



# **LAMB PROJECT GUIDEBOOK**



***Species-Chair:***

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<b>IMPORTANT DATES</b>		<b>IMPORTANT INFO</b>	
Registration	March 1 <sup>st</sup>	Minimum Weight @ Fair	105 lbs
Birth Date	After January 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2021		
Possession	May 1 <sup>st</sup>	Record Book (Both Market and show only)	Required
Tagging	TBD	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 lamb 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.
- ◆ 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**

- ◆ Lambs must be wethers or ewes. Rams will be disqualified.
- ◆ Lambs must be in possession of the 4-H member (or under his or her care) before May 1<sup>st</sup>.
- ◆ All lambs must have a Farm Identification Tag (from the breeder) for scrapies testing purposes. All market lambs must also be tagged by the Northwest Michigan 4-H Livestock Council.
- ◆ All lambs must receive an overeating shot and be wormed
  - These are often given by the breeder before the lamb is sold
    - Be sure to get the medication information from the breeder for the Lamb Health Record
  - A second dose of wormer should be given prior to fair if needed
    - Be sure to read the label and note the withdrawal time to ensure that the lamb is clear for market at the fair
  - Proof of vaccination is required when unloading at the fair.
- ◆ Minimum weight for a market lamb is 105 pounds
- ◆ Lambs should be sheared as close to the fair as possible

## **Fair Week Requirements**

- ◆ Boots or solid shoes are required at all times when working with the lamb
- ◆ Weigh-in takes place the first Saturday of fair. Minimum weight at fair weigh in is 105 pounds.
- ◆ Youth are responsible for providing enough grain and hay to care for their lamb throughout the entire week.
  - No liquid feeding of lambs
- ◆ 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.
  - Pens are to be bedded with natural material (sawdust is provided). No carpets.
- ◆ No muzzles on lambs at any time
- ◆ Show Requirements:
  - Market lambs cannot be used for breed entries
  - 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 lamb.
  - The lamb is to be shown with all four feet on the ground or show ring surface at all times
  - When fitting your lamb for show:
    - No painting or artificial coloring agents may be used
    - No use of unnatural enhancers such as, but not limited to, "Cool Blue" or other muscle tighteners
    - No chilling of the lamb – Use of frozen rags or ice is prohibited
- ◆ At the end of fair youth are responsible to completely clean and scraped down pens

## **Helpful Info**

- ◆ Cost:
  - Most lambs will cost between \$200 and \$350
  - Average cost of feed:
    - Grain: 350-450lbs @ \$10/50lbs = \$80.00
    - Alfalfa Pellets: 100lbs @ \$10/50lbs = \$20.00 OR Hay: 4-5 bales @ \$6.50ea = \$33.00
  - Wormer: \$5.00
  - Shearing: \$15.00
  - Other Necessary Items: Lead Rope, Feed Dish, Water Bucket, Lamb Blanket, Tools (wheelbarrow, shovel, rake, cleaning supplies, etc)
  - Fair Week Expenses: Registration Fees, Camping Fees, 4-H Picture, 5% Commission
- ◆ NEVER give a lamb feed that contains copper as copper is deadly to lambs.
  - NOTE: Goat feed contains copper

- ◆ Do NOT use any kind of bleach on your lamb when washing or any other time as bleach will burn the lamb's skin
- ◆ To prevent foot rot, keep your lamb in a dry area. If you suspect foot rot, contact your Species Chair immediately as foot rot is highly contagious

### **Tips**

- ◆ ASK QUESTIONS!!! If you have questions or need help, contact the lamb species chair for answers or resources
- ◆ Lamb Selection:
  - Structure – Look for sturdy legs, sound hooves, a straight back, a wide and long loin, and the back leg should look full and meaty
  - Health – No loose stools, no runny eyes or nose. Free of cough and walk without any noticeable stiffness. Ears should not be droopy.
  - Weight – To achieve the ideal weight at fair time, the lamb should weigh 45-50 pounds at time of purchase
- ◆ Bringing the Lamb Home:
  - Prepare – Have a clean pen with shelter and shade, clean water and feed dishes
  - Feed – Know what the lamb has been fed by the breeder. A sudden change in feed can make the lamb sick
  - Bonding – The lamb will likely cry quite a bit for the first few days. Sit in the pen and make friends with the lamb. The lamb will begin relying on you for all of its needs including attention
- ◆ Training/Working with the Lamb:
  - Remain calm and keep your voice down
  - Be patient while halter training the lamb. Never pull hard on the halter; a gentle touch near its tail will usually get it to walk
  - After mastering the halter, begin working on showmanship including setting up the lamb and guiding it without a halter
- ◆ Feeding Your Lamb:
  - Grain- Grain should be given twice a day. Give them a pound in the morning and a pound at night or whatever they can eat in 15 minutes. Whichever is greater. If they are gaining too slowly, give them more grain. If they are gaining too much, cut them back.
  - Hay – Lamb should get about 1 pound of hay at morning and night
- ◆ Exercise/Muscle Building:
  - While feeding, elevate the lamb's grain dish so that the lamb has to stand and stretch to eat
  - Build Muscles By: Walking up hills, running in sand, and installing jumps in lamb pen area.
- ◆ Hot Weather:
  - Lambs tend to lose their appetite when hot, try to keep them cool
    - If the temperature is above 90 degrees, cool the lamb down with a bath. Be sure to dry them off well.
  - Flies tend to get worse as the heat goes up – Use Avon's Skin So Soft on the fleshy non-wool parts of the lamb

- Exercise early in the morning or late in the evening when the temperatures are lowest
- ◆ Get Ready For Fair:
  - Be sure to give your lamb a good bath before arriving at the fair
    - Wash well including the knees, belly, and armpits
    - Trim the hooves
    - Clean the ears (including the ear tags) – Baby oil and cotton swabs are the best way to get the ears clean
  - Gather the necessary tools and supplies:
    - Feed dish and water bucket
    - Tack Box to keep items in
    - Wheelbarrow and shovel
    - Bathing supplies
    - Lamb Blanket – To keep lamb clean between bath and show time
- ◆ Show Day:
  - Attire: Clean pants/jeans (free of holes and stains); Button-down shirt
- ◆ Record Keeping:
  - Use a calendar to track:
    - Purchases (feed, tack, medication, etc)
    - Amount of grain fed
    - Weight gain
    - Worming

### **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 on Friday of fair
- ◆ Cloverbuds may bring their own lamb to the fair OR they may choose to show someone else's lamb
- ◆ Cloverbuds are not allowed to market their lamb
- ◆ A parent, leader, or other adult must be present at all times when the cloverbud is working with their lamb, including in the show ring