth opportunities to sample a broad array of experiences, measure personal progress, and become self-directed learners. They provide a standard of excellence where members are recognized for knowledge and skills they have mastered. The Project Proficiency may be used as a guideline for 4-H volunteers to enhance and expand project content and experiences. Each proficiency level will help members set goals, record their successes, and be recognized for their work. Each level can take more than one year to complete. Members are not expected to complete a level each year. In some projects, more than one level can be completed in a year if they are highly motivated. For additional information about the proficiency program refer to the *Leader Tips for Utilizing the 4-H Project Proficiency Program*.

Resources available at the UC Cooperative Extension office:

4-H Lending Library - located at the UCCE Office

Learning Laboratory Kit

4-H Club Member & Parent Expectations – (project and fair participation requirements)

Teen Leaders

Other 4-H Project Leaders

UCCE website: <http://celake.ucdavis.edu>

Project Proficiency

California State 4-H Website:

Parts Identification Poster <http://ca4h.org/4hresource/forms>

University of California, Davis website:

Animal Science <http://animalscience.ucdavis.edu>

Safety Notes http://danrec.ucdavis.edu/ehs/safety_notes/

For additional resources contact the 4-H staff at the UCCE office:

707/263-6838,

UCCE Office, 883 Lakeport Blvd., Lakeport CA 95453

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