



# **JUNIOR BEEF PROJECT GUIDEBOOK**



**Species-Chair:**

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<b>IMPORTANT DATES</b>		<b>IMPORTANT INFO</b>	
Registration	March 1 <sup>st</sup>	Maximum Weight @ Fair	700 lbs
Birth Date	After January 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2021		
Possession	May 15 <sup>th</sup>	Record Book (Both Market and show only)	Required
Tagging	June 2021	Thank You Note	Required

## **General Requirements**

- ◆ Participating youth must abide by all general rules and regulations listed in the Northwest Michigan 4-H Livestock Council's Member Guidebook. This includes, but is not limited to, Code of Conducts, registration deadlines, showmanship and market requirements, Record book and Thank you Letters etc.
- ◆ To participate in a 4-H market junior beef project, youth must attain the age of eight (8) or older by January 1<sup>st</sup> of that calendar year and be registered with 4honline.
- ◆ Registration is due to the Northwest Michigan 4-H Livestock Council Auction Committee no later than the March council meeting.
- ◆ Each 4-H market junior beef participant may register an extra calf for \$10.00, to be paid on tagging day. The extra calf may only be used within the family that purchased the calf and only one (1) market calf may be brought to the fair per 4-H member. Bring your best calf!
- ◆ Youth are required to complete a project record book depicting their experience from beginning to end of the project. It is recommended that youth weigh and photograph their project at time of purchase.

## **Animal Requirements**

- ◆ All cattle MUST have an official radio frequency identification (RFID) electronic tag in their ear before they leave the farm on which they were born.
- ◆ Junior beef calves must be born on or after January 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year.
- ◆ Junior beef calves must be in possession or under the care of the 4-H member by May 15<sup>th</sup>.
- ◆ Calf can be a heifer or a steer.
  - Heifer calves will be judged in the same classes as the steers.
  - Junior beef steer calves need to be properly castrated and healed by fair. This should be completed at least 3-4 weeks before fair.
- ◆ Junior beef calf must be 100% beef breed (no dairy): Angus, Herford, Simmental, Shorthorn, Belted Galloway, Charolais, etc. The calf can be a cross of 2 or more beef breeds but cannot be crossed with a dairy breed.

- ◆ Not all beef breeds are naturally polled, calves that have horns need to be dehorned at least 2 weeks before fair. Horns cannot exceed 3" long.
- ◆ All junior beef calves must be vaccinated for the following: Bovine Rhinotracheitis (IBR), Parainfluenza 3 (PI3), and Bovine Respiratory Syncytial Virus (BRSV)
  - Suggested vaccines include (but not limited to): Inforce 3, Triangle 10 HB, Bovi-Shield Gold, Cattle Master Gold FP5 L5, or Express 5-HS
  - Be sure to ALWAYS carefully read and follow all instructions printed on the label.
  - Vaccines should be given early in the project to help prevent illness.
  - Proof of vaccination is required when unloading at the fair.
- ◆ Junior beef calves must be weaned off of milk at least 2 weeks before fair.
- ◆ Junior beef calves must weigh less than 700 pounds at fair check in. There is no minimum weight.

### **Fair Week Requirements**

- ◆ Protective boots are required at all times when working with your calf (tennis shoes or sandals are not permitted)
- ◆ Weigh-in takes place the first Saturday of fair.
- ◆ Youth are responsible for providing enough grain and hay to care for their calf throughout the entire week.
- ◆ No feed, feed bags, or supplies are to be left in the barn (everything must be stored at the campsite).
- ◆ Youth are responsible for feeding, watering, and caring for their animal the entire week.
- ◆ Youth are responsible for keeping their pens clean all week.
- ◆ Show Requirements:
  - Classes will be divided at the discretion of the species-chair.
  - Youth are required to show in the appropriate showmanship and market classes in order to auction their junior beef calf.
  - A leather show halter, show comb, and show stick are required for showing.
  - Use of false tail heads or adding hair or hemp is prohibited. Coloring agents may only be used on the legs and tail head. Use of powders is prohibited. No forced administration of fluids to create gut fill will be allowed.
- ◆ At the end of fair youth are responsible to:
  - Completely clean and scrape down pens
  - Pen boards need to be taken home or stored on the pallets at the end of the barns. All boards not taken home at the end of fair become the property of the fair.
  - Bars on the pen dividers need to be scrubbed and wiped down.

### **Helpful Info**

- ◆ Cost:
  - Most calves will cost between \$700 and \$1300. This will fluctuate with the current market prices for beef.
  - Average cost of feed to raise a junior beef project is \$400
- ◆ Housing: Calf must:

