



PROJECT ESSENTIALS

LIVESTOCK: LARGE STOCK

VOL.1



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
Cooperative Extension



AZ# 1906-2021
Published August 2021

Project Essentials Livestock Fact Sheets

Large Stock Vol. 1:

Beef, Market Goat, Horse, Market Sheep, Swine

How to Read “Project Essentials” Fact Sheets

The goal of the “Project Essentials” sheets is to provide a basic resource for new 4-H members and parents to get started in a livestock project. Livestock projects can be challenging and it is the goal of these tip sheets to provide first steps and basic knowledge on your project’s needs. The following information should be utilized by families to foster a youth’s ‘learning to learn’ skills. There are several key livestock boarding and feeding requirements discussed, in addition to cost estimates for each type of animal. You will also see an “additional resources” and “local resources” section. The additional resources are links to examples within a greater body of resource material – again this is not a complete resource, but a starting point. The local resources section is very important – getting involved in your local community will provide a 4-H member with a rich body of knowledge and experience. 4-H Livestock Projects provide a great opportunity for young people to interact with peers and caring adults.

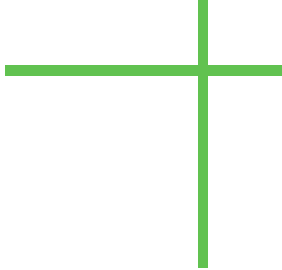
What skills and experience does a 4-H Member gain from raising a livestock animal?

Livestock projects provide day-to-day experiences that enable youth to learn new skills and, most importantly, ‘learn how to learn.’ We expect 4-Hers to gain abilities and knowledge in:

- Marketable skills for many careers
- Planning, organization, goal setting, and record-keeping
- Wise use of resources
- Critical thinking, problem-solving, and decision making
- Learning to learn
- Stress management and personal safety
- Self-discipline, self-motivation, and self-responsibility
- Empathy and emotional regulation

What are the long-term outcomes for 4-H youth?

Livestock projects provide challenges that enable youth to gain social skills, learn valuable life-skills, and gain content expertise in career fields in a controlled context. These efforts allow young people to develop a sense of responsibility and maturity. Working through these difficult projects will have profound outcomes, not only as a 4-H member, but as thriving adults. We expect 4-H animal projects to foster:

- 
- Academic motivation and success
 - Social competence
 - Personal standards
 - Contribution to others
 - Connection with others
 - Personal responsibility.

Completing a 4-H Livestock Project is a proud accomplishment, and our goal in Extension is to help youth achieve success. Please feel free to share these documents, and contact county-level 4-H Staff with further questions and guidance.

Acknowledgments: We would like to thank the following 4-H volunteers for providing on these sheets.

- Eric Treece – Coconino County
- Karen Donaldson-Webb – Gila County
- Tucker Guilliam – Gila County
- Micaela McGibbon, Pima County
- Carter Ham, Pima County
- Makayla Smith, Pima County
- Kristen McGurk, Pima County
- Irish Coussens, Pima County
- Lisa Benson, Pima County
- Heather Wood, Pima County
- Jodie Bagley, Pima County

The input from these volunteers has added great value to these documents and produced a better resource for 4-H youth.

Contents

Project Essentials Fact Sheet: Beef	4
Additional Resources:	6
Project Essentials Fact Sheet: Market Goat	8
Additional Resources:	9
Project Essentials Fact Sheet: Horse Project	11
Additional Resources:	12
Project Essentials Fact Sheet: Market Sheep	14
Additional Resources:	16
Project Essentials Fact Sheet: Swine	18
Additional Resources:	20

Project Essentials Fact Sheet: Beef

Congratulations on taking on the beef project! Livestock projects require smart investment, informed management, and caring oversight. Here are a few helpful tips on preparing for your animal, maintaining health, safety, and managing your project for success.

Learn the Ground Rules: Reach out to your 4-H Project Leader or County 4-H Staff to obtain a copy of your County Premium Book or Rule Book for the Project. In this book, you should be able to find a list of requirements for raising your projects. Talk to your project leader or county extension staff about dates of tagging, and any other important fair dates.

