SNAPSHOT 4H1618

4-H Swine Project

WHAT’S IT ALL ABOUT?
The 4-H swine project helps you learn about swine breeds, health care, production, management, showmanship, marketing and careers in the swine industry.

» Learn principles of animal science and gain life skills, like responsibility, by owning, caring for and keeping records on one or more head of livestock.
» Gain knowledge of sound breeding, feeding and management practices.
» Learn nutritive value of swine products and promote their use.

THE BIG PICTURE

Starting Out:
» Learn breed names.
» Identify swine body parts.
» Learn how to judge swine.
» Manage a swine production budget.
» Learn how to feed and water your pig.
» Identify how a healthy pig looks and acts.
» Name and describe pork meat cuts.
» Discover pork by-products.
» Conduct a pork cooking and tasting experiment.
» Prepare to show your swine at the local fair.
» Network with potential buyers.
» Recognize buyers of your swine project.
» Develop and keep records on your swine project.

Learning More:
» Learn differences in preparing pork cuts by cooking and tasting.
» Learn pork quality standards.
» Explore swine breed characteristics.
» Understand how to keep swine health records.
» Explore various swine diseases.
» Understand swine management practices.
» Analyze and make decisions on how to solve swine management issues.
» Formulate a swine ration.
» Plan and conduct a pork promotional activity.
» Explore the digestive system of a pig.
» Identify leanness of a swine carcass.
» Learn world cultural beliefs about swine.

Expanding Horizons:
» Help a younger 4-H'er explore the swine project.
» Organize a judging clinic.
» Plan and conduct a swine showmanship clinic for younger members.
» Arrange questions and hold a swine quiz bowl.
» Plan swine breeding.
» Research state or national swine organizations.
» Learn about swine genetics.
» Interview agencies about environmental issues.
» Explore farrow-to-finish facilities.
» Learn how to manage baby pigs.
» Balance a swine ration.
» Compare qualities in carcasses.
» Explore international swine markets.

CURRICULA & RESOURCES

Michigan 4-H Resource
http://4h.msue.msu.edu/4h/livestock
» Swine Litter Record (4H1342)

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
» 4-H Swine Project Health Supplement (4H369K) (University of Wisconsin Extension) http://www.uwex.edu/ices/4h/pubs/showdoc.cfm?documentid=30501


National 4-H Curricula
http://www.4-h.org/resource-library/curriculum/
» Swine
  • The Incredible Pig – Swine 1 (08065)
  • Putting the Oink in Pig – Swine 2 (08066)
  • Going Whole Hog – Swine 3 (08067)
  • Swine Helper’s Guide – (08068)

Other Resources
» The 10 Youth PQA Plus Good Production Practices (GPPs) Key Learning Objectives http://www.pork.org/filelibrary/youthpqaplus/YPQA_GPPs.pdf
FOCUS ON SWINE

Science
» Explore genetic traits for successful breeding.
» Learn about the anatomy of a swine's gastrointestinal system.
» Understand differences in environmental needs throughout the pig's lifespan.
» Practice good management techniques and complete PQA (Pork Quality Assurance) Plus Certification.

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

Citizenship & Leadership
» Volunteer your baby pig for an Agriculture in the Classroom program at school.
» Participate in a local food drive project donating to food pantries.
» Volunteer to help at the county livestock judging event at the swine station.
» Lead other 4-H members in participating in local pork producers events.
» Teach others how to safely handle swine at a PQA session.
» Prior to your county fair, lead a swine showmanship and grooming session.

Communication
» Design a poster on parts of the swine.
» Participate in a judging contest giving oral reasons.
» Give a tail-docking demonstration.

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.
» Compare feed tags from different companies.
» Visit a local meat locker or local grocery meat case to observe preparation and packaging.
» Learn how to evaluate meat cuts – quality grade and yield grade – and learn how these affect taste and cost.
» Job shadow a local veterinarian to learn about animal health.
» Attend a swine show and listen to a judge give oral reasons, and witness the differences in judging hogs.
» Participate in a judging team.
» Tour a hog operation.
» Research swine by-products.
» Consider showing in your county fair swine show.


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