

## Prior to the Show:

- Train, prepare and groom your project animal to the best of your ability before a show.
- Become familiar with the handling and transportation of your project animal.
- Have a well-stocked show box with the appropriate supplies.
- Find out as much as you can about the rules of the upcoming show, including the dress code.  
\* Each show may have a different set of rules, so you need to know what each particular show expects. Know and understand the rules of the show before entering the ring.

## At the Show:

- Be friendly towards other exhibitors and take the opportunity to meet 4-H members from other areas. Be helpful to all exhibitors.
- If you're showing at an outdoor event, be sure to wear sunscreen.
- Do your own work on your project animal. 4-H is about learning to do by doing.
- Be an advocate for agriculture – be polite to those who ask questions, and take the time to answer if you can. You may be the only exhibitor they have ever talked to!

## In the Ring:

- Be alert at all times in the ring.
- Make sure you're prompt in entering the ring.
- Be polite and courteous to the judge and fellow exhibitors. Sportsmanship is a key ingredient in showmanship.
- Keep the animal under control at all times.
- Watch the judge for directions, and explicitly follow the directions you are given.
- Be prepared to answer questions that the judge may ask you – such as the animal's date of birth, weight, genetics, or your opinion on the characteristics of your animal.
- Be prepared to lead any animal the judge designates. Be courteous when returning to your animal.
- Follow the accepted practices in leading for each specific livestock type.
- Make sure the animal looks its best from the time it enters the ring until it leaves.
- Never stand between your animal and the judge.
- Don't fuss inappropriately when the animal is properly posed or penned.
- At some shows, senior members show prior to junior or novice members. If so, be sure to watch the more experienced exhibitors show and listen to the judge's reasons – you'll learn from them, and have a better understanding of what's expected.
- Respect the judge. The decision of the judge is final. Even if you disagree, be open-minded and view it as a learning experience. Use the experience to improve your showmanship technique.
- Be a gracious winner.
- Keep showing until you exit the ring – don't fall for the temptation to quit showing once the judge makes his/her placing.
- Smile! Smiling helps you relax, and portrays confidence.
- Relax! Showmanship is meant to be a fun learning experience – gain all you can from each experience you have in the ring, no matter how you placed.



## **What to wear, what to wear!**

- The number one thing to remember here is to be neat and clean. Clothing and accessories do not need to be brand-new or expensive – but you do need to present yourself in a professional manner by being neat, clean and appropriately dressed. Make sure your shoes or boots are clean and laces are neatly tied, that your whites are white and your clothing is clean. Those with long hair may choose to wear their hair back or up, so that it stays neat and out of the way. Do not chew gum or smoke. Nothing should be worn that focuses attention on you rather than on your animal.
- To find out what the dress code is for shows you are exhibiting in, consult the rules & regulations for the show; contact show organizers, breed organizations, or ask your 4-H leader. It is your responsibility as a member to find out what is expected of you for each show.

Here's a listing of the generally acceptable attire for various species, provided as a suggestion only. **Remember**, do your homework and find out what is expected for each show.

Dairy: White pants and white shirt, adequate footwear.

Beef: Black pants and white shirt, and adequate footwear.

Lamb: White shirt and black pants, and adequate footwear.

Horse: Tends to vary depending on breed or discipline. One basic form of standard attire is dark pants or breeches and clean shirt. Be sure to find out what's expected for your shows. What's important is to be suitably dressed, neat and clean. If riding or driving, ASTM-approved helmets are required.

Dairy Goat: White pants and white shirt, adequate footwear.

Meat Goat: Black pants and white shirt with adequate footwear tends to be the accepted practice.

Swine: Dark pants and white shirt. At some shows, denim jeans are acceptable.

Rabbit: White shirt and pants, or white lab coat.

Poultry: White shirt and pants, or white lab coat.

## **Last but not Least:**

4-H members are responsible for the care, preparation, fitting and exhibiting of their 4-H project animals. Club leaders and parents can be on hand to assist members if they are having difficulty, but are not to be performing duties that members can do for themselves. Learn to do by doing!

4-H is first and foremost a youth development program. What's important is the 4-H member, not the project or the show. The exhibition of 4-H projects is the means to develop the elements of responsibility, decision-making, goal-setting, and leadership skills in 4-H youth.

# Have fun showing!