

Potential Buyers: A Tutorial for 4-H Members and Parents

(Adapted from Michigan State University Cooperative Extension)

MARKETING YOUR 4-H or FFA LIVESTOCK PROJECT ANIMAL

4-H members have a unique opportunity to gain many valuable life skills through their 4-H livestock projects. In addition to gaining such skills as communication, critical thinking, financial management, organization, responsibility, and leadership through their project involvement and 4-H club, the 4-H member also has the opportunity to receive a premium price for the animals that they market through the youth livestock auction sales at the County Fair. Many youth use the money gained from their 4-H projects to help pay for college.

Thinking like a business person is essential to being successful. From the very beginning of your project identify potential customers (buyers) to purchase the end product. Know what your expenses are, and be able to calculate your break-even price for the product.

Successful completion of a market livestock animal project includes recruiting buyers to bid on your animals during the auctions at the County Fair. You should contact buyers several months prior to the fair to allow them ample ability to plan time away from work or other activities to attend the auctions and opportunity to budget for their purchase. Contacting potential buyers early also allows you the chance to build rapport with the buyer and answer any questions they have about the auction.

Exhibitors should contact enough buyers to ensure that at least 2 buyers are bidding on each animal they sell during the auctions. Keep in mind that not every buyer you contact will place a bid on your animal so it is necessary to contact several potential buyers.

Who are potential buyers? Buyers can be businesses, families, individuals, or groups of people. You should be certain to contact people that have supported you and the auction in the past as well as people that have never attended before. Contact people your family knows (friends, neighbors, relatives, etc.), people you do business with (gas station, grocery store, dentist, insurance, bank, carwash, organizations, etc.), and with the guidance of an adult, people and businesses that you don't know.

POTENTIAL BUYERS

When approaching a potential buyer, you are not only marketing your animal, but also yourself and your organization. Often times youth are nervous or scared about making this contact. Marketing your livestock project animal is a great opportunity to develop stronger communication skills and build self-confidence. Parents and club leaders can help you overcome your anxiety by practicing together before visiting with potential buyers.

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 Canadian County 4-H

 Join: 4h.zsuite.org



It is best to meet with buyers in person when possible, but a hand written letter can be sent in the event that you are unable to establish a meeting time. When meeting with a potential buyer it is appropriate to introduce yourself with a handshake. If the person you are marketing to knows your parents you may also include that connection in your introduction.

Some of the important talking points to highlight during your conversation include:

- Your 4-H club
- What projects you are exhibiting
- What you have learned this year in 4-H
- What your future plans are, including how you intend to use your earnings
- The benefits of supporting 4-H and FFA members through the Livestock Auction
- Resale and processing options available to buyers
- When and where the auctions happen
- How to register to buy an animal at the auction

Always close the sale by inviting the person to attend the auction. Marketing materials including posters and buyer pamphlets are available from the Livestock Sale Committee and 4-H office.

DETAILS BUYERS WILL NEED TO KNOW

Sale Date: March 4, 2022 Doors open at 4:45 p.m., dinner at 5:30 p.m., sale start 6:30p.m.

Sale Location: 3001 Jensen Road E, El Reno, OK (Canadian County Expo Center)

Sale Rules:

- The 50th Annual Live & Online Premium Auction Sale will be held at 6:30 PM on Friday, March 4, 2022, at Canadian County Expo Center & at www.kencarpenterauction.com
- The Auction Sale Steering Committee named in this publication shall have complete jurisdiction over the sale and their decisions will be final in regard to matters or questions that may arise during the course of the show and sale.
- During the selection of animals for the sale the only individuals allowed to be in the ring will be the judge, exhibitors, superintendents and Auction Steering Committee members.
- Only one animal per exhibitor will be allowed to sell in the AUCTION SALE.
- 3 Does, 5 Goats, 3 Heifers, 15 Steers, 3 Ewes, 20 Wethers and 3 Gilts, 38 Barrows will be sold for a total of 90 animals.
- Sale order will be determined immediately following the Grand Drive of that species. All animals called for Show Order must show when called.
- The Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champions of the beef, swine, sheep and goat divisions are the only animals automatically eligible for the sale. All others will be shown for sale order and selected on quality. Breed Champion exhibits are not automatically in the sale.
- Once an exhibitor has an animal selected for sale, all other animals of that species owned by that exhibitor shall be scratched and are not eligible for sale order.
- Exhibitors needing to scratch a sale animal from the sale order lineup, may do so by notifying the General Superintendent, Kyle Worthington, within one-half hour after Beef sale order.
- Check for premium sale and bonus will be mailed as soon as premiums are collected. Also, \$33 will be withheld for pictures.
- Sale Order will be determined by Premium Sale Line up.