

Kalamazoo County Small Mammals/Cavies and Critters/Reptiles/Pet Birds

4-H Project Guidelines

Revised 3-15-2012

1. All members must have their pets by June 1 of the current year to show the pet at the fair in August
2. All members are required to enter an educational exhibit for each animal type entered in the project for the fair. For example, if a cavy and a hamster are entered for fair, two educational exhibits are required, one for the cavy and one for the hamster. If multiple cavies in varying weight classes are entered for fair, only one educational exhibit is required for all cavies entered.
 - a. The educational exhibit may be a notebook, poster, 3-D exhibit or video. . See page 2 for Notebook requirements. Trophy and rosette for best notebook of the year will be awarded at the Fair.
 - b. Educational exhibits are judged the Saturday before fair and are entered as a still exhibit.
 - c. Clover Bud members (ages 5-8 years old) may do a Clover Bud notebook, poster, 3-D display, or video; A Clover Bud educational exhibit is encouraged but is not required.
 - d. A 4-H project record form or a Clover Bud Project form found on the Kalamazoo County 4-H website is required for all projects entered as a still exhibit. See page 2 for Notebook requirements.
3. All members are required to attend a minimum of 3 countywide meetings per project year. Contact the superintendent prior to a scheduled meeting if you have a conflict and need to obtain an excused absence. Members are encouraged to attend all countywide meetings.
4. While showmanship for your animal project(s) is not required, all members are encouraged to do showmanship at fair.
5. See the Fair book for dates and times for Small Mammals/Cavies and Critters judging & showmanship.
6. Pets will be entered Sunday morning start of fair 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 Room during fair. See the Fair book for specific deadlines.
7. No poisonous reptiles or amphibians will be allowed in the project.
8. Currently specific classes for fair include the following Critters:
 - Mice or Rats
 - Hamsters or Gerbils
 - Chinchillas
 - Any other pocket pets, such as Ferrets, Hedgehogs, Degus, Sugar Gliders, etc.
 - Snakes
 - Any other Reptile or amphibian
 - Pet bird, such as canaries, lovebirds, parakeets, parrots (excludes pigeons and poultry).

Research materials are available at libraries, specific books on your pet, magazines, pet supply catalogs/stores, the Internet and perhaps your vet. ARBA Standard of Perfection book and other ARBA materials will also have information on Cavies. Please document resources used in your educational exhibit.

Educational notebook requirements (9 years old and up)

If the 4-H member decides to do notebooks for the educational exhibit, a notebook is required for each animal type entered for fair. For example, if a cavy and a hamster are entered for fair, one notebook for the cavy and a separate notebook is required for the hamster. Put all your materials in a three-ring binder. Notebooks will be judged on current year only.

1. Put the Cavy and Critter project report in first. See superintendent or 4-H website for the Small Mammal/Cavies and Critters Project Report.
2. Include a Table of Contents behind the Cavy and Critter project report, but before the rest of your notebook
3. As each question is answered, put a title at the top of the page or use a title page. An example of this would be My Personal Story as the title on a page.
4. Answer each question as completely as possible. Be sure to answer all questions in your own words.
5. Label all illustrations, drawings, or pictures.
6. Note research sources as required.
7. If the member is in the second year and beyond in the project, include last year's notebook in reverse order of year, use tab dividers. For example, if you are doing year 3 in your notebook, this would be the first year in your current notebook, followed by Year 2 information, and finally Year 1 information at the end of your notebook.
8. Please have someone proof read the notebook to check for spelling and grammar mistakes.
9. Number all pages
10. Some suggested activities to include in the notebook might be shows, workshops, previous year's fair pictures, demonstrations, talks, or other interesting information on your pet or breed of animal.

First Year Notebook*

1. 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.
2. 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.

3. List the parts of your pocket pet.
4. Describe a Cavy or Critter that you do not own.

Second Year Notebook*

1. Write your personal story. Include pictures and updates since last year.
2. 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.
3. Describe showing and handling your pet. This should include, but is not limited to showmanship for your pet.
4. Describe another Cavy or Critter that you have not owned. (not the same one you described in your year 1 notebook)

Third Year Notebook*

1. Write your personal story. Include pictures and updates since last year.
2. 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.
3. Describe in detail 3 ailments or diseases that could affect your pet. If possible, include how it is transmitted, symptoms, treatment, and prevention.
4. Describe another Cavy or Critter that you have not owned. (not the same one you described in your year 1 or 2 notebooks)

Fourth Year Notebook*

1. Write your personal story. Include pictures and updates from last year.
2. Describe breeding basics for your pet. This should include, but is not limited to conception procedures, gestation, kindling, weaning, problems you may encounter, etc.
3. Describe another Cavy or Critter that you have not owned. (not the same one you described in your year 1 or 2 or 3 notebooks)

Fifth Year Notebook*

1. Write your personal story. Include pictures and updates from last year.
2. 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.
3. Describe another Cavy or Critter that you have not owned. (not the same one you described in your year 1 or 2 or 3 or 4 notebooks)

Sixth Year Notebook*

1. Write your personal story. Include pictures and updates from last year.
2. Describe the history of your pet, what is its origin and how did it become a favorite pet for people. This should include, but is not limited to special products or services your pet has provided.
3. Keep a record of expenses for 2 months and include this in your notebook.

Seventh Year Notebook*

1. Write your personal story. Include pictures and updates from last year.
2. 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.
3. 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 Notebook*

1. Write your personal story. Include pictures and updates from last year.
2. 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 Notebook*

1. Write your personal story. Include pictures and updates from last year.
2. 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, storeowner, breeder, vet, groomer, etc.

Tenth-Eleventh Year Notebooks*

1. Write your personal story. Include pictures and updates from last year.
2. Independent studies to be approved by the superintendent.
 - a. Proposal must be made to Superintendent for approval by December 31st.
 - b. Proposal must be made in writing stating the topic to be researched, the goals of the project and resources to be used.
 - c. Superintendent will sign the Proposal upon approval.
 - d. Signed Proposal must be included in notebook

*For your last year in the project/4-H, you also need to write a brief overview of all your years in the Small Mammal/Cavies and Critters 4-H project.

- What you liked about your project years
- What you did not like about your project years
- Would you do anything differently
- Would you chose the same type of pet or a different pet,
- Accomplishments, etc.

**Kalamazoo County 4-H Small Mammals/Cavies & Critters
Project Report**

Name: _____

Age: _____

Community Club: _____

How many years in 4-H: _____

How many years in Project: _____

Year in notebook: _____

Pet's name: _____

What kind of pet: _____

Pet's age: _____