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**Title: Junior Livestock Show Projects**

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**Summary:** During the 2020-2021 school year 2,185 4-H and FFA members gained hands on experience through state livestock projects by exhibiting 4,949 head of livestock.

**Situation:** With every passing generation, young people are being further removed from production agriculture. This further separates youth from the source of animal products, animal production methods, economic impacts and environmental issues of animal production. State livestock projects provide an experiential learning approach to animal production agriculture. Furthermore, research shows that soft skills are desired by employers when hiring new applicants. Youth livestock projects develop students' communication, team work, leadership and decision making skills.

**Response:** University of Georgia's Animal & Dairy Science Department and 4-H Program in cooperation with the State Department of Education and FFA Program offer state livestock projects to members of each youth organization. Youth have the opportunity to participate in the beef cattle, dairy cattle, swine, sheep, and/or goat project each year. Youth maintain primary care of their project animal(s) for upwards of two years learning the ins and outs of animal agriculture. These projects often lead to soft skill development opportunities such as District Project Achievement, public speaking, quiz bowls, and record keeping.

**Results/Impacts:** During the 2020-2021 school year 2,185 4-H and FFA members entered 4,949 animal projects in state shows. The State Market Lamb and Market Goat Show, held in conjunction with the 2020 Georgia National Fair, had 521 youth entered with 459 lambs and 730 goats. 1,934 exhibitors were entered in the Georgia Junior National Livestock Show held in February 2021. During the GJNLS 359 youth entered 591 beef heifers, 215 youth entered 168 market beef animals, 223 youth entered 297 commercial dairy heifers, 1,128 youth entered 2,140 market hogs, 127 youth entered 268 ewes, and 175 youth entered 296 does.