

# *University of California Cooperative Extension*

## **4-H ANIMAL SCIENCE PROJECT GUIDE** **SHEEP**

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.

# **SHEEP**

## **SEPTEMBER**

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

## **OCTOBER**

1. Review what supplies, feed, and shelter, each member will need to have before purchasing an animal.
2. Discuss with members and parents the cost of market animals, figure a feeding budget and possible sources for a loan if necessary.
3. Discuss nutrition needs, types of feed, feeding program, grooming, and safe handling.
4. Discuss breeding procedures with members having breeding projects.
5. Review importance of feeding same time, every day, seven days a week.
6. 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. Continue assisting members in locating market and show animals.
3. Assist members in starting project record keeping.
4. Consult with breeding project members about winter pasture and shelter.
5. Be sure breeding animals are on proper feed.
6. Discuss lamb scrapies tags, permanent identification, and other methods of identification.

## **DECEMBER**

1. Plan breeding project tour to see all project animals and facilities.
2. Discuss hoof care and maintenance.
3. Plan a field trip to UC Hopland Field Station during lambing season.
4. Begin holding practice judging activities or skill-a-thon.
5. Have each member assemble a barn emergency kit for both sheep and humans.
6. Discuss breeding procedures and lambing quarters with breeding projects members.
7. Review with each member their personal goals for this project.

## **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. Discuss rate-of-gain and market weights.

## **FEBRUARY**

1. Check that members have entered County Presentation Day.
2. Arrange for a field day with another project for a judging/skill-a-thon.
3. Plan a field trip to Junior Grand National or to other livestock shows.
4. Review signs of illness and medicine to have on hand.
5. Plan a community service activity related to the project.

## **MARCH**

1. Review conformation, show quality and wholesale meat cuts.
2. Arrange a field trip to a livestock show, educational field day, or facility.
3. Continue locating market animals.
4. Start planning educational display for Lake County Fair.
5. Review Showmanship.

## **APRIL**

1. Plan project tour to check fences, pasture, shelter, etc., for all project animals.
2. Each member should attend/participate in a minimum of one hour of animal ethics training.

3. Discuss bio-security and how to keep animals healthy.
4. Review daily grooming, handling and exercise.

### **MAY**

1. Stress keeping animals cool in hot summer months.
2. Discuss fly and parasite control.
3. Plan a project tour to check facilities and animals.
4. Discussing rate-of-gain and market weights.
5. Hold fitting and showmanship activities.
6. Encourage members to show or attend up-coming shows or fairs.
7. Discuss sheering and when to shear for Lake County Fair.
8. Have members start marketing to buyers for the Lake County Fair Auction.
9. Advise members of special fair awards and recognition.

### **JUNE**

1. Advise members of “due date” on project records, and procedure for fair entry form signature.
2. Encourage member to continue grooming as previously outlined.
3. Encourage members and parents to read the Lake County Fair Exhibitor Handbook.
4. Have members report and record rate-of-gain
5. Plan a project tour to weigh, check facilities and animals
6. Discuss Bio-security and how to keep animals healthy and safe.

### **JULY**

1. Encourage members and parents to read the Lake County Fair Exhibitor Handbook.
2. Work with Junior/Teen Leader to discuss “wrap-up” of year’s activities.
3. Help members create a “check list” of supplies to take to fairs.
4. Continue recording rate-of-gain.
5. All requirements for show or sell at fair should be complete.

### **AUGUST**

1. Continue fly control.
2. Set up barn work schedule for members to have at fairs.

3. Discuss feeding, watering and pen cleaning at the fair.
4. Plan a project tour to weigh animals.
5. Plan for project or group competition at fairs.
6. Continue project records and encourage members to re-enroll in project.
7. Continue recruiting buyers for the auction.
8. 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

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/](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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