Prior to purchasing your Market Beef Project, be sure to read a copy of your County's rules in a 4-H Premium Book. Each county will have specific dates, deadlines, and rules pertaining to raising a Market Beef Project. For example, in some counties in Arizona, a Market Beef Project can only be a Steer, or castrated male bovine, whereas in other counties, a Market Beef Project can also be a Market Heifer, or a female bovine that was not selected as a herd replacement for breeding. **It is extremely important to first familiarize yourself with your County's rules!**

Youth for the Quality Care of Animals training is a great class to take before your purchase your animal. In some counties, it is required before you can tag your animal. Talk to your county 4-H extension staff to find out the deadlines and class availabilities.

Preparing to purchase and selecting your Market Beef Project:

- Remember that the Market Beef Project is a financial investment, costs associated with the project include purchasing the beef animal, purchasing equipment (one-time cost), and purchasing feed (recurring cost).
 - Cost of Market Beef Project: This varies however the suggested price range for first-year exhibitors is \$800-\$1,500.
 - Equipment Cost: \$400-\$800+.
 - Feed Cost: \$1,800-\$2,500.
- To determine the optimal purchase weight for your steer or heifer (allowed only in certain counties), you must determine the following factors:
 - A target weight to achieve at the time of your County Fair, this should be between 1,000-1,300 lbs. Make sure you read your County 4-H Premium Book to identify your fair's minimum and maximum weights.
 - The number of days until your county fair.

- Calculate the Average Daily Gain: this is the rate of weight gained by your animal per day. Usually for Market Beef, this is between 2.0-2.75 lbs. a day.
- Now use this simple equations below to discover how much your steers should weigh at purchase:
 - (Days until fair) x (Average daily gain) = Pounds of gain before fair
 - (Desired weight) – (Pound of gain needed before fair) = Ideal beginning weight

**Beginning Weights can vary depending on the length of time of ownership in your county. Be sure to reference your local rule book to ensure that you are following specific timelines and rules.

- Steers or Heifers purchase weights should be between 500 and 800 lbs. The animal should be purchased 6-9 months before the county fair or expo.
- Crossbred club calves have become very popular in the show circuit. A few breeds that are well selected for showing include Angus, Hereford, Shorthorn, and Charolais.

Make sure you have the right equipment & facilities:

- Livestock Housing: cattle pens should be constructed of materials that are safe for the animal, but also keep out potential predators that may harm your animal. Additionally, cattle pens should have proper ventilation that allows for airflow. A shade structure should allow for the steer to have a place to cool down in the summer, but also stay warm in cooler temperatures. Cattle grow exponentially larger from the time you acquire them to when they are market-ready. Be sure that your pen is large enough to accommodate a 1200+ pound animal.
- Common equipment includes: Rope Halter, Show Stick, A Scotch & Curry Comb, Rice Root Brush, Water Trough or Automatic Waterer, Livestock Pen, Pooper Scooper, Feed Equipment, Think of a method for transporting animal, including a trailer, or finding a friend, leader, or neighbor who can help with transportation, A fitting stand, Livestock Blower, Various adhesives and other show products.

Maintaining your animal:

- Isolate new animals to ensure that they don't spread diseases to other animals in the pen
- Keep it clean! Make sure that the pen, feeders, and drinkers are cleaned on a regular basis. Sanitize surfaces with a water bleach solution (4:1 ratio)
- Feeding your steer properly is important. You must:
 - Feed a balanced ration.
 - Be sure to talk to your project leader about adding salt to a steer's diet.
 - Provide plenty of clean water.
 - Feed on a regular schedule.
 - Make sure your water and feed tubs are clean.

