



4-H 

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY  
EXTENSION



# GOAT PROJECT: 4-H LEADER GUIDE

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# Goat Project: 4-H Leader Guide

## Purpose of the Goat Project

The goat project is an excellent opportunity for youth interested in livestock. The goat is an intelligent and interesting animal that is quick to learn, likes attention, is relatively small, does not require a great deal of space, and is fun to raise. In this project, youth work toward achieving the following important skills and abilities:

- Select, raise, and show a goat
- Be responsible for their own project
- Take pride in their work and the self-discipline needed to accomplish it
- Develop confidence as they learn to manage their project
- Practice speaking before groups and expressing ideas through demonstrations, judging, and other activities
- Make decisions and accept their consequences
- Work effectively with others in a group

## Overview of the Project

The goat project offers a number of options. Each member will need to determine his or her own project goals. Members need to consider money, equipment, space, time, and markets for products produced.

Options:

1. A female kid may be raised to breeding age, bred, sold, kept as a milk goat, or become part of a dairy or meat goat breeding herd.
2. A yearling doe or more mature doe may be kept as a milking goat.
3. A goat can be raised for meat.
4. A dairy goat can be managed to produce milk, cheese, yogurt, and ice cream for family use or legal sale.
5. A goat (particularly wethers) may be kept as a pet, pack or cart animal, or for brush control.
6. Some goats can produce valuable fiber (cashmere or mohair) that can be harvested and sold.

Whatever option a member chooses, he or she must have the information needed to successfully complete that option. This will include information on selection, feeding, housing, management, and disease identification and control.

## Leaders' Responsibilities

Adult leaders organize 4-H clubs, help members plan and carry out the purpose of the club, facilitate project learning, encourage member participation in 4-H, and

inform and involve parents in the program.

Leadership may be shared among several individuals. Responsibilities could be divided on the basis of club organization and operation, project teaching, and activity programs such as community service, recreation, fairs, and judging.

In Washington State, 4-H leaders are supported by county Extension faculty and Washington State University Extension. County faculty can make recommendations regarding reference materials, audio visual materials, leader training meetings, and other learning opportunities.

Older members can help with demonstrations, arrange tours, present videos, invite speakers, coordinate other activities, help members with 4-H records, and work closely with new members on their projects. Support teen leaders as they have experiences that will develop their leadership abilities and help the club achieve its goals.

## The Role of Parents

The interest and active cooperation of parents are important to the success of members. Parents should know what is expected of their children. This includes an understanding of the total club program. Parents need to know when and where meetings, tours, and activities will be held. The importance of these activities to the members is not always recognized by parents unless they understand the entire program.

Inform parents through telephone calls, letters, personal visits, or by inviting them to one of the first meetings of the club. Encourage them to:

- Help youth plan projects within their abilities
- Help obtain animals, housing, feed, equipment, and transportation required for the project
- Encourage youth by praising their accomplishments
- Serve as a resource person if they have a special interest or experience related to the goat project
- Provide transportation to meetings or special events
- Attend 4-H events
- Keep children safe, learning, and having fun at 4-H activities

## Project Resource People

Look around your community and ask your county Extension faculty to identify goat producers who might visit your club to discuss or demonstrate goat-related topics. For example, a veterinarian might be available to discuss diseases, nutrition, health, and sanitation measures to prevent disease.

## Developing the 4-H Program

A first-year member may need additional one-on-one help through personal visits with a more experienced member or leader. This will depend on the experience a family has raising goats and the amount of time parents are willing to commit to learn with their children.

Experienced members of the club may help provide some project information through talks and demonstrations at club meetings. This is an excellent leadership and public speaking opportunity for them.

Program topics and activities for the year could be organized as follows:

### October–December

- a. Purchasing animals
- b. Housing
- c. Feeding
- d. Health and health care
- e. Breeding and reproduction

### January–March

- a. Pregnant doe care
- b. Kidding
- c. Kid care
- d. Poisonous plants

### April–June

- a. Demonstrations
- b. Judging
- c. Project tours
- d. County training clinics
- e. Health practices and biosecurity

### July–September

- a. Food safety (meat and dairy)
- b. Preparation for fairs
- c. Pasture and forages
- d. Record books



Milking demonstration by a 4-H Leader to kindergarteners and parents.

