

# 4-H Youth Development

## 4-H Youth Experience in Animal Projects – Purposes

January 22, 2018

**Rationale:** 4-H Youth Development must place an importance on developing “youth experience” versus “contest participation and competition.” It is important to build the framework of design in order to develop the highest level of success for our youth.

**Foundation:** Animal projects are an important aspect of the 4-H Program. To place emphasis on “youth experience,” the following objectives outline animal project purposes beyond event management to include youth development principles. Long considered a model program for youth to experience American Agriculture, animal projects have moved beyond animal husbandry practices to include intense scrutiny as part of the food supply feeding the world. We have a responsibility to collaboratively move to the larger intent of every 4-H event; 4-H Youth Development.

**Purpose of 4-H Animal Projects:** The South Dakota 4-H Youth Development Program defines the following objectives for the basis for “youth experience” with their animal project(s).

**Objective #1:** To promote personal growth and development by providing an educational experience for youth that emphasizes belonging, independence, generosity and mastery through the pathway of animal projects.

**Objective #2:** Animal projects assist youth in developing life skills. Decision making and planning are keys to building awareness and following through to project completion. When youth take responsibility for these aspects, they receive a more complete experience that prepares them for the future.

**Objective #3:** Animal projects build character through experience in a competitive environment. Positive interactions with mentors and other participants allow for exhibitors to increase their knowledge of recommended practices and procedures while building tolerance for other opinions.

**Objective #4:** To teach youth proper animal husbandry practices and spark career interests. Caring, feeding, fitting and exhibiting animals allows youth to gain experience with animal projects. Necessary paperwork assists participants to increase the well-being of animals while understanding ethical and safe practices for human consumption.

**County & State Animal Projects:** County and state animal project events will use the above objectives to move forward in 4-H Youth Development. This will provide the best array of involvement and participation in order to provide 4-H Youth a positive “youth experience.”

**Methods:** The message of 4-H Youth Development does not change, but the methods that drive the program forward often need to change with the times. The strategies proposed in this document may bring specific questions, but consistency is the key for implementation. For the purpose of this document, changes are identified and explained below.

#### Changes to State Fair 4-H Animal Project Requirements/Participation

- Affidavits will be for unofficial use only.
- 4HOnline data entry for 4-H animal identification is the exhibitor’s responsibility to upload into 4HOnline by June 1<sup>st</sup> at 11:59pm.
- Initial weight for market animals is no longer required to participate at the State Fair.
- DNA collection is the exhibitor’s responsibility.
- Animal registration papers are the exhibitor’s responsibility to upload to 4HOnline by July 1<sup>st</sup> at 11:59pm.
- Weigh-back processes during State Fair animal exhibitions have been eliminated.

### Direct Action

- Affidavits will be available for unofficial use.
  - The unofficial affidavits provide a tool for exhibitors when collecting the needed information for animal entry into 4HOnline.
    - Data that is collected on the unofficial affidavit correlates directly to the animal identification documentation entered in 4HOnline.
  - As affidavits are for unofficial use, they will not be accepted as an official form of ‘back up’ when checking in at State Fair.
  
- 4HOnline data entry for 4-H animal identification is the exhibitor’s responsibility.
  - It is the exhibitor’s responsibility to ensure registration is completed accurately before the deadline of June 1<sup>st</sup> at 11:59p.m. To insure accurate data entry, the youth/family member(s) should enter their own data.
  - 4-H Youth Program Advisors have a responsibility to insure that 4-H youth/families in their county(ies) have the resources available to enroll online. We recognize not all families have computer and/or internet access consistently available. Also, some 4-H youth/families, particularly those new to the program, may not be comfortable entering their information on their own. Mentorship to 4-H youth/families should be provided during the enrollment and entry season. This can be in the form of offering open enrollment times at the county office and/or other central locations, offering enrollment events with 4-H clubs, offering opportunities for 4-H youth/families to schedule times to meet with you individually, or alternative options that may work better. Members of the South Dakota 4-H Team have the responsibility to provide high quality customer service to youth and families served.
  
- Initial weight for market animals is no longer required to participate at the State Fair.
  - This does not prevent counties from holding their own county level rate of gain contest or other educational program.
  - When a county holds their own county level weigh-in/rate of gain contest and a youth does not attend, the lack of participation does not disqualify them from the county event. As long as all state level deadlines and requirements are met, the youth’s animal project(s) is eligible for State Fair 4-H exhibition.
  - Market animal NUES tagging requirements remain the same as in past years. Market animals must have an NUES tag to be exhibited at the County Achievement Day/Fair and South Dakota State Fair 4-H show. (Note: market sheep and market goats need scrapie tags, so NUES tags are not needed.) Without state level weigh-in requirements for market animals, NUES tagging is a self-identification process administered by the youth/family.

- DNA collection is the exhibitor's responsibility
  - To encourage consistency, informational help sheets will be provided to ensure proper preparation and training for exhibitors and their families.
  - Individual/Exhibitor DNA collection
    - Youth pick up a DNA sample envelope(s) from the county office, take home the envelope(s), properly collect the sample, record the animal identification and collect all signatures. Each sample must be carefully placed in its own envelope to insure each animal's sample is untainted. Once all steps are completed, youth will return the envelope(s) to the county office by June 1<sup>st</sup>. When returning the completed DNA samples to the county office, youth/families will pay the \$6 fee per sample.
      - Animal weight is NOT needed on the DNA sample envelope.
    - DNA collection can also be completed during mentorship days held within the county.
      - The sampling procedure above will be followed. However, 4-H Youth Program Advisors and county staff will be available for questions and guidance.
      - In an effort to emphasize project management, youth/families are responsible for providing a proper DNA sample for each market animal project by June 1st.
    - DNA process at State Fair
      - The State 4-H Office plans for DNA collection through a process of pre-identifying test samples for award winners and randomly selected exhibits.
- Registration papers are the exhibitor's responsibility.
  - If an exhibitor does not have a registration paper for their animal by July 1<sup>st</sup>, an official letterhead with a detailed explanation from the respective breed association stating circumstances for the lack of paperwork must be uploaded in its place. E-mail explanations alone for late registration papers are NOT an accepted document.
  - If an exhibitor does not upload a registration paper (or other supporting document) by July 1<sup>st</sup>, that animal must be entered in the commercial/crossbred division at both the county event and State Fair. If a supporting document is provided by the July 1<sup>st</sup> deadline, but the registration paper is not available by the county qualifying event, the animal must be exhibited in the commercial/crossbred division.
  - It is recommended that exhibitors have the original paper copy of the registration paper in hand during check in at both the county event and State Fair. This is recommended practice for any animal exhibition.
  - Counties can request registration paper copies to be filed in the county office. Please work with your county to understand local requirements above the 4HOnline upload.
- Deadlines are essential and will be strictly enforced.
  - A 4-H animal project(s) is ineligible for State Fair competition if any deadline is missed.
  - For youth who miss animal project deadlines, counties can allow county level project exhibition at the discretion of the 4-H Youth Program Advisor. However, this type of county level exhibition does not meet minimum expectations for State Fair qualification.
- Weigh-back processes during State Fair animal exhibitions have been eliminated.