

# 4-H Beef Project



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SNAPSHOT 4H1629

## CURRICULA & RESOURCES

### Michigan 4-H Resource

- <http://4h.msue.msu.edu/4h/livestock>
- » Beef Cow Calving and Breeding Record (4H1340)
  - » Beef Cow Production Record (4H1339)
  - » Your Market Beef Project (4H1188)

### Curricula — Other States

- » Beef Resource Handbook (4-H 117R) (The Ohio State University Extension): <http://estore.osu-extension.org/productdetails.cfm?PC=2313>
- » Beef, Sheep and Swine Selection and Evaluation (4-H 103R) (The Ohio State University Extension): <http://estore.osu-extension.org/productdetails.cfm?PC=2277>

### National 4-H Curricula

<http://www.4-h.org/resource-library/curriculum/>

- » Beef:
  - Bite Into Beef – Beef 1 (08143)
  - Here's the Beef – Beef 2 (08144)
  - Leading the Charge – Beef 3 (08145)
  - Beef Helper's Guide (08146)
  - Exploring Beef Health and Husbandry (08455)

### Other Resources

- » National Cattlemen's Beef Association: <http://www.beef.org/>
- » Michigan Beef Industry Commission: <http://www.mibef.org/>

## WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

The 4-H beef project allows you to learn about breeds, selection, grooming, production, management, showmanship, marketing and careers through a breeding or market animal.

- » Learn basic principles of animal science and gain life skills, such as responsibility, by owning, caring for and keeping records on one or more head of livestock.
- » Gain knowledge of sound breeding, feeding and management practices.
- » Start your own herd with breeding animals or raise a market animal that produces a meat product for human consumption.

## THE BIG PICTURE

### Starting Out:

- » Identify different beef breeds.
- » Explore the differences between market and breeding cattle.
- » Learn proper feeding of cattle.
- » Prepare a beef project to show by leading it and setting up its feet.
- » Learn how to groom a beef animal.
- » Locate and name parts of the beef animal.
- » Identify common beef cuts of meat.
- » Discover different beef by-products.
- » Develop and keep records of the beef project.
- » Identify how a healthy calf looks and acts.
- » Network with potential buyers.

### Learning More:

- » Learn the appropriate handling techniques and housing for beef cattle.
- » Identify livestock safety hazards.
- » Explore the difference between yield grade and quality grade.
- » Learn the various methods of cooking different beef cuts.
- » Compete in a livestock or meats judging contest.
- » Plan and conduct a beef promotional activity.
- » Explore a ruminant digestive system.
- » Identify common external parasites.
- » Properly administer medication.
- » Learn about beef food safety concerns and quality assurance practices.

### Expanding Horizons:

- » Help younger 4-H members explore a beef project.
- » Balance a beef ration.
- » Plan and conduct a beef showmanship clinic.
- » Learn how to manage a cow and newborn calf.
- » Organize a livestock judging clinic.
- » Learn about Expected Progeny Differences (EPDs).
- » Explore the technological impacts to beef breeding and reproduction.
- » Properly identify and learn to treat common cattle diseases.
- » Evaluate meat carcasses.
- » Interview beef producers about beef trends.
- » Research and analyze how beef check-off dollars are used.



## FOCUS ON BEEF

### Science

- » Explore beef behavior; track normal versus abnormal behaviors.
- » Understand the differences in nutritional needs throughout a cow's lifespan.
- » Learn about the anatomy of a ruminant digestive system.
- » Research genetic differences in beef breeds and current mutations.

### Life Skills

- » Use critical-thinking, problem-solving and decision-making skills to help you make good decisions about beef project management.
- » Keep records on your project expenses and income.
- » Practice personal resiliency through successes and challenges in your beef project.

### Citizenship & Leadership

- » Complete a beef promotion presentation during May, Beef Month.
- » Provide beef taste testing at a grocery store to promote local food.
- » Lead other 4-H members in participating in local beef producer events.
- » Start a beef livestock judging team with the help of an adult volunteer.
- » Prior to the county fair, lead a beef grooming and showmanship clinic.



### Communication

- » Teach someone the important traits in selecting a breeding heifer.
- » Design a poster demonstrating how to prepare beef cuts.
- » Participate in a judging contest giving oral reasons.
- » Share a presentation on the importance of following drug labels.

## HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

- » Contact your local Michigan State University (MSU) Extension office for workshops, activities and events.
- » If you are interested in a college education in animal science or veterinary medicine, visit MSU's website at [www.msu.edu](http://www.msu.edu) to explore those majors.
- » Visit a local feed mill and see how feed ingredients are mixed, weighed and blended to make a complete ration.
- » Visit a local meat locker or local grocery meat case to observe preparation and packaging.
- » Compare beef feed tags from different companies.
- » Participate in a beef skillathon contest.
- » Job shadow with a local beef producer or veterinarian to learn about animal management and health.
- » Attend a cattle show to listen to a judge give oral reasons and witness the differences in judging cattle.
- » Participate in a regional livestock judging workshop in the fall.
- » Discover different uses for beef products and by-products.
- » Exhibit or attend local, regional or national beef shows and conferences.
- » Consider showing in your county fair beef show.

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