## Suggested Project Activities

These teaching suggestions can be used by project leaders to help 4-H members achieve their goals. The leader and members can select those most appropriate for the group.

| Learning Topics for Members   | Teaching Ideas   |
|---|--|
| <b>Animal Selection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Age</li><li>• Gender</li><li>• Breed</li><li>• Grade or purebred</li><li>• Physical characteristics</li><li>• Temperament</li></ul>   | <b>Animal Selection</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Use dairy goat chart to familiarize members with body part terms</li><li>• Talk about desired qualities and conformation</li><li>• Visit dairy goat breeders' farms</li><li>• Have experienced members show their project animals</li><li>• Go to goat shows</li></ul>   |
| <b>Nutrition and Feeding</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Basic nutrition</li><li>• Types and amounts of feed for different ages and conditions of animals</li><li>• Goat digestive system</li><li>• Grazing management</li><li>• Body condition scores</li><li>• Buying hay</li></ul> | <b>Nutrition and Feeding</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentations by members about feed for different ages of animals</li><li>• Feed identification contest using samples of forages and grains</li><li>• Discuss basic nutrition and why it is important</li><li>• Read labels of commercial feeds to see what they contain</li><li>• Evaluate a pasture with forage specialist</li><li>• Read and interpret a hay analysis report</li><li>• Condition score a goat herd</li><li>• Discuss the importance of feeding colostrum</li></ul> |

## Learning Topics for Members

## Teaching Ideas

### Breeding and Reproduction

- Breeding age
- Breeding records
- Artificial vs. natural breeding
- Signs of heat
- Gestation period
- Caring for pregnant does
- Kidding

### Breeding and Reproduction

- Discuss breeding records and show how to keep them
- Observe kidding
- Observe estrus
- Watch an artificial insemination demonstration

### Kid Care

- Normal vs. abnormal kids
- Routine practices
- Special care
- Dam vs. bottle raising
- Health concerns
- Nutrition
- Weaning

### Kid Care

- Discuss feeding
- Demonstrate how to disbud
- Discuss methods of castrating buck kids
- Show members local poisonous plants and discuss signs of poisoning
- Discuss use and care of equipment for bottle feeding and tube feeding kids

### Milking Management

- Recommended milking practices
- Making and using a milking stand
- Preparing milk products
- Mastitis

### Milking Management

- Demonstrate proper milking and how to handle milk
- Discuss milking stands and how to construct them
- Make cheese or ice cream
- Sample goat milk products
- Demonstrate preparing doe for milking
- Demonstrate equipment sanitization
- Demonstrate the California Mastitis Test

### Health and Sanitation

- Common diseases
- Selecting a healthy goat
- Working with a veterinarian
- Disinfecting premises, equipment, clothing, and footwear
- Handwashing
- Diseases spread from goats to humans
- Preventing illness
- Signs of illness
- Reportable diseases

### Health and Sanitation

- Discuss parasites and control measures
- Demonstrate and practice trimming hooves
- Ask a veterinarian to discuss diseases commonly found among goats and their prevention and treatment
- Identify characteristics of normal animals and signs of possible illness
- Have a veterinarian demonstrate a physical examination of a goat
- Discuss quality assurance

### Buildings and Equipment

- Shelter from drafts, rain, cold, and predators
- Exercise space
- Fencing
- Feed and equipment storage
- Sanitation

### Buildings and Equipment

- Have experienced members demonstrate how tools and equipment are used
- Visit a breeder's or member's goat facilities
- Discuss equipment members will need for their project

### Showmanship

- Equipment
- Sanitation
- Show ring etiquette
- Rules and common practices

### Showmanship

- Discuss dairy goat and dairy goat showmanship scorecards
- Have experienced members demonstrate how to fit and show an animal
- Discuss exhibiting at the fair and explain classes, rules, and regulations for participating, referring to fair premium book

### Record Books

- Reasons for recording information
- Recommended format
- Information to include
- Awards or recognition available

### Record Books

- Ask a teen leader or older member to show how to complete a record book
- Attend a 4-H achievement event to see how youth are rewarded for their project work
- Examine an award-winning record book from a local 4-H member.