- Healthy nutrition for your steer consists of water, carbohydrates, protein, minerals, and vitamins. Talk with your project leader to determine specific ration types and schedules.
- Find the right ration. Steers are fed rations that are formulated by combining feeds that will maximize nutrient intake and rate of gain.
- Steers convert about 7 lbs. of feed into 1 lb. of gain.
- Consider using a bagged feed that is appropriate for your animal's growth stage. For example, cattle below 1000 pounds should be fed a Grower Ration that has higher crude protein to assist with muscle development, whereas cattle over 1000 pounds may be fed a Finisher Ration to develop more marbling.
- Cattle need regular access to a grass-based hay such as Bermuda to promote rumen health. High protein hays such as Alfalfa should be avoided as they can lead to bloating issues.
- Access to cool clean water is required.
- Weigh your steer regularly. This helps you evaluate his growth, update your feeding regiment, and achieve your goals!
 - If you do not have access to a scale an alternative is a beef measuring tape.
- Make sure to work with your animal every day, or as often as possible, the more you work with your animal at home the more it will show in the show ring! Your project leader and other 4-H members will have a lot of good advice, but in general:
 - Train your steer to lead.
 - Make sure to care for your steer's coat.
 - Get practice showing and interacting with other animals by attending local practice shows, jackpots, or clinics. Ask your Beef Project Leader or Extension Staff member for a list of opportunities.

Find a Veterinarian - For any health concerns make sure to contact your local veterinarian.

Conclusion:

Raising a Beef Project is a great way to start your 4-H experience! Although cattle are challenging, they can have fun personalities and provide an excellent opportunity to learn valuable life skills. At all times, remember that you are aware of the rules of your County 4-H Program and abide by them, communicate with your 4-H Project Leader, follow the quality assurance standards set forth by the YQCA class that you attended either online or in-person, and do not be afraid to ask questions!

Additional Resources:

- Cooperative Extension Beef resources: <https://extension.arizona.edu/4h/project/beef>
- YQCA Training - <http://yqca.org/>
- Look into cattle breed associations - for example <https://redangus.org/junior-red-angus/>
- Look into livestock shows and camps for practice/education opportunities - a good example is the Arizona National Livestock Show - <https://www.anls.org/>

- Arizona Department of Agriculture for transporting and owner Information: [Information on Arizona Department of Ag, Seasonal Pass Requirements for Livestock](#)
- Cooperative Extension website: <https://extension.arizona.edu/> (educational content, staff contact information, event dates, etc.)

Local Resources:

My Project Leader name _____

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

My County Agent name _____

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

Two 4-Hers that have done this project before me are _____ and _____.

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

My county 4-H extension website is <https://extension.arizona.edu/4h/>(your county name here)

Project Essentials Project Fact Sheet: Market Goat

Congratulations on taking on your market goat project! Livestock Projects require smart investment, time management, and caring oversight. Here are a few helpful tips on preparing a space for your animal, maintaining health, safety, and managing your project for success.

Selecting and purchasing your animal:

- **Learn the Ground Rules:** Reach out to your 4-H Project Leader or County 4-H Staff to obtain a copy of your County Premium Book or Rule Book for the Project. In this book, you should be able to find a list of requirements for raising your projects.
- **Develop a project budget:** 4-H members should create a budget for their projects in order to guide their decisions when selecting animals, housing and transporting animals, feeding animals, and establishing a Veterinarian. It is best to create a list of possible expenses first in order to determine how much “Income” is needed to raise a market goat project. Common Expense Areas include:
 - Purchasing a Market Goat: The costs of goats are variable by county and by quality level. According to a survey of 4-H members, the average cost of purchasing a market goat project was approximately \$350 with a low-end cost of \$200 per goat and a high-end cost of \$750.
 - Feed, feeders, water containers
 - Shelter, shade, fencing
 - Transportation - depending on the number/size of your animal you may need access to a trailer when mature.
- Make sure you have a vaccination record from the breeder.
- Purchase weight depends on how many weeks until showing, deadlines for animal ownership, and the weight ranges accepted at your show. Be sure to check the rules at the events you want to attend. Purchase weights tend to be between 16 and 40 pounds, and goats raised under ideal conditions can be expected to gain 2-3 pounds per week.
- Goats can be properly finished between 80 and 120 pounds, check with your auctions for minimum and maximum market weights. Be sure to check the head, neck, canon, and body lengths of animals you are considering purchasing to estimate proper finishing weights. Many shows are flexible with the goat weight range because goats can show well with small or large frame sizes.
- A few breeds well selected for meat are the South African Boer, Nubian, Spanish, Tennessee, Tennessee Myotonic, Kiko and Savanna.
- Make sure you have the right facilities and transportation. Your goat will need a barn or shed that is safe from predators, cool in the summer and warm in the winter with a minimum of 15 square feet per goat. Off the ground feeders and drinkers should be easily accessible. Larger animals are transported most easily on a trailer.

