

4-H Beef Project



18 U.S.C. 707
SNAPSHOT 4H1627

CURRICULA & RESOURCES

Michigan 4-H Resource

- <http://4h.msue.msu.edu/4h/livestock>
- » Beef Cow Calving and Breeding Record (4H1340)
 - » Beef Cow Production Record (4H1339)
 - » Your Market Beef Project (4H1188)

Curricula — Other States

- » Beef Resource Handbook (4-H 117R) (The Ohio State University Extension): <http://estore.osu-extension.org/productdetails.cfm?PC=2313>
- » Beef, Sheep and Swine Selection and Evaluation (4-H 103R) (The Ohio State University Extension): <http://estore.osu-extension.org/productdetails.cfm?PC=2277>

National 4-H Curricula

- <http://www.4-h.org/resource-library/curriculum/>
- » Beef:
 - Bite Into Beef – Beef 1 (08143)
 - Here's the Beef – Beef 2 (08144)
 - Leading the Charge – Beef 3 (08145)
 - Beef Helper's Guide (08146)
 - Exploring Beef Health and Husbandry (08455)

Other Resources

- » National Cattlemen's Beef Association: <http://www.beef.org/>
- » Michigan Beef Industry Commission: <http://www.mibeef.org/>

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

The 4-H beef project allows you to learn about breeds, selection, grooming, production, management, showmanship, marketing and careers through a breeding or market animal.

- » Learn basic principles of animal science and gain life skills, such as responsibility, by owning, caring for and keeping records on one or more head of livestock.
- » Gain knowledge of sound breeding, feeding and management practices.
- » Start your own herd with breeding animals or raise a market animal that produces a meat product for human consumption.

THE BIG PICTURE

Starting Out:

- » Identify different beef breeds.
- » Explore the differences between market and breeding cattle.
- » Learn proper feeding of cattle.
- » Prepare a beef project to show by leading it and setting up its feet.
- » Learn how to groom a beef animal.
- » Locate and name parts of the beef animal.
- » Identify common beef cuts of meat.
- » Discover different beef by-products.
- » Develop and keep records of the beef project.
- » Identify how a healthy calf looks and acts.
- » Network with potential buyers.

Learning More:

- » Learn the appropriate handling techniques and housing for beef cattle.
- » Identify livestock safety hazards.
- » Explore the difference between yield grade and quality grade.
- » Learn the various methods of cooking different beef cuts.
- » Compete in a livestock or meats judging contest.
- » Plan and conduct a beef promotional activity.
- » Explore a ruminant digestive system.
- » Identify common external parasites.
- » Properly administer medication.
- » Learn about beef food safety concerns and quality assurance practices.

Expanding Horizons:

- » Help younger 4-H members explore a beef project.
- » Balance a beef ration.
- » Plan and conduct a beef showmanship clinic.
- » Learn how to manage a cow and newborn calf.
- » Organize a livestock judging clinic.
- » Learn about Expected Progeny Differences (EPDs).
- » Explore the technological impacts to beef breeding and reproduction.
- » Properly identify and learn to treat common cattle diseases.
- » Evaluate meat carcasses.
- » Interview beef producers about beef trends.
- » Research and analyze how beef check-off dollars are used.



FOCUS ON BEEF

Science

- » Explore beef behavior; track normal versus abnormal behaviors.
- » Understand the differences in nutritional needs throughout a cow's lifespan.
- » Learn about the anatomy of a ruminant digestive system.
- » Research genetic differences in beef breeds and current mutations.

Life Skills

- » Use critical-thinking, problem-solving and decision-making skills to help you make good decisions about beef project management.
- » Keep records on your project expenses and income.
- » Practice personal resiliency through successes and challenges in your beef project.

Citizenship & Leadership

- » Complete a beef promotion presentation during May, Beef Month.
- » Provide beef taste testing at a grocery store to promote local food.
- » Lead other 4-H members in participating in local beef producer events.
- » Start a beef livestock judging team with the help of an adult volunteer.
- » Prior to the county fair, lead a beef grooming and showmanship clinic.



Communication

- » Teach someone the important traits in selecting a breeding heifer.
- » Design a poster demonstrating how to prepare beef cuts.
- » Participate in a judging contest giving oral reasons.
- » Share a presentation on the importance of following drug labels.

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

- » Contact your local Michigan State University (MSU) Extension office for workshops, activities and events.
- » If you are interested in a college education in animal science or veterinary medicine, visit MSU's website at www.msu.edu to explore those majors.
- » Visit a local feed mill and see how feed ingredients are mixed, weighed and blended to make a complete ration.
- » Visit a local meat locker or local grocery meat case to observe preparation and packaging.
- » Compare beef feed tags from different companies.
- » Participate in a beef skillathon contest.
- » Job shadow with a local beef producer or veterinarian to learn about animal management and health.
- » Attend a cattle show to listen to a judge give oral reasons and witness the differences in judging cattle.
- » Participate in a regional livestock judging workshop in the fall.
- » Discover different uses for beef products and by-products.
- » Exhibit or attend local, regional or national beef shows and conferences.
- » Consider showing in your county fair beef show.

Adapted with permission from "4-H Beef Project," by Iowa State University Extension, 2011, *Iowa 4-H Project Hot Sheet*. Retrieved from <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/projects/>

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status. Issued in furtherance of MSU Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Thomas G. Coon, Director, MSU Extension, East Lansing, MI 48824. This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned. The name "4-H" and the emblem consisting of a four-leaf clover with stem and the "H" on each leaflet are protected under Title 18 U.S.C. 707. (4H1618 1P-WEB-9:2013-LP) Produced by ANR Communications.