## Goat Buyer's Guide and Checklist

Before you buy a goat:

1. Examine it carefully.
2. Stand back and evaluate its overall appearance and health.
3. Watch the animal from the front, side, and rear as it walks.
4. If possible, look at the animal's dam, sire, siblings, and/or kids and their production records.
5. Ask for verified results of laboratory tests for goat diseases of concern or conduct these tests before purchase.
6. Review all the points on the following list:

### GENERAL APPEARANCE

- Shiny coat and bright eyes
- Good weight in proportion to size
- Pleasing personality
- Bright and alert attitude

### BODY

- Deep abdominal cavity
- Long body
- Wide ribs
- Body blends well together throughout
- Long level rump
- Level back

### FEET AND LEGS

- Strong bones
- Straight legs with proper angles; not excessively straight or bent
- No lameness
- Strong pasterns at correct angle
- At least one hand-width separation of front legs
- Hooves healthy, normal, and trimmed

### REPRODUCTIVE

- Udder well-formed and supported
- No signs of mastitis
- Both udder halves symmetrical and producing (unless dry)
- No double teats or other abnormalities
- Easy to milk
- Normal external genitalia
- Testicles symmetrical and normal sized (two in bucks, none in wethers)
- No retained testicles

### OTHER CRITERIA

- Doe kid: check pedigree and dam and sire information.
- Bred doe: insist on written guarantee of pregnancy and service memo signed by buck's owner. Confirm buck is registered and same breed as doe if interested in registering a purebred kid.
- Unbred or dry doe: purchase only if less than two years old and seller will give a written guarantee the doe should conceive and give birth or the animal will be replaced.
- Lactating doe: check doe's lifetime production records. If she is not enrolled in the Dairy Herd Improvement Association testing program, observe at least one milking and milk the doe yourself to see how milk flows. Prime dairy does are usually between three and six years old.



Newly freshened Oberhasli with a Body Condition Score of 2 demonstrating excellent type in udder, body, and legs.



Nubian doe with a Body Condition Score of 4 preparing to show at fair.

## Demonstrations

Encourage every member to give one or more demonstration during the project year. A first-year member may start by helping you or a teen leader show and tell how to do something. Beginning 4-Hers may prefer to give a demonstration with another member before trying it alone. Suggest simple demonstrations for beginners.

Refer to EM4788, *Public Presentations, Demonstrations, and Illustrated Talks, Leader Guide*, to help members plan and present demonstrations.

First-year members may want to observe a demonstration day at the area or county level before participating in these activities themselves. A new club may want to visit another club to observe demonstrations, ask a member from another club to give a demonstration at a club meeting, or attend a demonstration day as a group.

## Judging

An essential project skill for goat project youth to master is to understand the standards by which goats are judged. This skill is helpful during competition and when selecting animals for purchase. The first step is being able to identify and name the parts of goat anatomy and use correct terms when describing an animal's characteristics.

The next step is to learn what qualities to look for and what distinguishes good quality from poor quality. Members should become familiar with the standards described in the dairy goat scorecard. The standards may not have much meaning unless the member can observe and compare one or more animals using the card.

There are several ways to learn about qualities and standards. These include:

- Member's project book
- Pictures from books, magazines, and web pages
- Observing classes being judged at an exhibition and listening to the judge's reasons
- Practicing judging on tours to fairs and goat shows

Practice judging helps members be observant, recognize high-quality animals, make choices based on standards, tell others what is good quality, make decisions, and support these decisions with reasons.

When members have developed some skill in identifying and describing desirable standards, the official scorecards used in judging activities should be introduced and explained. This includes registration, placing, and reasons cards (WSU publications CO742, CO736, and CO745, respectfully). How to complete these might be illustrated on a blackboard or on large sheets of paper. The club could then judge a class of animals and complete a set of cards just as they would in an official judging contest.

The decisions a member makes must be supported with reasons. Placing of a class of four animals and reasons for the placings can be done in small groups or in a group

discussion to help beginning members learn to give reasons. When giving reasons, oral or written, the member needs to:

- Have in mind a clear picture of the whole class
- Know desired qualities and standards
- Select the top and bottom animals first, then place the middle two
- Review placing decisions
- Make notes on strong and weak points for each animal to help when giving oral or written reasons or answering judges' questions
- Keep in mind that decisions are based on how this group of goats compare to each other today, not what is expected of them in the future or how well any did in previous competitions.

