

Kalamazoo County 4-H

Pocket Pets Project Guidelines

Project Superintendents: Andrea McCubbin- jamccubbin@aol.com or (269) 598-5231

Project Social Media: N/A

Project Objectives & Life Skills*

- 4-H'er will learn the care, needs and basics of owning a cavy or critter
- 4-H'ers will learn to identify breeds, species and their characteristics
- Head
 - Keeping records
 - Planning/organizing
 - Goal setting
 - Problem solving
- Heart
 - Concern for others
 - Empathy
 - Sharing
 - Communication
- Hands
 - Responsible citizenship
 - Teamwork
 - Self-motivation
 - Leadership
- Health
 - Character
 - Disease prevention
 - Personal safety
 - Stress-management

**note these life skills are just some examples of what 4-H members will learn in this project*

Additional Resources:

<https://www.weld4h.org/files/sharedassets/4-h/v/1/files/projects/countyprojects/pocket-pets-manual.pdf>
<https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/cavy-fitting-showmanship-member-s-guide-4h1345>
<https://anrcatalog.ucanr.edu/pdf/8617.pdf>
<https://www.redcross.org/get-help/how-to-prepare-for-emergencies/pet-disaster-preparedness.html>
https://ohio4h.org/sites/ohio4h/files/imce/books_resources/Learning%20Activities-Pocket%20Pets%20Beginning.pdf
<https://www.uwyo.edu/4-h/projects/manuals/pocket-pets-manual.pdf>

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Pocket Pets

Guidelines:

- Exhibitors are required to enter an educational exhibit for each animal type that they are planning on showing at the fair.
 - Cloverbud members (age 5-7 years old) may do notebooks, posters, 3-D display, video or other educational exhibits. Cloverbuds are not required to do an educational exhibit, but it is encouraged.
- All exhibitors must have their pets by June 1st of the current year to show them at the fair in August.
- All exhibitors are encouraged to enter showmanship class.
- A minimum of 3 county-wide meetings are required per project year to show your animals at the fair. Although it is recommended to attend all countywide meetings.
- Show dates and times will be posted in the fair book and in the July newsletter.
- Animals will be entered in on animal move in day and are to remain at the fairgrounds during fair week.
 - Birds and reptiles are not required to stay at the fair.
 - Contact the superintendent if the 4-H member has specific issues regarding leaving an animal in the Still Exhibit Barn during fair week.
- Exhibitors are required to check on their animals in the morning and at night to make sure they have enough food and water, and their cages/enclosures are clean and presentable for the public.

Section K – Cavies

- Included in this section are guinea pigs
- Multiple pocket pets may be entered by a single exhibitor

Section L – Pocket Pets

- Included in this section are mice, rats, hamsters and gerbils.
- Multiple pocket pets may be entered by a single exhibitor

Section M – Reptiles/Amphibians

- Included in this section are snakes, bearded dragons and other reptiles.
- No poisonous reptiles and amphibians will be allowed.

Section N – Pet Birds

- Exhibitors may enter multiple pet birds per class.
- Pet birds are limited to caged house birds such as canaries, lovebirds, parakeets, and parrots. Pigeons and poultry are excluded.

Section O – Educational Exhibits

- Educational exhibits can be a notebook, poster, 3-D exhibit, video or other educational exhibits.
- Please see page 3-4 for requirements for each year's educational exhibit
- Cavies and critters project report (page 5) should be included in your educational exhibition.

Section P – Showmanship

- Showmanship is not required for your animal project, but it is encouraged to do showmanship at the fair.

Pocket Pets Educational Requirements

- **First Year**
 - Write your personal story. Include pictures of you and your pet. You may also want to include specific goals or things you want to learn this year.
 - How do you care for your pet? Illustrate with pictures from magazines, hand drawn, or photos. Include housing, feeding, exercising, grooming, and routine vet care. Discuss tools/requirements for each.
 - List the parts of your pocket pet
- **Second Year**
 - Write your personal story. Include pictures and updates since last year
 - Why is record keeping important? This can include but is not limited to the following: vet care/illness, feeding, grooming, breeding, or showing your pet.
 - Describe showing and handling your pet. This should include but is not limited to showmanship for your pet.
- **Third Year**
 - Write your personal story. Include pictures and updates since last year.
 - Describe 2-3 internal or external parasites that your pet can get. Describe how they are transmitted and if possible, describe symptoms, treatments, life cycle, life span and prevention of the parasite.
 - Describe in detail 3 ailments or diseases that could affect your pet. If possible, include how it is transmitted, symptoms, treatment, and prevention.
- **Fourth Year**
 - Write your personal story. Include pictures and updates from last year.
 - Describe breeding basics for your pet. This should include, but is not limited to conception procedures, gestation, kindling, weaning, problems you may encounter, etc.
- **Fifth Year**
 - Write your personal story. Include pictures and updates from last year.
 - Describe in detail Genetics for your pet. Include description of desirable traits and color formulas. If possible, list faults or undesirable traits or lethal genetic breeding combinations.
- **Sixth Year**
 - Write your personal story. Include pictures and updates from last year.
 - Describe the history of your pet, what its origin is and how it became a favorite pet for people. This should include but is not limited to special products or services your pet has provided.
 - Keep a record of expenses for 2 months
- **Seventh Year**
 - Write your personal story. Include pictures and updates from last year.
 - Discuss the male and female reproductive organs. Include labeled diagrams. Include how long the female is in season, the gestation period, signs of pregnancy and labor, birthing needs, labor difficulty or problems you may encounter.
 - Show how you would keep records of each offspring, such as weight, color, etc. and when the offspring can or should be removed from the mother. Include any special feeding requirements or other notable information for your pet
- **Eighth Year**
 - Write your personal story. Include pictures and updates from last year.
 - Describe how you would manage and run a complete breeding program. Include the size of facilities needed, costs for food and vet care, breeding contracts, purchase contracts, any licenses needed and regulations for your townships if any are required. Use pictures, diagrams, etc to help discuss this topic.
- **Ninth Year**

- Write your personal story. Include pictures and updates from last year.
- Interview and write a report on a related profession. Include education, salary, and job availability. This could include, but is not limited to handler, trainer, store owner, breeder, vet, groomer, etc.
- Tenth year and above
 - Write your personal story. Include pictures and updates from last year.
 - Independent studies to be approved by the superintendent.
 - Proposal must be made to the superintendent for approval by December 31st.
 - Proposals must be made in writing stating the topic to be researched, the goals of the project and resources to be used.
 - The superintendent will sign the proposal upon approval.
 - Signed proposal should be included in notebook

Pocket Pets Project Report

Name: _____ 4-H Age: _____ Number of years in Project: _____

Club: _____

Pet's name: _____ Pet's age: _____ Type of pet: _____

Add photo of your animal here
(optionally you and your pet)

Personal story: _____