- Fences should be 42 inches or greater, goats like to climb so make sure that tree branches or other elements in the pen do not provide an easy escape route.
- Tools required include cleaning brushes, grooming brushes, feed bins/drinkers, hoof trimmers, electric trimmers, halters, collars/and or show chains, weighing scale.
- Youth for the Quality Care of Animals training is required – talk to your county project leader or county 4-H staff to find out the deadline.
- Be sure to check with your project leader and county 4-H staff about any other deadlines or important procedures.

.**Beginning Weights can vary depending on the length of time of ownership in your county. Be sure to reference your local rule book to ensure that you are following specific timelines and rules – a limiting factor will often be the required presence of milk teeth.

Maintaining your animal:

- Isolate new animals to ensure that they don't spread diseases to other animals in the pen.
- Keep it clean! Make sure that the pen, feeders, and drinkers are cleaned on a regular basis. Sanitize surfaces with a water bleach solution (4:1 ration)
- Make sure that there is plenty of cool, clean water – expect a goat to drink 1-3 gallons a day.
- Talk to your project leader about the use of salt.
- Weigh regularly to make sure that your animal is on track for show weights.
- Be sure to work with a veterinarian to ensure the animal is healthy, vaccination schedules are followed, and withdrawal times are sufficient before sale.
- Over time your animal will get parasites – your job is to keep a close eye for any issues and manage these issues early with a veterinarian and your project leader.
- Trim hooves as needed to prevent discomfort.
- Find opportunities such as camps and shows for practicing with your animal, ANLS is a good example of what to look for.
- **Find a Veterinarian** - For any health concerns make sure to contact your local veterinarian.

Conclusion:

Raising a Goat Project is a great way to start your 4-H experience! Although goats can be challenging, they can have fun personalities and provide an excellent opportunity to learn valuable life skills. At all times, remember that you are aware of the rules of your County 4-H Program and abide by them, communicate with your 4-H Project Leader, follow the quality assurance standards set forth by the YQCA class that you attended either online or in-person, and do not be afraid to ask questions!

Additional Resources:

- Cooperative Extension Market Goat resources:
<https://extension.arizona.edu/4h/project/meat-goat>
- YQCA Training - <http://yqca.org/>
- Look for camps and shows for practice and education, a good example is the Arizona National Livestock Show: <https://www.anls.org/livestock-show/>
- Arizona Department of Agriculture [Importing Goats](#)
- American Boer Goat breed standards: <http://abga.org/abga-education/breed-standards/>
- Cooperative Extension website: <https://extension.arizona.edu/> (educational content, staff contact information, event dates, etc.)

Local Resources:

My Project Leader name _____

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

My County Agent name _____

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

Two 4-Hers that have done this project before me are _____ and _____.

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

My county 4-H extension website is <https://extension.arizona.edu/4h/>(your county name here)

Project Essentials Fact Sheet: Horse Project

Congratulations on taking on the horse project! The Horse Project requires smart investment, informed management, and caring oversight. Here are a few helpful tips on preparing for your horse, maintaining health, safety, and managing your project for success.

Preparing to purchase/lease your animal:

- You may lease or own your project animal.
- A 4-H Horse Project animal can be a horse, pony, or mule.
- Things to consider before purchasing your animal:
 - Age and experience of the rider.
 - Age and training of a prospective horse.
 - A rider that is younger with little to no experience will require a horse that is older and has more training.
 - Purpose of the horse. The horse that you purchase should be suitable for the events you wish to participate in i.e. jumping fences, running barrels, roping, etc.

There is not a specific breed you must purchase in order to participate in the horse project.

Difference between a Registered (papered) vs. Unregistered (grade) Horse:

- For many organizations, such as 4-H, a registered horse is not necessary in order to compete.
- If you wish to show in registered shows or some breed shows, you will need to purchase a horse that is registered with that association. Research this before purchase.
- If you plan on breeding horses, papered horses are usually of higher value.
- If you decide to purchase a registered horse make sure that the seller is in possession of the horse's registration papers, to ensure transferability.