Youth who participate in judging contests are often asked to give oral reasons on one or more classes. The following approach is recommended:

1. Look at the judge, speak up, be clear and to the point.
2. Begin by stating what class is being judged and how you placed it.
3. Tell all the good points of your top animal.
4. Be fair and point out any faults of your top animal.
5. Compare your first animal with your second place animal, using positive terms.
6. Give some of the good points about the second place animal as well as some weaknesses.
7. Compare the middle pair.
8. Compare the bottom pair.
9. Tell why number four was placed last, but mention some positive attributes.
10. Let the judge know when you have finished by making a closing statement. Example: "For these reasons, I placed this class of milking does one, four, three, two."
11. There are many times when members can compare two or more animals—at home, at meetings, at tours, or at shows—which will help them become more observant and better judges of quality. Practice is necessary to develop skill in judging.

County Extension faculty or an experienced adult or teen leader can help plan a judging activity. There may be also a training session for leaders or a county practice judging session available to help learn about judging.

Note: if judging members' goats against each other in practice sessions, remind youth to be kind. Some youth will take criticism of their animal personally and can become upset; this is especially true of younger members. Remind the group every animal has strengths and weaknesses and no animal is perfect. A small grade crossbred goat with a sweet personality could be the perfect

animal for a particular family, based on their reasons for having a goat.

## Dairy Goat Judging Fundamentals

1. Thorough knowledge and understanding of animal form and function is necessary for successful selection and breeding of healthy goats with long productive lives.
2. The outward appearance of an animal usually gives a good idea of its value as a breeding or dairy animal.
3. Perhaps no business relies so much upon visual judgment as does the livestock industry.
4. Skill in judging is acquired through instruction and experience.
5. Judging is sound reasoning.
6. When you size up a class, look for obvious things first. Read these points over again and think them through carefully before going on to the next step.

Judging members must learn the names of all the parts of an animal before you can talk about them.

Spend some time with youth studying the nomenclature of the dairy goat as presented in the *Dairy Goat Chart*, C0541.

## General Rules for Judging Dairy Goats

1. Before placing a class, consider the following points:
  - (a) For what purpose is the class being judged—dairy, breeding, meat, fiber, pack, cart, other?
  - (b) What are the outstanding characteristics of an individual that make it valuable for that purpose?
2. Judge each class individually according to its purpose.
3. Observe each animal carefully, and see the animals as they are and not as you would like to see them.
4. Analyze the class after making accurate observations.
5. Make brief notations of strengths and weaknesses of each animal.
6. Place the class by a process of elimination.
7. Go over the class again to check your judgment.
8. Never make a final placing before preparing your notes.
9. Your first impression is nearly always right.
10. Depend upon your own judgment, not someone else.
11. If you become rattled, stop, back off from the class, and think. Ask yourself the questions under Number 1 above.

## Giving Reasons

Reasons make a show more educational, keep the attention of exhibitors and spectators, help identify outstanding youth livestock judges, and promote the development of higher-level mental skills. Reasons must be accurate because they logically express the judge's thoughts and evaluations to those listening. Good, accurate, concise, comparative reasons will allow those in attendance to follow the judge's reasoning, whether or not they agree with the placings.

Animals must be selected accurately and reasons must be given accurately. Advise youth to use correct terminology in giving reasons. Exhibitors appreciate hearing the names of the parts of the body used correctly.

Members should organize their reasons, comparing one pair of animals at a time, mentioning the most important or strongest areas of comparison first. For example, members might say, "I place this milking yearling class 4-2-1-3 as they stand from my right, placing 4 over 2 because of her stronger topline in the area of the chine and because of her more widely-attached udder, especially in the rear." They could mention she has a more feminine head and neck, but these are minor reasons. Then they should go down the line, comparing 2 with 1, and 1 with 3.

Reasons should be positive and forceful. Some good points should be mentioned about each animal. If this is not possible, they should say nothing, and the implication will be clear. If 2 has a strong point over 4, this should be mentioned in the reasons, making clear the judge is aware of the strength but thinks 4's strong points are great enough to carry her over 2 anyway. Forceful, positive, organized reasons all indicate a confident, well-poised judge worthy of respect.

## General Rules When Giving Reasons

1. For each animal, claim points where it is superior to the animal behind it. Then, grant to the other animal its points of advantage. Never claim strong or weak points for an animal unless it has them.
2. Emphasize major differences strongly. Give reasons on big differences first.
3. Be concise and definite.
4. Speak with confidence, enthusiasm, and without hesitation.
5. Use correct terms for each class, breed, and part.
6. End reasons strongly, giving a concise final statement, positive if possible, as to why the last animal is last.
7. Be sure your reasons are well organized.

