

Kalamazoo County 4-H Sheep Project Guidelines

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Project Social Media: N/A

Project Objectives & Life Skills*

- The 4-H sheep project allows young people to learn about breeds, selection, grooming, production, management, showmanship, marketing and careers.
- Learn the basic principles of animal science by owning, caring for and keeping records on one or more heads of livestock.
- Gain knowledge of sound breeding, feeding and management practices.
- Identify quality in wholesale and retail cuts of meat to understand the relationship to management principles.
- **Head**
 - Goal setting
 - Resiliency
 - Decision making
 - Problem solving
- **Heart**
 - Cooperation
 - Nurturing relationships
 - Conflict resolution
 - Concern for others
- **Hands**
 - Leadership
 - Contributing to group efforts
 - Self motivation
 - Teamwork
- **Health**
 - Disease prevention
 - Character
 - Managing feelings
 - Personal Safety

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

Additional Resources:

[Michigan State University Extension Sheep Project Snapshot](#)
[Shop 4-H Livestock curriculum](#)

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Sheep project

Guidelines:

- 1 st year sheep members will be limited to two market entries.
- Those who have shown at least 1 yr can show 4 market lambs.
- Animals are to be owned by the exhibitor by May 15 prior to the fair.
- All market and breed lambs must have a USDA scrapie tag before coming to the fair.
- Members must have all market lambs that will be going to the Kalamazoo County Fair tagged with Kalamazoo County I.D. by the superintendents.
- Ram lambs must be castrated by the tagging date.
- Weigh in and tagging is mandatory and will be held on a date to be determined by the project superintendents, in the arena at the Kalamazoo County Expo Center and Fairgrounds
- Cloverbuds, youth 5-7 years old (as of January 1 of the current program year), will participate in non-competitive classes and will not be allowed to sell their animals during the livestock auction.
- When signing up for the fair Cloverbuds should sign up for the appropriate classes in Department 90.
- Lambs will be divided into weight classes for ewe lambs and wethers.
- The superintendents will determine the number of weight classes based upon the number of sheep and weight ranges.

Section A –Sheep Carcass

- For complete guidelines go to [large animal project guidelines](#)

Section B - P - Breeding Lambs

- All animals shown in breeding classes must be purebred.
- Members may have up to 2 entries per breeding class.

Section Q - Market Lambs

- All market lambs must come in on the day of the event already sheared, clean and dry for weighing in.
- All blankets must be removed for unloading and weighing in.
- All market breeds will compete.
- Market sheep may be grade, purebred or crossbred.
- Animals weighing less than 80# are not considered finished, unless deemed by the superintendent, will be placed in a “C” grouping and are not eligible for sale in the livestock auction.
- Animal weight will be established at weigh-in at the beginning of the fair and will be use for the show weigh classes and the livestock auction.

Section R– Showmanship

- All youth participants showing sheep (both breeding and market) are expected to compete in showmanship.

Section S– Wool

- Exhibitors may show one fleece per class and do not need to show an animal to participate in the wool project
- All wool must be identified with the sex and breed
- Both purebred and commercial wool will be judged together
- Only the champion and reserve champion fleece will sell with the proceeds to be split between the fleece and rug producers.
- The buyer of the Champion fleece will choose between two wool pieces determined by the coordinator.
- The buyer of the Reserve champion fleece will receive a wool piece determined by the coordinator.

Section T– Sheep science

- An educational project is required for exhibitors in the sheep project
- The exhibit may be a notebook, poster or other educational exhibit.
- CLOVERBUDS: 5 - 7
 - Importance of clean water
 - Know and be able to identify the characteristics of their own sheep breed
 - Age of lamb
 - Weight of lamb
 - Start to learn the parts of a lamb
 - Learn the meat breeds
- JUNIOR; 9-12 YEARS OLD
 - Importance of clean water
 - Know all sheep body parts
 - What to look for when choosing a lamb
 - Start to learn judging vocabulary
 - Show etiquette and equipment
 - Vaccinations
 - Current market price
- INTERMEDIATE:13 -15 YEARS OLD
 - Importance of clean water
 - Explore three health issues: (foot rot, scrapies, coccidiosis, etc.)
 - Importance of feed rations
 - Know judging vocabulary
 - How to shear a lamb
 - Difference between wool and meat breeds
- SENIOR 16 - 19 YEARS OLD
 - Have the knowledge to select and purchase your own lamb
 - Be able to prepare yourself and your lamb for show
 - Purchase to market plan (how to make a profit):
 - What weight your lamb should be when you buy it
 - What must you do to get it to the optimum weight at fair
 - Feed costs
 - How much do you need to sell your lamb for at the fair to make a profit.