



4-H LIVESTOCK JUDGING PROJECT



In this project, youth learn how livestock producers and breeders evaluate the form of their animals with their function to produce high quality saleable products to their customers. Youth will analyze individual animal traits, of four animals presented together as a class, to each other and to an accepted ideal for that specie. Then, youth will rank each animal in the class and communicate their reasoning as to what order each animal was placed. Livestock judging events require youth to:

- Possess breeding and market animal industry preferences; while making accurate and complete observations
- Compare and contrast individual animals to others in class; and make decisions within an allotted time and communicate their reasoning effectively to others.

Starting Out *Beginner*

- Describe breeds of animals which may include beef, sheep, swine, goats, and other animals.
- Describe parts of the animal.
- Compare and contrast a class (i.e., top pair and bottom pair) as to muscle, fat, volume, and structure. These would be independent comparisons.

Learning More *Intermediate*

- Compare and contrast class pairs (i.e., top pair, middle pair, and bottom pair) as to muscle, fat, volume, and structure, including prioritization of these traits.
- Develop livestock reasons script template.

Exploring Depth *Advanced*

- Interpret performance data based on industry standards.
- Evaluate livestock and provide written and oral justification or placing's for market and breeding classes.

The activities above are ideas to inspire further project development. This is not a complete list.

4-H THRIVE

Help Youth:

Light Their Spark

A spark is something youth are passionate about; it really fires them up and gives them joy and energy. Help youth find what it is about livestock that excites them.

Flex Their Brain

The brain grows stronger when we try new things and master new skills. Encourage youth effort and persistence to help them reach higher levels of success.

Reach Their Goals

Help youth use the GPS system to achieve their goals.

Goal Selection: Choose one meaningful, realistic and demanding goal.

Pursue Strategies: Create a step-by-step plan to make daily choices that support your goal.

Shift Gears: Change strategies if you're having difficulties reaching your goal. Seek help from others. What are youth going to do when things get in their way?

Reflect

Ask project members how they can use their passion for this project to be more confident, competent and caring. Discuss ways they can use their skills to make a contribution in the community, improve their character or establish connections.



Expand Your Experiences!

Science, Engineering, and Technology

- Use a handheld ultrasound instrument to determine back fat and loin depth measurements to estimate USDA Yield Grade.
- Conduct a fecal floatation to check for an intestinal parasite load of an animal.
- Evaluate performance data to determine a cull/cut class.

Healthy Living

- Design and create an exhibit that features cuts of meat and their anatomical origin.
- Create a collection of recipes that features lean sources of protein.
- Develop a timeline of breeding trends to changes in industry and/or consumer preferences.
- Develop a brochure that illustrates important safety precautions when working with animals.

Citizenship

- Apply for a service-learning grant to inform the public about livestock bio-security issues related to fairs and expositions.
- Attend or establish a Quality Assurance and Ethics training workshop in your county.
- Conduct an Emerald Star Project that benefits your local fair.

Leadership

- Join a livestock breed association/Jr. association and participate in meetings.
- Develop and share a county breeder/producer address book by species.
- Join your local fair's junior livestock committee or 4-H Council's Livestock Committee.
- Become a role model for others by taking the position of junior/teen leader.

Resources

- The Judging Connection
www.thejudgingconnection.com/
- Livestock Breed Associations
www.hobbyfarms.com/farm-resources/livestock-resources/Livestock-Breed-Associations.aspx
- California Cattlewomen
www.cattlewomen.org
- Judging 101
www.judging101.com
- UM Livestock Judging Techniques
[//extension.missouri.edu/publications/DisplayPub.aspx?P=G2952](http://extension.missouri.edu/publications/DisplayPub.aspx?P=G2952)
- ISU 4-H Livestock Judging
www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/projects/livestock/Livestock%20Judging.htm
- USU Livestock Judging
[//extension.usu.edu/cyberlivestock/htm/livestock-judging](http://extension.usu.edu/cyberlivestock/htm/livestock-judging)
- CSU Judging Classes
[//livestock.colostate.edu/youth/judging/index.html](http://livestock.colostate.edu/youth/judging/index.html)
- OSU Breeds of Livestock
[//www.ansi.okstate.edu/breeds/](http://www.ansi.okstate.edu/breeds/)

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Connections & Events

Post-Secondary Colleges and State Field Days – Participate in a livestock judging contest as an individual and part of a team. During these events, 4-H members apply observation, critical-thinking and communication skills to evaluate sheep, swine and beef classes.

California State 4-H Livestock Judging Contest.
www.ca4h.org/Programs/Events/SLJC/ - The top three state winning teams qualify for national 4-H livestock judging contests.

Curriculum

- SDSU Livestock Judging Manual
www.sdstate.edu/ars/students/activities/judging/evaluation/upload/LivestockJudgingManual.pdf
- MS 4-H Livestock Judging Manual
[//msucare.com/pubs/publications/p2289.htm](http://msucare.com/pubs/publications/p2289.htm)
- KSU Livestock Judging Guide
www.unce.unr.edu/4H/programs/stem/files/pdf/LivestockJudgingManualKansas.pdf

4-H Record Book

4-H Record Books give members an opportunity to record events and reflect on their experiences. For each project, members document their personal experiences, learning and development.

4-H Record Books also teach members record management skills and encourage them to set goals and develop a plan to meet those goals.

To access the 4-H Record Book online, visit www.ca4h.org/4hbook.

University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources

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