Judges should introduce class first. For example, they might start with something like, "I place this class of Nubian 2-year-old does 4, 2, 1, 3."

After the introduction, they proceed with reasons. For example, "I place 4 over 2 because she has sharper, cleaner withers and she stands stronger in the pasterns."

Compare each pair of animals, giving the major points first and minor points last. They should avoid using terms like "better." Use more specific terms like stronger, wider, more level.

If the second-place animal excels over the first in some point, they would say "I grant 2 over 4 for greater spring of rib," for example.

End the reasons on the class with something like, "Although 3 stands last today, she must be commended for her fine, loose, pliable skin and beautiful coat." It is usually not necessary to say anything negative about the last animal. Having compared her with the animals ahead of her in positive terms, omitting saying anything further speaks for itself.

Sometimes a closing statement such as, "For these reasons I place this class of Nubian 2-year-old does 4, 2, 1, 3" may be necessary.

In giving reasons, a judge might say that an animal has or is more desirable in specific characteristics. The term STRONGER may refer to such characteristics as the jaw, loin, legs, pasterns, brisket, medial suspensory ligament; SMOOTHER may refer to blending of shoulder blades, rear udder attachment, fore udder attachment; WIDER may refer to loin, rump, chest, between fore or rear legs, escutcheon, ribs, rear udder attachment, fore udder attachment; LONGER may refer to the neck, rump, topline; MORE LEVEL usually refers to the topline, chine, loin, rump (hooks to pins, or thurls to thurls).

There are other comparative terms that can be used and applied to these and other parts of the body, such as broader, fuller, brighter, neater, more feminine, tighter, shorter, more desirable, flatter, flintier, more graceful, powerful, style, finer, thinner, more pliable, deeper, more refined, more perfectly molded, leaner, more open, greater, more capacious, more globular, more balanced, more symmetrical, more distinct, softer, more clearly delineated, and so on.

Use of these terms applied properly to the correct body part will help with giving more effective and accurate reasons.

ADAPTED FROM THE OFFICIAL BREEDER'S AND JUDGE'S TRAINING MANUAL OF THE AMERICAN GOAT SOCIETY, INC., Revised 1973.

## Tours

Tours are fun and educational if planned well to make the most of each stop. A leader and a tour committee can generate lots of interest and excitement with a tour. Members will remember it as one of the highlights of the year, especially if it includes a recreational activity such as a picnic, barbecue, swimming party, or ball game.

There are many possibilities for tours including trips to club members' farms, visits to goat breeders, veterinary clinic tours, or a tour relating to milk marketing or animal research. The project tour is probably the first which comes to mind. Project tours are visits to a member's home to inspect his or her project and hear the member's experiences in the project. The project tour is especially well suited to a group of younger members, although it is of interest to most age groups.

On the project tour each member will act as host or guide when his or her project is visited. The member should explain briefly his or her experiences in the project and give others a chance to ask questions. A member may give a short demonstration as part of the visit.

The project tour is a good opportunity for the leaders to discuss the member's project, give information that might be helpful, and provide encouragement.

Every tour requires preparation. Help the tour committee think about and discuss these items:

1. Set time, date, and place the group will meet.
2. Have members obtain parent's permission for the trip and try to fit the schedule of visits to suit the families involved.
3. Set an approximate time for each visit and a closing time for the tour.
4. Arrange transportation.
5. Explain what is expected of each member when the group visits his or her project.
6. Invite parents to attend. Assistance may be needed if the group is large, so ask parents to help.
7. Make plans for providing food and refreshments as part of the program.
8. Remind members this would be a good time for picture taking.
9. Insist participants wear clean clothing and street shoes or disinfected boots. Leave dogs at home.
10. Discuss additional aspects of risk management with county Extension faculty or veterinarians.

Visiting goat breeders, dairies, veterinary clinics, and others requires advanced planning for the tour to be successful. The tour should be arranged well in advance. Write or visit the host to establish a convenient date and time for the tour. Explain who the group is, how many young people and adults will be in the group, ages of members, purpose of the visit, and some of the specific things you would like the individual to show and tell.

