Resource Handbook
for Market, Breeding, and Feeder Calf Projects

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Beef Friendly from Pfizer Animal Health

Beef Improvement Federation Guidelines

Beef Quality Assurance: Is Every Cattleman's Buseiness from National Cattlemen's Association, Englewood, CO, USA

Beef Retail Cuts - National Live Stock & Meat Board


Certified Angus Beef - American Angus Association, St. Joseph, MO, USA

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From Feedlot to Freezer

As a cattle producer
make the commitment of producing wholesome beef products for meeting the consumer's demand!!!
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**Introduction**

**In this chapter**
- Objectives of the Project
- General Project Guidelines
- Benefits to a 4-H Member
- Teamwork for a Common Goal

This handbook is designed to be used as a resource by 4-H members participating in a beef feeder calf, dairy beef feeder, market steer or heifer, dairy steer, or beef breeding project. Younger members may need help reading this handbook. Members are encouraged to check with their 4-H advisor or local Extension office for a complete set of project guidelines.

The 4-H beef projects involve the selection, feeding, and caring for one or more cows, heifers, steers, or feeder calves. Youth will need to purchase and complete the appropriate project/record book for market animals, feeder calves, or breeding projects every year.

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**Objectives of the Project**

Be sure to check with county project guidelines (if any) for additional requirements, especially if you wish to exhibit at the county fair. You do not have to participate in the fair to complete this project. However, it is one way of enhancing your project experience.

**General Project Guidelines**

1. Complete the project record book that corresponds to the type of project you are taking.
2. Make sure your project entry form is completed and turned in to the county office on time.
3. Contact your local veterinarian for health papers if your county requires them.

4. Be sure to review the rules outlined in your county fair premium book if you plan to participate in the county fair. Regulations may vary from county to county.

5. Keep project animals in your continual care and possession.

6. Attend or complete a quality assurance program every year you enroll in a livestock project if required by your state or county.

---

**Benefits to a 4-H Member**

1. **Selection and judging**—From the time you select your project animal until the time you show your animal, you will learn what characteristics to look for in a modern beef animal.

2. **Record Keeping**—A requirement for a feeder calf, market beef, or beef breeding project is record keeping. By keeping records, you will learn the costs of feed and equipment, the concept of profit and loss, and hopefully will be able to start a savings account for yourself.

3. **Nutrition**—You will learn the nutritional requirements of beef cattle and how to balance a diet, one for the fastest, most economical gain.

4. **Health**—You will learn about beef diseases and parasites and their control.

5. **Quality assurance**—You will increase your awareness of the issues of animal well being, quality assurance, and show animal ethics.

6. **Competition**—You will benefit from learning to groom and show your project animal, and will learn good sportsmanship.

7. **Ownership pride**—Owning and caring for an animal gives you a feeling of pride and satisfaction of a job well-done.

8. **Professional and social development**—Having a feeder calf, dairy steer, market beef, or beef breeding project will bring you in contact with successful beef breeders and producers, project leaders, and other 4-H members.

9. **Consumer awareness**—Raising a market animal will help you better understand how meat enters our food chain.

---

**Additional Learning Experiences**

1. Be on a livestock judging team.
2. Attend livestock project seminars.
3. Demonstrate fitting and showing.
4. Participate in a Beef Skill-a-thon.
5. Attend the state fair.
6. Visit a beef producer’s operation.
7. Visit a feed mill.
8. Visit a local veterinarian.
10. Visit a grocery store to study the different ways beef is sold.
Teamwork for a Common Goal

The purpose of all project work is to enhance the education, experience, and development of young people, a purpose that is not realized without the involvement of several people working as a team. The successful completion of a beef project depends upon the combined efforts of parents, experts, 4-H leaders, and you. Everyone has responsibilities.

To Parents
How much your child learns in his/her 4-H market beef, dairy steer, beef breeding, or feeder calf project depends on the amount of support and encouragement you give. Much of your time will be spent helping your child obtain the resources needed to complete the project. You may offer other assistance when necessary, but you should never interfere with your child’s opportunity to learn by doing. Be available to listen to his/her needs and concerns, and offer praise whenever possible. Stress the value of doing one’s own work and help your child realize how much he/she has learned from that work. To most children, a sense of accomplishment is usually more important than a ribbon or trophy.

It is also inappropriate for a professional to own, care for, or groom the project animal. The 4-H members are to own their project animals and keep those animals under their care. Also keep in mind that most projects, especially those involving animals, will require several adjustments at home and some investments to be successful. For this project, separate pens, a shelter, and some room for exercise will be needed. The 4-H members may need to purchase special grooming and showing equipment.

Remember, your child’s success in this and all 4-H projects largely depends on the encouragement and support you give.

To the 4-H Advisor
As people directly concerned with youth development, it is the responsibility of every 4-H advisor and educator to help each member who wants a beef project (and has financing and suitable facilities) to secure one. Keep in mind that people in your position have exceptional influence with youth, and your encouragement and help can not only lead to completed projects but contribute as well to the development of responsible citizens.

To the Member
After you have made the decision to take a beef project, it is important that you know what type of animal you are looking for, how to feed it, diseases it may have, management techniques, and many other important concepts.

By teaching you these concepts through information and experience, this project will make it possible for you to produce a high-quality, lean, meaty, and wholesome end product that the consumer wants to buy. To have a successful project you must be willing to study and review the information contained in this handbook and apply it to your project.

The member project and record books contain activities that enhance the learning from the information contained in this resource handbook.