

## Why Show Youth Livestock?

Georgia 4-H uses all kinds of projects to accomplish our main objective - positive youth development! Livestock projects are special because young people learn what it truly means to care for and be responsible for another living being. Youth learn time management, budgeting, record keeping skills and many animal husbandry skills. They also learn about the livestock industry and its role in the larger agricultural economy.

Georgia 4-H believes there are four essential elements to positive youth development: Mastery, Generosity, Belonging and Independence. The 4-H Livestock Program fosters all four elements. Attend a livestock show and you cannot miss the sense of community. Maybe no other 4-H program demonstrates a sense of belonging like the livestock program. Youth build mastery as they practice and compete. Getting up early to feed and care for animals builds a “can do” attitude important for independence. How does one rightly describe generosity? The livestock shows again offer fine examples - adults sharing what they know with youth with no thought to the competitive nature of the event, youth sharing supplies...generosity is everywhere.

We are excited that you are interested in joining this dynamic part of Georgia 4-H! This fact sheet is a start-up document. You will find county agents, UGA Specialists and friends of agriculture everywhere willing to help you take next steps.

## The Basics of Raising a Market Steer

### Cost of Showing a Market Steer

**Purchase of Market Steer:** A beef cattle project is a very rewarding project. Beef project heifers or steers require daily care and attention by the exhibitor. It should be considered a project that has higher cost and labor inputs than other livestock species. Steers are typically \$1,500 plus depending on breed and source. Cattle should be purchased well in advance of the October 1<sup>st</sup> deadline. Most cattle projects are secured by June. Purchases can be made private treaty from producers or through advertised sales. Beef cattle projects can be one or multiple registered heifers, commercial heifers, or steers. Novice showman should consider animal weight and age. Larger, heavier weight animals may be more difficult for younger participants to control on the halter. Please consult with your local UGA Extension to find reputable purchasing options.

**Feed:** Feed cost consists of 60%-80% of the project after purchase and typical cost would be \$150 a month and up for an individual beef animal depending upon feed type. Concentrate commercial feeds can be purchased from livestock feed stores.

**Equipment:** Nylon halter, Show stick, Feed Pans, Water bucket, Water Hose, Fitting and Grooming Supplies, Livestock Blower (recommended) are supplies that you will need for your first year of showing and can be reused throughout time. Livestock fans, a show box, and a grooming chute are also needed, but be sure to check with your county first to make sure they do not already have some that can be used.

## Facilities

- Secure Holding pen approximately 12'x12' preferably sheltered during hot or inclement weather.
- Provide appropriate bedding such as wood shavings or mulch. Daily removal of animal waste is a necessity. A night or turn out pen is highly recommended as an exercise area and aids the cleaning maintenance of the holding pen.

## Health

- If purchasing a calf, ideally it will have been weaned for more than 45 days or longer and have received appropriate health vaccinations. This will increase the odds for a healthy calf during transition to your location.
- Appropriate deworming and external parasite control is necessary.
- Health papers will need to accompany all show cattle for each show and crossing state lines. Rules vary by state. Please consult your local UGA Extension office or the Georgia Department of Agriculture for details.
- Please consult a veterinarian to outline an appropriate annual health protocol for beef steer projects.

## Feeding

Free choice clean water, quality hay, and a 12-14% crude protein feed ration is the basis for feeding and caring for your calf's nutritional needs. You can formulate a custom ration or purchase from a reputable show feed company. Beef cattle should be fed to consume 2.0% of their body weight on a dry matter basis of hay, forage, and/or concentrate feeds.

## Show Requirements

- Refer to the Georgia Junior National Livestock Show Rulebook and always read show rules for any exhibition you are preparing to attend!
- Complete and mail entries with payment, and be sure your forms are signed by your county agent!
- Complete Code of Conduct and Medical Info & Release Forms and turn them in to your county agent for the Georgia Junior National Livestock Show!

**Additional Opportunities** – Livestock Judging Contest, Market Steer Record Book Contest, Georgia Junior National Livestock Show, Georgia National Fair Junior Invitational, Georgia Cattlemen's Association's Beef Industry Scholarship Challenge, District Project Achievement

**Additional Resources** – The following links can be accessed and utilized for more information regarding shows, contests, clinics, care for your project, scholarship opportunities and more!

Georgia 4-H Livestock Program's Beef Webpage: <http://georgia4h.org/livestock/beef/default.htm>

Raising Beef Cattle for Dummies (Cheat Sheet): <http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/raising-beef-cattle-for-dummies-cheat-sheet.html>

Raising Freezer Beef: What does it really cost?: <http://www.uwyo.edu/barnbackyard/files/documents/magazine/2007/winter/freezer-beef-winter-barnyards-2007.pdf>

The Market Steer Guide to Success: <http://oregonstate.edu/dept/mcarec/sites/default/files/4h-youth/marketsteerguide.pdf>

The Judging Connection's Market Steer Handbook: [http://www.thejudgingconnection.com/pdfs/4H\\_Market\\_Steer\\_Handbook.pdf](http://www.thejudgingconnection.com/pdfs/4H_Market_Steer_Handbook.pdf)

A Guide for Youth Beef Cattle Exhibitors: [http://northampton.ces.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/A\\_Guide\\_For\\_Youth\\_Beef\\_Cattle\\_Exhibitors.pdf?fw=no](http://northampton.ces.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/A_Guide_For_Youth_Beef_Cattle_Exhibitors.pdf?fw=no)

Georgia 4-H & FFA State Livestock Show Rulebook: <http://georgia4h.org/livestock/GaJrLivestockShow/default.htm>

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*Pending Peer Review - 4/16*

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