Talk about activities, such as judging, and how they might be incorporated as part of the visit to a dairy goat breeder.

Members also should be prepared in advance. They should have some idea of what they will observe and some questions that might be appropriate to ask.

The impression your members make on the individual they visit is important to your community and 4-H. Your host will be favorably impressed by an interested, attentive group. Encourage club members to thank the host at the end of the tour and also take a moment following the tour to write and send an appreciation card to the host.

## Dairy Goat Clinic or Day

A clinic or dairy goat day is an activity that can be planned on an area or county-wide basis for members, leaders, and parents. Ask your county Extension faculty about developing such a program. A variety of things might be done including demonstrations, a fitting and showing activity, judging, breed identification game, name-that-part game, and milking contest.

This is a learning session, not a competitive event. The activities suggested may not all be included on one day but divided into two or more sessions.

A special show clinic in preparation for the fair is held in some counties to teach 4-H members:

1. How to prepare themselves for a fitting and showing contest.
2. How to get their goat ready for a fitting and showing contest.
3. What is expected of a member and goat in the show.
4. How to care for an animal during fair.
5. How to address biosecurity concerns for show animals.

## Teaching Youth to Show a Goat

Here are some suggestions for helping youth prepare their goat and themselves for a show. Thorough preparation will help them find satisfaction and success with the goat project. Not all project youth will be interested in showing their animals competitively and they should not be forced to do so. However, they and their project animals will still benefit from the interaction and rigor of show preparation. Here are recommendations for youth preparing for show:

### Preparation at Home

1. Work daily with your goat. Practice leading and show positions. Develop a positive and trusting relationship with your goat. It should know you and cooperate with you.
2. Groom daily with a brush to get dirt out and shine in.
3. Your goat should be neatly trimmed. Give special attention to inside ears, around feet, udder, and tail. Use electric clippers.
4. Trim hooves two weeks before the show and again one or two days before the show.
5. On the day before the show, wash stained parts with warm water and soap, rags, and a brush if needed. Clean feet and tail area also.



4-H youth showing their project animals at a county fair.

6. Learn the names of the parts of a goat.
7. Create a list of things to take to a show and refer to it while getting ready.

### On Show Day

1. Bring all the things on your list: grooming equipment, show collar, feed, etc.
2. Clean goats' eyes, ears, nose, tail area, and hooves with a damp cloth.
3. Make sure the goat's collar fits well and is clean and attractive.
4. Exercise your goat so it will be ready and willing to stand still in the show ring.
5. Remove straw and dust with a brush. Have her coat look smooth and well groomed.
6. Wear quiet clothes; white is preferred. Exhibitors should be neat and clean in appearance.
7. Be on time. Be ready and waiting when it is time for your goat to enter the show ring.

### In the Show Ring

1. Enter the ring with your goat and turn to the left unless directed otherwise.
2. Exhibit your goat gently and gracefully. Keep her in show position without overfussing.
3. Be alert and watch the judge at all times to not miss a silent ring command.
4. Always keep your goat between yourself and the judge.
5. Keep proper spacing. Don't crowd or leave large gaps between animals.
6. Be courteous to all and pay attention. Do not talk unless the judge asks you a question.
7. Be prepared to answer the judge's questions about your goat, your preparation, and goats in general.
8. If the judge asks you to switch animals with another exhibitor, quickly decide how to show it to emphasize its strong points and minimize its

weaknesses. Do not simply accept the grooming and position left by the previous exhibitor; re-set its legs and smooth its coat immediately to indicate you are the superior showman.

9. Remain in the ring until the judge is through with all the explanations for placings; pay attention regardless of your placing.
10. Be a humble winner and graceful loser.

Occasionally the goat you have carefully prepared will be lame, sick, in heat, or just plain droopy on the day of the show. Therefore, it is a good idea to have a second goat entered and prepared to take her place, just in case.

## To Parents and Leaders

1. Youth need proper tools, instruction, and practice before they can properly trim hooves and clip show animals. They should practice on non-show animals to gain skills well in advance of a show.
2. 4-Hers must learn how to set their animals in show position and master basic show ring maneuvers (advance, stop, turn, line up side-to-side, line up head-to-tail, change order, switch animals, etc.).
3. 4-H YOUTH MUST PREPARE THEIR OWN GOAT FOR SHOWMANSHIP CLASSES. Let each 4-Her do the work. Parents or other 4-Hers may assist in restraining the animal if necessary.

