

# Wood County 4-H Goat Project Guide



Helpful information for your goat project.

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## Goat Project Summary

There are several goat projects that you can enroll in as a 4-H member. Here is a brief summary of each project:

4-H #	Title	Description
135BD	Breeding: Dairy	Raise a goat of a Dairy breed (example: Alpine, Saanen) For breeding or production purposes.
135BM	Breeding: Meat	Raise a goat of a Meat breed (example: Boer, Kiko) for breeding or production purposes. Classes are available for Does (females) only.
135F	Fiber	Raise a goat of a Fiber breed (example: Angora)
135H	Harness	Train a goat for use as a Harness goat
135M	Market	Raise a goat of a meat breed to harvest weight
135P	Pack	Train a goat for use as a Pack animal
135PY	Pygmy	Raise a goat of a Pygmy breed (example: Nigerian dwarf)
135C	Companion – Pet Goats	Raise any breed of goat as a pet. Note: This goat project does not participate in the Goat Show, instead can participate in 4-H Project Interview Judging and does not stay in the Goat Barn during Fair.

## Project Literature

You will need the following project materials for your goat project:

- **Goat Resource Handbook** (\$17) - Designed to be used for all years of your goat projects.
- **Goat Project and Record Book** (\$8) - Obtain and keep for the resource info it contains. Note: do not use for your annual record keeping (with the exception of the first year).
- **Wood County Livestock Project Record Insert** (free) - Download this document and use as your records for your project. You may also purchase one from the Extension Office for \$4. Obtain a new one each year. \*You will need to bring this completed document to 4-H Project Interview Judging.

In Summary: obtain the first two books listed above and keep and use them for all years you are taking a Goat Project. Each year: download a new Livestock Record Insert and use it to keep your annual project records.

\*\*Note to those with Food Animal (Market) Projects; as a food animal producer you are required, by law, to keep a record of any treatments, medications, drugs, etc. that are used for the health of your animal. Use the Treatment Record within your Wood County Livestock Record Insert to keep this information.

**IMPORTANT DATES FOR 4-H PARTICIPATION: \* = Mandatory**

Activity	Due Date	Location	Reference Page # (in this guide)
*Enroll in 4-H	No later than March 15	<a href="https://v2.4honline.com/#/user/sign-in">https://v2.4honline.com/#/user/sign-in</a>	2
*4-H Project Interview Judging	Thursday, July 16 <sup>th</sup>	Wood County Fairgrounds Junior Fair Building	2
Skill-a-thon	Thursday, July 16 <sup>th</sup>	Wood County Fairgrounds Junior Fair Building	3

**Activities that will take place in order to complete your 4-H goat project.**

The following 4-H activities are described below.

**4-H Enrollment**

Membership requires enrollment in an authorized Ohio 4-H club or group under the direction of an OSU Extension professional or an approved adult volunteer. Your 4-H club Advisor will assist you with the online enrollment process. Joining Ohio 4-H is a privilege and responsibility for individuals and is subject to the Ohio 4-H Code of Conduct and applicable policies of The Ohio State University. Members must remain in good standing with their 4-H club, meaning attending a minimum of five meetings, completing a demonstration, fully participating, etc.

**Project Interview**

Project judging is an exciting time to showcase your hard work spent on your 4-H project. Our judges love talking with you and learning about your project. Please be patient and understand if a judge is running behind. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

**Judging Hints**

- Arrive at the Junior Fair Building with your project book and record books. Remember to wear nice attire to judging. See Dress Code below.
- Check in at the registration desk.
- Complete the top of a judging interview sheet. Be prepared to talk about your project, know what you did, how you did it, and what you learned. Be proud of your accomplishments! You worked hard. Have a seat, talk to friends, and RELAX!
- If you are unable to attend the specified project interview judging day in July at the Junior Fair Building, your advisor may judge the project and provide a grade to the Extension Office by the required date.



- \*Please note\* To be eligible for awards (premier livestock interviewer) you must be judged on the day your project is assigned at the Junior Fair Building.

### **Dress Code Rule for 4-H Project Interview Judging**

Exhibitors must wear a collared polo or buttoned shirt with some sleeve and nice blue jeans (no rips or cut-offs and no tank-tops, t-shirts or sleeveless tops) or show whites for dairy goat exhibitors.

- \*\*Consequences for not following this rule may include class disqualification, or no interview until wardrobe is changed. This rule was adopted by the 4-H Committee and Junior Fair Board.

### **Skill-a-thon**

This is where you have the chance to shine as an exhibitor. This is a contest to show who knows the most about their species. You will study various topics on goats and then at 4-H Project Interview Judging, you will go into the skill-a-thon and answer the questions they pose for you. There are 2 levels: juniors (8-13 years old) and seniors (14-18 years old.) The exhibitors with the highest scores can earn ribbons and then have a chance to earn cash prizes.

