Date: February 21, 2017

To: All 4-H Dairy Feeder Steer Project Members and Leaders

From: Eva Beeker, Program Coordinator, 4-H Youth Development

Re: 1. Basic Dairy Feeder Steer Selection/Management Tips
2. Radio Frequency Identification Device (RFID) Ear Tags
3. Vaccinations
4. General Rules
5. Optional resource material available at the MSU Extension Office
6. Showmanship
7. Important Dates and Deadlines for the Dairy Feeder Steer Project

1. Purchasing Dairy Feeder Steers and Making Weight

- Dairy calves weighing 90 lbs. or more at birth make the most rapid weight gain.
- Feeder steers sell best when they weigh 400-600 lbs. at market time.
- In order to market a 400-600 pound feeder steer in September, you need to purchase a calf born in March or early April, and it should have a birth weight of 90 lbs. or more.
- Dairy calves should gain at least 1.75 lbs. per day from birth to 6 months of age. Any dairy feeder steer that does not gain a minimum of 1.75 lbs/day from the June weigh in date to the September weigh in at fair, will be sent home and will not be able to exhibit at the fair.

2. Electronic Identification (EID) Tags

- All cattle moving to a show, sale, or exhibition are required to have an official radio frequency identification device (RFID) ear tag. Exhibitors may call the Michigan Department of Agriculture at 1-866-870-5136 to order RFID tags at a cost of $2.00 per tag.
- All out-of-state cattle exhibited in Michigan shall be tagged with an official radio frequency identification device (RFID) ear tag. Tags can be ordered by calling Vickie McCune with RJ Matthews Co. at 330-834-3000, ext 2013 or by calling Amy Bledsoe with the Indiana Animal Health, Inc. at 219-279-2378.
- All cattle purchased in the State of Michigan, by law, must have an EID tag.

3. 2017 Dairy Feeder Steer Project Vaccination Requirements

The goal of the required vaccination program is to help protect both the 4-H member, and ultimately the buyer of a given dairy feeder steer, against potential financial loss due to illness or death of the animal.

Dairy Feeder Steer Vaccination Requirements:

Step 1 - By June 10 vaccinate with a modified live vaccine that provides for the immunization of healthy cattle against the four (4) viruses listed below.

Step 2 - "Booster" the calf two to four weeks later (following the Step 1 vaccination) with the same type of modified live vaccine used in Step 1.

Step 3 - On arrival to the fairgrounds for fair weigh-in Nasalgen will be administered to all steers. Nasalgen is an intranasal administered IBR-PI3 vaccine. It is for use where fast protection against IBR and PI3 is needed. Nasalgen has a 21 day withdrawal time. Since there is a 21 day withdrawal time, NO FEEDER STEER WILL BE ALLOWED TO BE HARVESTED UNTIL THE 21 DAY WITHDRAWAL PERIOD HAS PASSED! Please be sure your buyers are advised of this!
Bovine viruses for which immunization must be provided for in the vaccines you select are as follows (vaccines for additional diseases are allowable):

- **IBR** - Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis
- **BRSV** - Bovine Respiratory Syncytial Virus
- **BVD** - Bovine Viral Diarrhea
- **PI3** - Para-Influenza

4-H leaders who prefer to administer the first two (2) required vaccinations must contact Steve Trattles, 4-H Beef Cattle/Dairy Beef Project Superintendent by **Friday, May 5** at 269/506-0555 to indicate this preference. This is a very important deadline, since Steve will be purchasing vaccine based on his knowledge of which clubs will or will not be having Step 1 vaccinations administered at the fairgrounds on June 8 and June 10, 2017.

4. **General Rules of Interest**
   1. There are four different types of 4-H market cattle that can be exhibited in 4-H classes at the St. Joseph County Grange Fair: *beef market steers, beef market heifers, dairy market steers and dairy feeder steers*. A given member may register all four types of market cattle with the MSU Extension office. **AS OF 2014:** 4-H Members may show both a Market Dairy Steer and a Feeder Steer but may only sell the Market Dairy Steer as their “primary” project at fair.
   
   2. **As of the 2015 post fair beef meeting...dairy feeder steers may be cross bred dairy animals of one of the following breeds:** Ayrshire, Brown Swiss, Guernsey, Holstein, Jersey, Dutch Belt, and Line-Back.
   