ADAPTED FROM MATERIALS PREPARED BY SPOKANE COUNTY 4-H GOAT PROJECT LEADERS JANE HIGUERA AND MR. AND MRS. DAN WALKER.

## Exhibits

Educational exhibits can be used to display 4-H members' skills; promote interest in 4-H work among members, parents, and prospective members; and attract attention to the 4-H dairy goat project.

Exhibits do not always need to include a live animal. The exhibit may include posters, models, drawings, slides, or actual equipment. They may take the form of a tabletop display, a booth with back and side panels, a window display, a projected computer presentation, portable display board, or a bulletin board. 4-H members can prepare exhibits for showing at fairs, community meetings, stores, banks, schools, achievement days, and other 4-H events.

These concepts should be kept in mind when planning and setting up an educational exhibit:

1. Choose one idea that can be explained in a simple, catchy statement. Use few printed words.
2. Have one main center of interest to which the eye is drawn.
3. Develop the story completely using as few items as possible. Clutter is the worst enemy of an exhibit.
4. Create a design that is orderly, interesting, and artistic.

5. Attract attention with movement, color, light, sound, clever title, and attractive design.
6. Make sure charts, posters, and other visuals are attractive, neat, clean, easily read, and accurate.
7. Judge exhibits by deciding if it attracts attention, arouses interest, conveys a message, and is well constructed with a neat and orderly appearance.
8. Select members to tend the exhibit who are well informed, can interact with the public easily, and create a favorable impression.

Project exhibits at 4-H shows, county fairs, or state fairs are important opportunities for members to show what they have learned. A well-prepared exhibit is a fitting climax to the project. Youth need to know the rules for entering each exhibit in which they participate. They should know what will be provided by the fair or show and what they are expected to provide regarding equipment and bedding for their animal.

Members should know what the show schedule is, where events will occur, fees involved, paperwork needed, deadlines, and what is expected of them before, during, and after the show.

A 4-H club might want to have its own show for the community and parents before members participate in a county show. This will give new members in the group show experience prior to participating at a county-wide event.

## Exhibiting a Goat

Leaders, use the following recommendations with youth as they prepare to exhibit their goats.

1. Prepare your animal, your equipment, and yourself in advance.
2. Fill out your entry carefully and accurately, sending it to the proper address on time.
3. Display an attractive, medium-sized sign with your animal identifying its breed, name, and owner's home town.



Does grazing on a good pasture in the spring to meet their energy and protein needs.

4. Handle and exhibit your animal with RESPECT, GENTLENESS, DIGNITY, AND PRIDE.
5. Provide all necessary feed and equipment. Feed and water animals in their pens. Make every effort to keep your area clean and attractive at all times. Remove manure promptly.
6. Know the show's rules and provide all required identification and certifications.
7. Give the show officials your undivided attention and cooperation.
8. Ensure animals are clean and groomed, with properly trimmed hooves.
9. Wear clean and appropriate show clothing and footwear.
10. Exhibit gracefully, without unnecessary conspicuous gestures.
11. Follow the show's classes carefully, bringing the proper animal into the ring for the proper class. Listen carefully to instructions for moving and lining up your animal in the ring.
12. Show your animal at its best manner, appearance, and type as it stands before the judge.
13. Be courteous at all times to officials and all others competing in the class.
14. Be prepared to give concise, accurate answers to officials about your animal. Have papers available if necessary for documentation.
15. Keep one eye on the judge and the other on your animal at all times.
16. Always know the whereabouts of the judge and have the animal in its best possible posture when the judge looks in your direction.
17. Keep your animal between you and the judge so you will not obstruct the judge's view.
18. Keep your goat standing well on four legs, one under each corner of the body. Accomplish this by maneuvering the animal by its collar or with slight hand pressure on its chest. Practice will make this second nature to your goat.
19. Never crowd your neighbor. As the judge instructs an exhibitor to move his or her animal up in the class, the exhibitors below should move down one position to give proper space.
20. Never talk to the judge in the ring except to answer questions.
21. Show your animal with silent pride and confident attitude.
22. Be considerate. Never allow your animal or yourself to keep a competitor's animal from showing at its very best before the judge.
23. Be a humble winner and a graceful loser. Accept the final decision of the judge. Offer congratulations to the first-place winner.
24. Do not leave places until awards have been

presented and records completed and you have been dismissed from the ring. Continue to exhibit your animal as it exits the ring.