Gender

- Arizona 4-H does not allow the use of Stallions at 4-H events.
- Geldings are at times the preferred choice due to their easy temperament as they do not experience hormonal mood changes such as mares and stallions.

Horses can cost anywhere from \$1,000 to \$20,000. The purchasing cost depends on what your budget is and what you are looking for. It is common for the first horse purchase will cost between \$1,500-\$5,000.

Keep in mind that housing and feeding costs will rapidly exceed most purchase costs, so be sure to research where you will keep and feed your animal! Your project leader is a good resource for this discussion.

- Other costs to consider:
 - Feed
 - Tack
 - Boarding/facility
 - Animal Care (teeth, farrier, veterinarian)

Make sure you have the right facilities! Stalls should be at least 10 feet by 10 feet, more is better. You will also need access to a turn out or pasture to keep your animal happy and healthy. Access to shade and clean water are a must. Talk to your project leaders about adding salt to your animal's diet.

Talk to your project leader or county extension staff about registration, ownership deadlines, and important fair dates.

Find a Veterinarian - For any health concerns make sure to contact your local veterinarian.

Learn the Ground Rules: Reach out to your 4-H Project Leader or County 4-H Staff to obtain a copy of your County and State Rule Book for the Project. In this book, you should be able to find a list of requirements for participating in projects with your horse.

Conclusion:

Working with a horse is a fulfilling and challenging way to participate in 4-H experience! Horses are a serious investment, and they provide an excellent opportunity to learn valuable life skills. At all times, remember that you are aware of the rules of your County 4-H Program and abide by them, communicate with your 4-H Project Leader, follow the quality assurance standards set forth by the YQCA class that you attended either online or in-person, and do not be afraid to ask questions!

Additional Resources:

- Cooperative Extension Horse Project resources:
<https://extension.arizona.edu/4h/project/horse>
- Look for camps and shows for practice and education, a good example is the Arizona National Livestock Show <https://www.anls.org/horseshow/>
- Arizona Department of Agriculture [Importing Horses](#)
- Informed Equestrian [Horse](#)
- Horse Biosecurity [Barn Smarts for Biosecurity: Tips for Keeping your Horse Safe and Healthy](#)
- Look into horse breed associations - for example <https://www.aqha.com>
- Cooperative Extension website: <https://extension.arizona.edu/> (educational content, staff contact information, event dates, etc.)

Local Resources:

My Project Leader name _____

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

My County Agent name _____

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

Two 4-Hers that have done this project before me are _____ and _____.

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

My county 4-H extension website is <https://extension.arizona.edu/4h/>(your county name here)

Project Essentials Fact Sheet: Market Sheep

Congratulations on deciding to participate in the 4-H Market Sheep Project. 4-H livestock projects require smart investment strategies, informed livestock management, and project oversight from caring adults. 4-H Projects are designed to provide valuable hands-on experiences to 4-H members, however adult guidance and interaction is required as well. Here are a few helpful tips on preparation for raising your animal, maintaining health, safety, and managing your project for success.

Preparing for your 4-H Market Sheep Project:

- **Learn the Ground Rules:** Reach out to your 4-H Project Leader or County 4-H Staff to obtain a copy of your County Premium Book or Rule Book for the Project. In this book, you should be able to find a list of requirements for raising your projects, including:
 - Ownership Deadlines & Ear Tagging Dates
 - Information County Specific Programs, such as county Bred & Fed Requirements.
 - Minimum Weights for your Market Sheep project. Some counties may have a maximum weight, however, most only have a maximum payout weight.
 - Specific age requirements including teeth checks for sheep meaning if a lamb still have their baby or “milk” teeth. Lambs older than 1 year of age will no longer have “milk” teeth and are usually considered too old in most junior livestock shows and sales.
 - Other pertinent rules and dates including show date, check-in/weigh-in date, and rules for show products and other pertinent info.
- **Develop a project budget:** 4-H members should create a budget for their projects in order to guide their decisions when selecting animals, housing and transporting animals, feeding animals, and establishing a Veterinarian. It is best to create a list of possible expenses first in order to determine how much “Income” is needed to raise a Market Sheep project. Common Expense Areas include:
 - Livestock Housing: Sheep pens should be safe from predators and have proper ventilation and shade.
 - Plumbing and Water Access. Troughs should be cleaned out regularly and ice should be broken up in cold weather.
 - Feeding sheep: Market Sheep projects are raised with the goal of being harvested for human consumption. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that they are fed a high-quality balanced ration. Work with your project leader to determine feed type, amount, and ration adjustments.
 - Feed Storage: Feed should be stored in a clean environment that is free of pests and promotes feed to stay fresh.