- The Goat Skill-a-thon is an activity that takes place prior to fair, at 4-H Project Interview Judging. It is a series of stations on topics you are learning about in your goat project. The goal of the Skill-a-thon is to facilitate learning about your goat project. It is not *expected, but highly encouraged* that you participate in the Skill-a-thon.
- A Goat Skill-a-thon Study Guide is available to assist your learning. The Study Guide can be found on the Wood County 4-H web site:  
[https://wood.osu.edu/sites/wood/files/imce/Program\\_Pages/4H/skillathon/goatskillstudy17.pdf](https://wood.osu.edu/sites/wood/files/imce/Program_Pages/4H/skillathon/goatskillstudy17.pdf)
- Online Study Resources:
  - <https://ohio4h.org/animalsciences/small-ruminant-sheepgoat>
- Additional information for the Goat Skill-a-thon can be found in your Goat Resource Handbook.
- Prizes are awarded to exhibitors who perform well in the Skill-a-thon. Prizes typically include cash and rosettes which are handed out at 4-H Spirit Night in October.

**Congratulations on the successful completion of your project!**



**Getting Started with your Goat Project:**

- Your 4-H Advisor, Fair Board, club members, and/or Extension Office can provide a list of possible sources of animals.
- It is highly advisable to seek out a reputable breeder to obtain your project animal. A good breeder wants you to be successful with your project and with the animal(s) they are offering. It is not advisable to look toward sale barns (stockyards) for project animals as you will not know the breed, health status or anything else about the animal you are getting. Again, do not buy a goat from ANY source that does not have a scrapie tag in its ear (it is federal law for the breeder to apply this tag).
- Create a relationship with a veterinarian in your area. Verify that they are willing and able to see your animal(s) should the need arise and share contact information so that you are prepared.
- For market goats: it's important to choose an animal of the correct size and growth potential so that it can meet the suggested weight range to show at the Wood County Fair (minimum 50-suggested maximum 120 pounds). You will want to select a meat breed goat for a market project that was born from January – mid February. The most common meat breed in Ohio is Boer. It is not advisable to select a dairy breed or dairy cross breed animal for a market project.
- For breeding and specialty goats, you will want to choose an animal that fits your project goals. If you want to show your animal, you'll want to make sure there is a class offered for the animal you are considering.

**Selecting market animals:**

- Look for a goat kid that is square on their legs, straight (not sway) backed, wide chested, front legs set squarely down from their shoulder and wide in rear leg set.
- Goat kids birth date must be considered alongside other factors such as genetics, nutrition, exercise, etc. Example: a single kid with a good milking Doe (mother) will grow much faster than a triplet kid that is getting limited nutrition.
- A rule of thumb is that a goat will gain about 1/3 of pound per day, or 10 pounds per month. However, this is largely influenced by type and quality of feed and other factors.
- Example: to have an 85 lb. goat on August 1<sup>st</sup> you would look for a 45 lb. goat on April 1<sup>st</sup>. Again, this is a rough estimate that can be influenced by many factors.
- Check for lice and mites when getting your goat and treat if needed to maintain good hair quality.
- A healthy goat kid should be alert, curious and move easily. Avoid a goat kid that stands in the corner, is hunched up as it stands, tail drooped, or moves lethargically.

**Housing:**

- Some type of shelter to keep goats out of the elements. Ventilation is key for keeping them healthy in the summertime, but you also want to have protection from wind, rain and sun.
- You will want a pen that provides room for exercise but is not so big that the goats are difficult to catch. 6' x 6' would be adequate, 10' x 10' would be ideal. Your goats do not "need" to be on

grass or pasture. In fact, it is easier to control feed intake and keep them free of parasites if they are not on grass.

- Bedding: Obtain straw or flake shavings. Shavings work better to manage the size of their belly for show as the goats will not eat the shavings as much. Clean pens regularly. Wet, dirty bedding is not ideal. At the fair, you must bed with shavings.

### **Feeding:**

- You will need a water bucket and one feeder per goat. Water needs to be changed out multiple times per day. Clean the feeders out after every feeding. Goats will not eat old, dirty feed.
- There are many types of quality show feeds available locally. Talk to your breeder to see what they recommend. Freshness is very important. Goats will eat 3-4% of their body weight per day. A good place to start is one pound of feed, twice a day for each goat. Market goats only need a small handful of hay 1-2 times per day.