   3. 4-H members may do cross-registration of dairy feeder steers within the immediate family (i.e. among brothers and/or sisters in the same family). Each dairy feeder steer may be registered to any or all of an immediate family, but each member is limited to a maximum of two dairy feeder steers registered in their name. Only one of the animals listed on the member’s registration form can be exhibited by that member.
   
   4. Dairy feeder steers **must be castrated** by the time of initial weigh-in at the fairgrounds on June 8 or June 10.
   
   5. **Dehorning:**
      - **All dairy feeder steers must be dehorned** by the time of initial weigh-in at the fairgrounds on June 8 or June 10.
      - **All market and breeding stock cattle must be clean-polled/dehorned** with an allowance of 1 ½” regrowth at fair in order to be exhibited in 4-H classes at the fair.
   
   6. Beef/dairy beef with physical defects (i.e. ruptured navel, abscess, etc.) will be ineligible for exhibition in 4-H/FFA & Other Youth classes at fair.
   
   7. Dairy feeder steers will be divided into classes based on their weigh-in weight at the fair. Weight classes will be made as appropriate to fit logical weight "splits" as determined by the 4-H Beef Project Superintendent/Assistant Superintendents and the St. Joseph County MSU Extension staff.
   
   8. All dairy feeder steers weighed in at the fair will automatically be entered in the Dairy Feeder Steer Rate-of-Gain Contest. Contest awards will include 1st place and 2nd place trophies, plus 1st through 8th place premiums. Trophies will be awarded to the exhibitors of all Champion and Reserve Champion dairy feeder steers.
   
   9. Feed and water buckets/pans must be removed from the stall as soon as the animal has finished eating/drinking. Also, **stalls must be cleaned daily** (removing wet and manured bedding). The 4-H member is responsible for monitoring when the animal is done eating/drinking and removing buckets/pans accordingly as well as cleaning the stall(s). Failure to follow these rules may lead to “yellow/red-tagging” the exhibit. If a member receives two yellow tags and one red tag his/her project animal will be sent home and all awards/premiums relating to that animal will be revoked. See the “yellow/red tag” rule in the St. Joseph County 4-H Fair Book.

5. **Dairy Market Steer Project Bulletins Available!**
   
   Copies of **Your 4-H Beef Project** bulletin and the **Beef Resource Handbook** are available for purchase at the St. Joseph County MSU Extension office.

6. **Showmanship**
   
   All exhibitors are required to compete in Fitting & Showmanship classes showing their own project animal.
## 7. Important Dates and Deadlines for the Dairy Feeder Steer Project

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| Initial Animal Weigh-in | June 8, 5:00-7:00 p.m. or June 10, 9:00 – 11:00 a.m. | - Animals must weigh between 175 and 325 pounds  
- Each member can weigh/register two animals  
- Animals will receive “Step 1” vaccination at weigh-in  
- Approximately $2.50/animal is due to cover the cost of the vaccination.  
- **Note:** 4-H market/carcass lamb and goat Weigh/Tag/Registration will also take place on these days. |
| Step 1 Vaccination (Detailed instruction on vaccination can be found earlier in this letter) | In conjunction with sheep & goat weigh-ins |
| Step 2 Vaccination | June 20 to July 6 (two to four weeks after the Step 1 vaccination) | - Your beef leader or your veterinarian will administer the Step 2 vaccination. You must bring the completed Step 1 & 2 verification form to the Fair weigh-in |
| Fair Weigh-in & Step 3 Vaccination | September 16, 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. | - The step 3 vaccination will be administered during fair weigh-in. **Bring your Step 1 and 2 Vaccination Verification Form.**  
- Approximately $1.00 is due to cover the cost of the vaccination.  
- Sign-up for a Dairy Feeder Steer Project Evaluation |
| Dairy Feeder Steer Evaluation | September 17, 9:00 a.m. - noon |
| Dairy Feeder Steer Show | September 19, 9:00 a.m. |
| Deadline to remove your animal from the 4-H Market Livestock Sale | September 19, 9:00 p.m. | - The 4-H member and parent or legal guardian must complete, sign and turn in the form to remove your animal from the sale. Forms are available in the 4-H Fair Office and are to be submitted to that Office.  
- The Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion animals must be sold in the sale. |
| 4-H Market Livestock Sale (large) | Large Animal Sale Begins September 21, 10:30 a.m. | - Beef are last in the sale order. |
| Load out from fair and Barn Clean Out | September 24, 5:30 a.m. |

Please feel free to call the Extension Office at 269/467-5521 if you have questions regarding information contained in this letter.