- Buying a sheep: The costs of sheep are variable by county and by quality level. According to a survey of 4-H members, the average cost of purchasing a Market Sheep project was approximately \$472.00 with a low-end cost of \$100 per sheep and a high-end cost of \$900 with national costs being even higher. As with purchasing other goods, finding a sheep project should match your budget.
- Transporting your sheep: Sheep projects are easier to transport at the beginning of the 4-H year in comparison to the end of the year. Young sheep can be transported in something as simple as a dog crate in the back of a SUV or Truck, whereas mature Market Sheep will require a trailer or lamb carrier in the back of a truck to be safely hauled. If a trailer is not available, consider asking your 4-H project leader or family friends about transportation concerns.
- Medical and Vet Costs: Sheep, like most animals need to be properly cared for in the event of illness and injury. It is a good idea to include in your project budget costs for a visit to a veterinarian as well as costs for medication needs such as regularly de-worming your sheep.

Selecting Your 4-H Market Sheep Project

- **Find a reputable sheep breeder in your area.** There are often animals for sale on social media platforms and personal column sites such as Facebook and Craigslist. It is recommended that you seek out a reputable livestock breeder who has experience selling animals to 4-H members with the intent of exhibiting them at a county fair.
- **Select a lamb that is the correct weight and size.** Market Sheep projects are evaluated based upon their weight in reference to other sheep. The ideal market weight for a sheep lies between 110-140 pounds dependent on the judge. Most 4-H members purchase their lambs at 2 1/2-3 months of age with sheep being anywhere from 50-75 pounds. Avoid selecting lambs that will be less than 5 months old and no older than 8 months by the time of your county fair.
- **Select a growth-oriented Market Sheep:** Professional judges evaluate livestock based upon priority traits that combine muscle and leanness with overall skeletal growth. Therefore, it is pertinent to select a lamb that is bigger boned, larger framed, well-balanced, and easy moving. An animal that can move and has the capacity to grow will produce a higher quality carcass.

Raising your Market Sheep:

Now that you have a plan and have selected your sheep project, it is important to complete your project by raising a high-quality animal! To do so, you can do the following:

- **Set a schedule and follow it:** Your sheep project should be cared for at least twice per day by ensuring timely access to food and clean water. Consider feeding your animal first thing in the morning and in the evening.
- **Keep a clean pen and animal:** Clean pens regularly to minimize hardware and debris to keep you sheep from eating foreign objects. Regularly clean out feed and hay bunk.

- **Regularly weigh your animal:** If possible, weigh your animal regularly to ensure that you are on target with your feeding program. you can change your feeding program to allow you to reach your target weight. Sheep should never be completely taken off feed and should never be restricted from access to water.
- **Use a Dewormer regularly:** Sheep are susceptible to internal parasites and may require a dewormer product to be administered regularly. Be sure that you are aware of withdrawal times/requirements for your sale.
- **Work with your animal regularly:** One-way Sheep showmanship can be practiced is by learning how to lead a lamb in a slow and calm manner.
- **Practice Biosecurity with your project:** Lambs often contract Ringworm/Club Lamb Fungus, so make sure to sanitize all equipment regularly.
- **Find a Veterinarian** - For any health concerns make sure to contact your local veterinarian.

•**Beginning Weights can vary depending on the length of time of ownership in your county. Be sure to reference your local rule book to ensure that you are following specific timelines and rules – a limiting factor will often be the required presence of milk teeth.

Conclusion:

Raising a Market Sheep is a great way to start your 4-H experience! Although sheep are challenging, they can have fun personalities and provide an excellent opportunity to learn valuable life skills. At all times, remember that you are aware of the rules of your County 4-H Program and abide by them, communicate with your 4-H Project Leader, follow the quality assurance standards set forth by the YQCA class that you attended either online or in-person, and do not be afraid to ask questions!

