



4-H Dairy Goat Project

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

The dairy industry is one of the foundations of agriculture. Most think of only dairy cattle when they think of animals that produce dairy products. Think again! Goat's milk is a popular dairy commodity, but goats can also be used for meat and fiber. Goats produce products such as soaps, lotions, cheese, milk, meat and fiber. The 4-H dairy goat project can provide you with the opportunity to learn about selection, management, health, marketing and careers in the goat industry.

- » Acquire basic knowledge about dairy goats.
- » Learn what a goat eats and what type of housing it needs.
- » Learn about basic animal identification.
- » Practice basic safe goat handling and management skills.

CURRICULA & RESOURCES

Michigan 4-H Resources

- » <http://4h.msue.msu.edu/4h/livestock>
- » Michigan 4-H Animal Science Cloverbud Record Book: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/resources/cloverbud_animal_record_book

National 4-H Curricula

- » <http://4-h.org/parents/curriculum/>
- » Goats:
 - Getting your Goat (4H 396A)
 - Stepping Out (4H 396B)
 - Showing the Way (4H 396C)
 - Dairy Goat Leader Guide (4H 396 LDR)

Other Resources

- » Michigan Dairy Goat Association: mdgs.org
- » Michigan Sheep Breeders Association (fiber goats): <http://www.misheep.org/>
- » Michigan Boer Goat Association: <http://michiganboergoat.org/>

THE BIG PICTURE

Starting Out:

- » Know basic information about your animal (breed, gender, color, identification).
- » Caring for your animal.
- » Demonstrate basic showing techniques.
- » Groom your animal.

Learning More:

- » Learn about different breeds.
- » Identify basic body parts of the animal.

Expanding Horizons:

- » Understand different uses for various breeds (fiber, dairy, meat).
- » Keep basic records on your animals.

HOW CAN PARENTS SUPPORT CLOVERBUD PROJECTS?

Parents play an important role in helping their children find out what they like and don't like. As a parent, you can be supportive and encourage your child to try new things. Be there to help them figure out the answer when they have questions. Don't just answer the question for them, but help them know where to go to find the answer. The important part of a cloverbud project is not the outcome, but the

experience children have while participating. It's OK if your child ends up not liking their current project, but they should finish it and try something else. Remember, cloverbuds are at an age where they can explore lots of different topics to try and find the ones they really want to focus on in the future.



4-H Cloverbud Dairy Goat Project



FOCUS ON DAIRY GOATS

Science

- » Investigate and compare the different types of goat breeds and purposes.
- » Observe and record normal behavior of a dairy animal and compare it to abnormal behavior.

Communication

- » Create and present a poster on any breed of goat.

Citizenship & Leadership

- » Volunteer your animal for a petting zoo to share the importance of goats.
- » Participate in a goat project promotion event.

Life Skills

- » Keep records of your animal.
- » Explore careers working with goats.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:

- » What was your favorite part of this activity/project?
- » What do you know now that you did not know before?
- » What do you want to explore more/next?

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

- » Contact your local Michigan State University (MSU) Extension office for workshops, activities and events.
- » Tour a dairy goat operation.
- » Participate in the State 4-H Goat Show cloverbud classes.
- » Visit contests at the State 4-H Goat Expo.
- » Research goat products such as soap, cheese or milk.

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