

# Kalamazoo County 4-H

## Sheep Project Guidelines

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**Project Social Media: N/A**

### Project Objectives & Life Skills\*

- The 4-H sheep project allows young people to learn about breeds, selection, grooming, production, management, showmanship, marketing and careers.
- Learn the basic principles of animal science by owning, caring for and keeping records on one or more heads of livestock.
- Gain knowledge of sound breeding, feeding and management practices.
- Identify quality in wholesale and retail cuts of meat to understand the relationship to management principles.
- **Head**
  - Goal setting
  - Resiliency
  - Decision making
  - Problem solving
- **Heart**
  - Cooperation
  - Nurturing relationships
  - Conflict resolution
  - Concern for others
- **Hands**
  - Leadership
  - Contributing to group efforts
  - Self motivation
  - Teamwork
- **Health**
  - Disease prevention
  - Character
  - Managing feelings
  - Personal Safety

*\*note these life skills are just some examples of what 4-H members will learn in this project*

#### **Additional Resources:**

[Michigan State University Extension Sheep Project Snapshot](#)  
[Shop 4-H Livestock curriculum](#)

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## Sheep project

### **Guidelines:**

- 1 st year sheep members will be limited to two entries in each individual class.
- Those who have shown at least 1 yr can show 4 market lambs.
- Animals are to be owned by the exhibitor by May 15 prior to the fair.
- All market and breed lambs must have a USDA scrapie tag before coming to the fair.
- Members must have all market lambs that will be going to the Kalamazoo County Fair tagged with Kalamazoo County I.D. by the superintendents.
- Ram lambs must be castrated by the tagging date.
- Weigh in and tagging is mandatory and will be held on a date to be determined by the project superintendents, in the arena at the Kalamazoo County Expo Center and Fairgrounds
- Cloverbuds, youth 5-7 years old (as of January 1 of the current program year), will participate in non-competitive classes and will not be allowed to sell their animals during the livestock auction.
- Cloverbuds should sign up under the appropriate classes in Department 90
- Lambs will be divided into weight classes for ewe lambs and wethers.
- The superintendents will determine the number of weight classes based upon the number of sheep and weight ranges.

### Section A –Sheep Carcass

- For complete guidelines go to [large animal project guidelines](#)

### Section B - P - Breeding Lambs

- All animals showing in breeding classes must be purebred

### Section Q - Market Lambs

- All market lambs must come in on the day of the event already sheared, clean and dry for weighing in.
- All blankets must be removed for unloading and weighing in.
- All market breeds will compete.
- Market sheep may be grade, purebred or crossbred.
- Animals weighing less than 80# are not considered finished, unless deemed by the superintendent, will be placed in a “C” grouping and are not eligible for sale in the livestock auction.
- Animal weight will be established at weigh-in at the beginning of the fair and will be use for the show weigh classes and the livestock auction.

### Section R– Showmanship

- All youth participants showing sheep (both breeding and market) are expected to compete in showmanship.

### Section S– Wool

- Exhibitors may show one fleece per class and do not need to show an animal to participate in the wool project
- All wool must be identified with the sex and breed
- Both purebred and commercial wool will be judged together
- Only the champion and reserve champion fleece will sell with the proceeds to be split between the fleece and rug producers.  
\*The buyer of the Champion fleece will choose between two wool pieces determined by the coordinator.  
\*\* The buyer of the Reserve champion fleece will receive a wool piece determined by the coordinator.

## Section T– Sheep science

- An educational project is required for exhibitors in the sheep project
- The exhibit may be a notebook, poster or other educational exhibit.
- CLOVERBUDS: 5 - 7
  - Importance of clean water
  - Know and be able to identify the characteristics of their own sheep breed
  - Age of lamb
  - Weight of lamb
  - Start to learn the parts of a lamb
  - Learn the meat breeds
- JUNIOR; 9-12 YEARS OLD
  - Importance of clean water
  - Know all sheep body parts
  - What to look for when choosing a lamb
  - Start to learn judging vocabulary
  - Show etiquette and equipment
  - Vaccinations
  - Current market price
- INTERMEDIATE:13 -15 YEARS OLD
  - Importance of clean water
  - Explore three health issues: (foot rot, scrapies, coccidiosis, etc.)
  - Importance of feed rations
  - Know judging vocabulary
  - How to shear a lamb
  - Difference between wool and meat breeds
- SENIOR 16 - 19 YEARS OLD
  - Have the knowledge to select and purchase your own lamb
  - Be able to prepare yourself and your lamb for show
  - Purchase to market plan (how to make a profit):
    - What weight your lamb should be when you buy it
    - What must you do to get it to the optimum weight at fair
    - Feed costs
    - How much do you need to sell your lamb for at the fair to make a profit.