Additional Resources:

- Cooperative Extension Sheep Project resources: <https://extension.arizona.edu/4h/project/sheep>
- YQCA Training - <http://yqca.org/>
- Look for camps and shows for practice and education, a good example is the Arizona National Livestock Show <https://www.anls.org/horseshow/>
- Arizona Department of Arizona [Importing Sheep](#)
- Sheep associations: for example <https://sheepusa.org/researcheducation-onlineeducation-ssqa>
- Look for practice/educational camps and shows, a good example is Arizona National Livestock Show: <https://www.anls.org/livestock-show/>
- Cooperative Extension website: <https://extension.arizona.edu/> (educational content, staff contact information, event dates, etc.)

Local Resources:

My Project Leader name _____

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

My County Agent name _____

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

Two 4-Hers that have done this project before me are _____ and _____.

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

My county 4-H extension website is <https://extension.arizona.edu/4h/>(your county name here)

Project Essentials Fact Sheet: Swine

Congratulations on deciding to participate in the 4-H Swine Project. 4-H livestock projects require smart investment strategies, informed livestock management, and project oversight from caring adults. 4-H Projects are designed to provide valuable hands-on experiences to 4-H members, however adult guidance and interaction is required as well. Here are a few helpful tips on preparation for raising your animal, maintaining health, safety, and managing your project for success.

Preparing for your 4-H Swine Project:

- **Learn the Ground Rules:** Reach out to your 4-H Project Leader or County 4-H Staff to obtain a copy of your County Premium Book or Rule Book for the Project. In this book, you should be able to find a list of requirements for raising your projects, including:
 - Ownership Deadlines & Ear Tagging Dates
 - Information County Specific Programs, such as county Bred & Fed Requirements.
 - Maximum and Minimum Weights for your swine project.
 - Other pertinent rules and dates including show date, check-in/weigh-in date, and rules for show products and other pertinent info.
- Develop a budget, common expense areas include:
 - Livestock Housing: swine pens constructed of materials that are safe for the swine, but also keep out potential predators that may harm your animal. Additionally, swine pens should have proper ventilation and shade. Be sure that your pen is large enough to accommodate a 275+ pound animal.
 - Plumbing and Water Access: swine should always have access to cool, clean water.
 - Feeding a swine: Discuss ration nutrition and schedules with your project leader. Swine projects are raised to develop market animals that will eventually be harvested for human consumption. Therefore, it is of the utmost importance that they are fed a high-quality balanced ration. In general, you can estimate that swine convert feed at the rate of 3.5 pounds of feed to 1 pound of weight gain.
 - Feed Storage: Feed should be stored in a clean environment that is free of pests and keeps feed fresh.
 - Buying a Swine: The costs of swine are variable by county and by quality level. According to a survey of Pima County 4-H members, the average cost of purchasing a swine project was approximately \$522.00 with a low-end cost of \$250 per swine and a high-end cost of \$1,500.00.
 - Transporting your Swine: Swine projects are easier to transport at the beginning of the 4-H year in comparison to the end of the year. Young swine can be transported in something as simple as a dog crate in the back of a SUV or Truck, whereas mature market swine will require a trailer to be safely hauled.

- Medical and Vet Costs

Selecting Your 4-H Swine Project

- **Find a reputable swine breeder in your area:** It is recommended that you seek out a reputable livestock breeder who has experience selling animals to 4-H members with the intent of exhibiting them at a county fair.
- **Select a swine that is the correct weight and size:** The ideal market weight for a swine lies between 260-280 pounds dependent on the judge. Most 4-H programs purchase their animals 125 days prior to their weigh-in date for their exhibition. If you have more days or less days will affect how you feed your animal. It is estimated that most swine will convert 3.5 pounds of feed to 1 pound of gain. However, all animals are different. Check with your county/fair rule book to make sure your animal will be within the appropriate finishing weight range.
- **Select a growth-oriented market swine:** Professional judges evaluate livestock based upon priority traits that combine muscle and leanness with overall skeletal growth. Therefore, it is pertinent to select a young swine that is bigger boned, well-balanced, and easy moving. An animal that can move and has the capacity to grow will produce a higher quality carcass. In contemporary shows, crossbred swine tend to do very well, however other common market breeds include Hampshire, Yorkshire, Berkshire, Duroc, and any crosses of those breeds.