- Be kept out of drafts
- Be sheltered from weather
- Have room to move
- Have proper bedding (straw, wood shavings, or sand)
- ◆ Nutrition:
  - Fresh, clean water available to the calf at all times.
  - Be sure to keep grain, hay, and water fresh and clean of feces
  - Increase the amount of feed as the calf grows. Consult your nutritionist, junior beef species chair, or feed supplier for advice.
  - Start the junior beef calf out slowly on grain to keep it from getting a digestive upset.
    - First 2-3 days: Feed hay only
    - Next 3 days: Feed ½ pound of grain twice a day along with hay
    - Day 7-10: Feed 1 pound of grain twice a day
    - After Day 10 do the math!
      - (weight of calf) x (2.5 lbs of grain) = amount of grain for the day
      - Keep refiguring your calculations as the calf grows so you are feeding the correct amount
  - Average daily gain should be about 2 pounds.
  - Calf should be fed at the same times every day
  - Different Feeds:
    - Energy – a mixture of cracked or rolled corn, oats, protein pellets, and vitamins  
– Calves should not be given whole corn as they cannot process it well
    - Protein- Calves should be feed 16-18% protein.
    - Roughage – hay, silage
    - Supplements – soybean meal, processed supplements from feed mill/store
- ◆ Health:
  - Observe daily: Note any difference in behavior (not eating, not getting up, sluggish, ears down, etc) or any difference in appearance (bloating, runny nose, mucus eyes, etc). Changes in behavior or appearance usually indicate something is wrong; seek help or advise from a veterinarian immediately
  - It is highly recommended that the calf be treated for internal and external parasites before fair.
  - Wash and clip your calf several times before the fair so it gets used to it
    - When washing, use soap specifically for livestock.
      - Dish soap can remove minerals and oils from the skin causing dry flakes
      - Do not put soap directly on the calf, mix into a bucket of water
    - Just rinsing the calf is good, especially in hot weather
    - ALWAYS start with the legs so that the calf can get used to the cool water; putting cold water on their body first can cause them to go into shock
  - Keep pen clean and dry. A clean calf environment promotes a fly free atmosphere
  - Keep fly strips in the barn and pen, high enough so the calf and children cannot reach them
  - Keep calf fly spray on hand for when the flies get bad and bother the calf. This will help with health and training

- Don't overdo the fly spray; it can give the calf diarrhea and they may go off feed when that happens
- ◆ Training:
    - Start slow: Begin by just watching and talking to your calf
    - When going to touch your calf, talk to it and stay close to his side so you don't get kicked
    - After about a week, tie your calf to a fence post or secure object for an hour or two at a time. This will get it used to being restrained and standing still. This is also a good time to brush it down so that it gets used to being touched. For safety reasons, NEVER leave your calf alone when it is tied up
    - Brush your calf daily to help train the hair
    - Spend time with your calf while he/she is eating
    - Expose your junior beef to as many sights and sounds as possible, i.e. play a radio in the barn, have other animals around like dogs, geese, horses, etc
    - Work your calf with a rope halter first; walk him/her around. Then start to use your show halter and show stick.
    - It is ideal to work your calf twice a day, morning and evening, when it is not too hot
    - Attend as many showmanship practices as possible. You can learn even just by watching and taking notes
  - ◆ Fair Week Show Attire:
    - Clean pants or jeans (free of rips or holes)
    - Long or short sleeve dress shirt (button-down is recommended)
    - Protective boots
    - A show comb for your back pocket
    - Calf will need a leather show halter and show stick

## **Tips**

- ◆ BEFORE you bring the calf home, be sure to have the pen ready and grain or milk replacer (bottles), if necessary, on hand. The ride home is hard on them, so put water and food in pen right before the calf arrives. Once your calf is in the pen let it settled in for a couple of days. Watch the calf, but stay back.
- ◆ Junior beef Calf Selection:
  - Don't be afraid to ask the farmer's opinion
  - Pick a healthy calf
  - Twins are often weaker and grow slower and therefore are not usually a desirable choice
    - NOTE: A twin heifer to a bull calf is called a freemartin and is often unable to be bred
- ◆ When getting your calf, it is important to ask the farmer the following and record it on the Jr. Beef Health Record form:

- Vaccinations: Did the farmer give any vaccines and if so, what?
- Dewormer: Was the calf dewormed? If so, when and what kind of dewormer was given?
- Breed: What breed is the calf? (i.e. Angus/Hereford cross)
- Castrated: If the calf is male, has it been banded or cut? If it has not yet been banded or cut, it is your responsibility to make sure it gets done more than 4 weeks before fair
- Twin: Is the calf a twin? Remember: A twin heifer is most likely not breedable
- ◆ ASK QUESTIONS!!! If you encounter a situation or a question that you don't know the answer to, be sure to ask for help. Reach out to the species-chair, your club leader, another member raising a junior beef, or any member of the Livestock Council board. If that person does not have the answer, they WILL help you get it.
- ◆ Education – Attend as many education sessions and events as possible to help further your knowledge of your species
- ◆ Keep Good Records – Use a calendar to track purchases, weekly feeding schedules, weight gain, and medications. This information is important for your record book and also is a great guide to use for the next years project
- ◆ Basic Supplies Needed:
  - Feed Dish & Water Bucket
  - Weight Tape
  - Nylon Halter with Chain and Lead Rope
  - Leather Show Halter
  - Show Stick
  - Scotch Comb (carried in your back pocket during shows)
  - Soft Bristle Brush
  - Shampoo, Scrub Brush, Hoof Brush
  - Bedding
  - Grain & Hay
  - Bottle with Nipple & Milk Replacer
  - Fly Spray
  - Boots
  - Show Clothes
  - Chain or Neck Tie (to tie calf in the stall at fair)

### **Cloverbuds**

- ◆ 4-H members who are 5-7 years of age (as of January 1<sup>st</sup> of the current year)
- ◆ Cloverbuds have their own showmanship class. It will be held on the same day as the other cattle showmanship classes, usually Tuesday or Wednesday of fair
- ◆ Cloverbuds may bring their own calf to the fair OR they may choose to show someone else's calf
  - If showing another 4-H'ers calf please put that 4-H'ers name on your registration form
- ◆ Cloverbuds are not allowed to market their calves

- ◆ A parent, leader, or other adult must be present at all times when the cloverbud is working with their calf, including in the show ring