25. Be sure you know the animal's date of birth when you take it into the ring, in case the judge asks. Whether it is your own or whether you are showing it for another exhibitor, also know when it freshened if it is a doe.
26. Be prepared to answer questions from the public and represent yourself, your animal, your club, and 4-H well at all times during an exhibition.

Adapted from the Dairy Goat Journal. July 1976

## **Biosecurity Recommendations for Shows and Exhibitions**

Increasing emphasis is being placed on biosecurity both on and off farms. Protecting animals from disease should be in the back of livestock owners' minds constantly, particularly those owners who choose to have their animals in contact with others at shows, fairs, exhibits, etc.

Showing goats definitely increases their risk of exposure to diseases, such as soremouth, ringworm, contagious abscesses (C.L.), foot rot, Johne's disease, lice, and more; not everyone will be willing to tolerate this added risk. A veterinarian will be critical to the development of an effective farm biosecurity plan. Below are items to be sure to address for herds that show animals.

- After returning from a show, quarantine show animals from the rest of the herd for at least 30 days (three months is even better).
- Perform chores on the home herd first, then chores on the animals returning from a show.
- Wash hands between touching different animals when possible.
- Work with your veterinarian to develop an effective vaccination program and use it.
- Minimize animal stress at home and at shows.
- Provide adequate quality and quantity of nutrition to support good immunity.
- Practice excellent farm sanitation.
- Do not use manure-handling tools for feed handling.
- Remove and compost or spread manure on fields at shows and at home.
- Do not overstock or crowd animals while transporting, at shows, or at home.
- Clean and disinfect trailers before and after transporting animals.
- Provide good quality air through adequate ventilation.
- Consider paying for additional pens at shows and keep them empty to serve as protective buffers from direct contact with other goats.



Two does housed in very sanitary conditions.

- Use metal vs. wooden pens, gates, barriers, and feeders whenever possible; disinfect before and after use.
- Use an effective disinfectant on equipment, facilities, instruments, tools, and clothing.
- Expose equipment and tools to UV sunlight.
- Use protective clothing (rubber boots, coveralls, disposable gloves) when handling animals.
- Control flies, mice, cats, birds, etc.
- Keep hay and feed bags protected from contamination.
- Do not feed directly on the ground.
- Provide clean water at all times but only from disinfected water buckets from your home farm.
- Do not borrow equipment. Disinfect any equipment that could have been used on other animals.
- Do not allow foot traffic or manure wheelbarrow paths to overlap with feeding areas.
- Monitor animals carefully twice daily for signs of illness; isolate and treat sick animals as needed.

## Recognition and Awards

There are many ways a leader can recognize 4-H members for effort and achievement. You can recognize accomplishments of each member by:

1. Giving praise and words of encouragement at any time.
2. Asking each to share skills with the group.
3. Writing personal letters.
4. Making telephone calls.
5. Visiting members' homes.
6. Giving committee assignments and other leadership responsibilities.
7. Giving recognition at achievement programs.

Your Extension faculty can tell you about awards and other special recognition for 4-H members in your county. There are many tangible awards available to 4-H members which can include:

1. Ribbons.
2. Cash or savings bonds.
3. Equipment, merchandise, and books relating to the project.
4. Medals, pins, or certificates.
5. Trips.
6. Scholarships.
7. Discount coupons.
8. Donated animals.

Competition can have both a desirable and undesirable effect on members and the 4-H program. If we want a desirable outcome and worthwhile experience for members from competition and awards, programs must contribute to the accepted educational objectives of the 4-H program. Give all participants an equal chance for recognition; make all rules, regulations, and directions clear and precise; have standards which are neither too hard nor too easy, but challenge all age groups involved; stimulate 4-H members to greater activity and self-improvement; and develop the spirit of cooperation as well as the spirit of competition.

## Resources

[Penn State 4-H Dairy Goat Project](#)

[Maryland Small Ruminant Page](#)

[eXtension – Goats website](#)

[NY State 4-H Youth Development Program – Goats website](#)

[American Dairy Goat Association website](#)

[ATTRA – Toolbox for Small Ruminant Educators website](#)

[Dairy Goat Management: Best Management Practices](#)



4-H 

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