Raising your Market Swine:

Now that you have a plan and have selected your swine project, it is important to complete your project by raising a high-quality animal! To do so, you can do the following:

- **Set a schedule and follow it:** Your swine project should be cared for at least twice per day by ensuring timely access to food and clean water. Consider feeding your animal first thing in the morning and in the evening.
- **Keep a clean pen and animal:** Clean pens regularly to minimize hardware and debris to keep you swine from eating foreign objects. Additionally, clean pens will reduce the likeliness of intestinal worms and will reduce flies and smell.
- **Regularly weigh your animal:** If possible, weigh your animal regularly to ensure that you are on target with your feeding program. Work with your project leader to adjust feeding schedules based on weights.
- **Use a Dewormer regularly:** Swine are susceptible to internal parasites and may require a dewormer product to be administered regularly. Daily observations of your animal will help you know if your animal is not growing, has irregular hair patterns, or has visible worms in its manure. Questions can be asked to your 4-H Project Leader or local veterinarian. Ensure that all withdrawal times are met prior to harvesting the swine project.
- **Work with your animal regularly:** All 4-H livestock are exhibited in a show ring to be evaluated by a judge. Most market animals are bred to exhibit muscle and so exercising is not so much about building muscle, but more so about teaching kids and animals how to properly exhibit.

Swine showmanship can be practiced by learning how to drive a hog in a slow and calm manner using a show stick of some type for a 25-35 minutes length of time. You can set up two chairs or cones and move the swine in a figure eight motion between the obstacles.

- **Practice Biosecurity with your project:** Biosecurity is very important with your livestock project! New animals should be isolated from other animals on your property for 30 days of being purchased or after traveling to a livestock show. Additionally, be sure to restrict visitors to your property and to sanitize all equipment regularly.
- **Find a Veterinarian** - For any health concerns make sure to contact your local veterinarian.

Conclusion:

Raising a swine is a great way to start your 4-H experience! Although swine are challenging, they can have fun personalities and provide an excellent opportunity to learn valuable life skills. At all times, remember that you are aware of the rules of your County 4-H Program and abide by them, communicate with your 4-H Project Leader, follow the quality assurance standards set forth by the YQCA class that you attended either online or in-person, and do not be afraid to ask questions!

Additional Resources:

- Cooperative Extension Swine Project resources: <https://extension.arizona.edu/4h/project/swine>
- YQCA Training - <http://yqca.org/>
- Livestock association [Swine](#)
- Show Right, Next Level, trainings/education resources
- Arizona Department of Agriculture [Importing Pigs](#)
- Swine Veterinarians [American Association of Swine Veterinarians](#)
- Get a copy of your county rule book
- Cooperative Extension website: <https://extension.arizona.edu/> (educational content, staff contact information, event dates, etc.)

Local Resources:

My Project Leader name _____

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

My County Agent name _____

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

Two 4-Hers that have done this project before me are _____ and _____.

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

•Email address _____

•Phone number _____

My county 4-H extension website is <https://extension.arizona.edu/4h/>(your county name here)



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
Cooperative Extension

AUTHORS

Joshua Farella

Assistant Agent, 4-H Youth Development

Joshua Moore

Assistant Agent, 4-H Youth Development

Juan Arias

Assistant Agent, FRTEP

Renee Carstens

Gila County Director

Ashley Jeffers-Sample

Assistant Agent, 4-H Youth Development

CONTACT

Joshua Farella

farella1@email.arizona.edu

This information has been reviewed by University faculty.

Other titles from Arizona Cooperative Extension can be found at:

extension.arizona.edu/pubs

Any products, services or organizations that are mentioned, shown or indirectly implied in this publication do not imply endorsement by The University of Arizona.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Jeffrey C. Silvertooth, Associate Dean & Director, Extension & Economic Development, Division of Agriculture, Life and Veterinary Sciences, and Cooperative Extension, The University of Arizona. The University of Arizona is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution. The University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or genetic information in its programs and activities