



SHOW READY: LIVESTOCK STARTER GUIDE

Sheep



Q How do I identify and enter my animal in the fair?

A All livestock species, except Poultry, must be identified in the 4-H Online system (<https://v2.4honline.com>) by May 15. Ensure that you are meeting the animal ID requirements listed in the 4-H handbook when entering your animal. Poultry exhibitors will identify their animals at <https://tinyurl.com/26Poultry>. Identify any animals you may want to show. By July 1, go to <http://vanderburghcountyin.fairentry.com> to enter what classes your animal(s) will be participating in. This is where you'll select which animals you will be bringing to the fair, what classes they will be in, and you can enter showmanship. To exhibit beef cattle, dairy cattle, dairy goats, meat goats, poultry, pygmy goats, rabbits, sheep and swine, 4-H members must be certified through the Indiana 4-H Quality Livestock Care program by July 1. If you plan to exhibit at the Indiana State Fair, be sure to check out state guidelines and registration details at <https://indianastatefair.com>. Suggestion - if showing multiple animals/species, create a list of all ID information to help with animal ID entry. Enter all possible entries on May 15. Only animals entered by May 15 can be shown. Just because they are entered, does not mean they have to go to the fair; however, if they are not entered, they are not eligible.

Q How do I prepare for fair?

A You should talk with a local feed professional to determine the appropriate feed ration and amount for your sheep. It is important that your animal has access to clean and fresh water, as well as a clean, dry pen. It is also helpful to walk your animal each day so you can build a relationship.

Q Where do I find set-up, check-in, check out, and clean up times for my species?

A You will find this in the handbook, in the summer LINK newsletters, and in a mailing that goes out before fair.

Q How does check-in work? What do I need to have with me?

A When you arrive at the fair, you should find one of the superintendents in the sheep barn to have your animals checked over. Having the animals tag numbers, breed, and age are important to help make sure you are entered in the show correctly. If your lamb needs to be weighed for market or commercial classes, we will set up a time to get use of the scales.

Q What supplies/equipment do I need to have at fair?

A You will need to bring your own bedding materials (i.e. shavings or straw), feed and feed pans, water buckets, and any grooming supplies needed to get ready for show. This could include brush and soap for washing; blow dryer, towels, shammy cloths; electric clippers; or cards and hand shears. It is also helpful to have a fan to help keep your animals cool. Ensure you have an approved extension cord and tools to clean your animal's area. Think about what you use on a daily basis to care for your animals. You may want to have a sign that identifies each of your animals.

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How do I care for my animal during the fair?

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It is expected that the 4-H member provides regular care for their animal during the fair. This includes making sure your animal has access to clean water at all times and is fed regularly. The fair is often very hot so make sure you have a plan to keep your animal cool and to prevent overheating.

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How does check out work? What do I need to do to clean up?

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Refer to the handbook for check out times. Make sure you take all of your supplies home, and clean up any trash in your area. Bedding materials do not need to be removed.

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How do I participate in the livestock premium auction (if eligible)?

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To participate in the livestock premium auction, complete the auction card that will be mailed to you and return to the Extension Office at the fair by noon on Monday of the fair. If you decide to change the animal or species you plan to exhibit in the auction, let the Extension Office know by 5:00 pm on Thursday of fair week. Photos will be taken of you with your animal immediately after you take your animal in the ring. You will also be asked to write thank you notes to your auction buyers after you have exhibited in the auction. Exhibitors will be asked to pick up their auction check when available (typically about 1-2 months after the auction) and checks must be cashed/deposited within 90 days.

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What do I wear on show day?

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It is required to wear pants and a professional top. It is recommended to wear jeans free from holes, a collared shirt preferably of a solid color or modest pattern as to not distract from the animal. Sturdy leather boots are highly recommended, but closed toed are a must. You should avoid hats or caps, t-shirts or tank tops, and faded and/or ragged jeans.

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What supplies do I need to show?

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Most sheep showmen do not use any supplies while showing, but it has become acceptable to use a halter to help lead the animal around the ring.

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How should my animal be prepped for the show?

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If your sheep is being shown with a fleece, it is common practice to wash the animal a few days prior to show and use a blanket to help keep the wool clean. The fleece needs to be of a uniform length and free from feed and animal waste. If your sheep is being shown slicked, you need to shear the lamb within 7 days prior to the show. The wool growth should be no more than ¼ inch in length on the day of show. You need to wash and dry your animal the morning of the show.

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How do I make my animal look its best in the show ring?

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Making sure that your animal has clean bedding leading up to the fair and at the fair is the first step. This helps prevent stains from developing on your animal. Having a good washing routine leading up to the fair helps encourage healthy wool growth. As mentioned before, washing and covering your sheep a few days prior (if it has a full fleece) or washing it the day of show will have it looking showring ready! There are many products available to wash your animal, but dish soaps like Dawn work well too. Just make sure you completely rinse out all of the soap! If you don't, it could end up turning the wool green or pink.

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What does the judge expect of me?

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The judge will expect you to be able to handle your animal and maintain control as you walk about the ring. The judge will also expect you to know the breed, age, and gender of your animal, as well as its daily feed ration and the weight of your animal if it is a market lamb. Lastly, the judge will expect you to be attentive to what is happening in the ring, and maintain eye contact with him so that you can follow instructions given by him or the ring steward. -Be comfortable moving your animal in the ring. For older members, be prepared to handle not only your animal but others in the ring if you are participating in showmanship.

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Who can I contact if I have questions?

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Your species superintendent or assistant superintendents can answer your questions. Their contact information can be found in the 4-H handbook in the livestock section. You can also reach out to the Purdue Extension Office at (812) 867-4935 with questions.

We hope you have a
great year in 4-H!