### **Health Care**

- It is your responsibility as an animal owner and/or food animal producer to establish a relationship with a veterinarian, to help with health care decisions for your animal. Your 4-H Advisor and/or Extension Office may be able to provide suggestions about veterinarians in the area that provide services for goats. You can also seek suggestions from other goat owners.
- Do NOT seek animal medical advice from farm store clerks, neighbors, other goat owners, breeders, etc. Experienced goat owners may be able to guide you in many areas, but if your animal needs veterinary care; it is your responsibility to provide proper care for your animal.



**Wood County Junior Fair Participation**

All Wood County Junior Fair Goat information can be found here:

- Market Goats: <https://www.woodcounty-fair.com/goats>
- Dairy/Performance Goats: <https://www.woodcounty-fair.com/copy-of-market-goats> or in the Wood County Fair Book (printed annually each spring.)

**Project Requirement for Exhibition at the Wood County Junior Fair**

Participation is an opportunity available to you because you are a 4-H member. Exhibition at the Wood County Fair is not mandatory to fulfill the commitments of taking your 4-H project, but it is highly recommended. If you are interested in exhibiting a goat project at the Wood County Fair, you need to know and meet the exhibition requirements. Basic exhibition requirements include:

- You must be enrolled in 4-H (or FFA), no later than March 15<sup>th</sup>, in the project you want to exhibit.
- You must be a member in good standing of your 4-H Club: meaning attending a minimum of 5 meetings, completing a demonstration, fully participating, etc.
- Market Goats: You must participate annually in Livestock Quality Assurance Education, by the deadline of June 1<sup>st</sup>.
- You must register your animals in FairEntry online by the deadline of June 1<sup>st</sup>.
- Complete a Drug Use Notification Form (DUNF) online by the required date set by Junior Fair.
- Health Requirements can be found under the Junior Fair Rules & Guidelines section in the Wood County Fair Book.

**Training your goat to show:**

- You will need a halter for each goat and show chain or show halter. A chain that has small prongs is allowed (available through Weaver Livestock and other vendors).
- Start by putting a halter on your goat and tying them up in their pen. Keep them tied for 20-30 minutes at first, then work up to an hour. NEVER leave your goat unattended while tied. After they get used to standing while tied, you can start leading them. Don't pull hard or battle them to lead. Goats are very stubborn. Walk beside or behind them at first. Patience pays off. After the goat is comfortable walking with the halter, start putting the show chain on them to lead. Take them on short walks daily. Practice stopping and setting their legs as you would in the show ring occasionally. The earlier you start training your goat to lead, the better. It is best if you start about a week after you get your project home.
- If you have a grooming stand (highly recommended), it can be beneficial for the goat to practice standing with their legs set in place and their head up to prepare for the show ring.
- Establish a routine of walking and showmanship practice daily. Even if you are short on time 15 minutes of practice can make a huge difference.



**Preparing your goat to show:**

- You will want to clip your goat 5-7 days prior to show day. The goat needs to be clean and dry before you start to clip. You will want to clip all the hair above the knee and hock, including trimming the head. Leave the hair below the knee and hock on the lower part of the leg
- Trim their hooves 5-7 days prior to show day, and also throughout the duration of the project. Hooves in poor condition can lead to other feet and leg issues. Take care to not trim their hooves too close.
- On show day you will want to have your goat freshly washed and clean. Dish soap works just fine. Take your time to make sure you have cleaned everywhere, scrub the hooves, ear tag, etc. The details matter. Be careful to not get water in the ears.

**Fair Entries and Fair Rules**

Each exhibitor is responsible for creating a fair entry for every animal that you plan to bring to the fair. Registering in 4-HOnline does not register you for fair. You register for fair in the FairEntry online program (with instruction from the Junior Fair Coordinator). **Market goats by April 18 and all other goats by June 1<sup>st</sup>.** Instruction on this will likely take place at one of your club meetings (another reason it is very important to attend meetings). Your Advisor will be able to answer questions about the Fair entry process.

When you choose to become a Junior Fair Exhibitor; you are responsible for knowing the general fair rules and the department rules for the project you are exhibiting. These can be found on the Wood Fair website or in the Fair Book under Junior Fair Rules, Goats.

You should also be familiar with Ohio Revised Code Sections 901.70, 901.71, 901.72, 901.73, 901.74, 901.75, 901.76, 901.99 and 2925.94. These govern all livestock shows in the state of Ohio.

It is important to note that at the fair, the only people permitted to care for, fit, clip, or groom your animal are your immediate family members, 4-H advisors, or other members of your club and assistance is limited to explanation and minimal demonstration (ORC 901.19.31).

Should you have questions about rules, please contact the Fair Board Goat Committee.

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<https://www.woodcounty-fair.com/>

Guide Credit: Christy Leeds, 4-H Extension Educator & Assistant Professor – Union County, Ohio