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.

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.

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.

CURRICULA & RESOURCES

Michigan 4-H Resource
http://4h.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, 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/
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 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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