

4-H SOW AND LITTER PROJECT LEADER'S GUIDE

(To Be Used With 4-H Circular 143)

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PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

Own, feed, and care for, one or more purebred or high grade meat type sows and develop the litter or litters in one of these ways: 1. Produce feeder pigs to be marketed at weights from 50 to 100 pounds, depending upon feed and market conditions; 2. Finish the litter to desirable market weights, usually 200 to 225 pounds.

COMPLETION REQUIREMENTS

Members who are credited with completing this project are required to do the following: 1. Meet the above project requirements; 2. Attend a majority of the project meetings held; 3. Attend at least six community club meetings (if this project group is a part of a community club); 4. Turn in the completed Sow and Litter 4-H Record before the close of the club year.



THE PROJECT LEADER'S JOB IS IMPORTANT

Your job as a project leader is one of the most important ones in 4-H Club work. You will be working with boys and girls. Responsibility for their success or failure could be yours. Manual 57 "A 4-H Project Leaders Manual" gives detailed suggestions and information you'll find helpful.

A project leader is really a teacher. Six things that all project leaders should strive to teach are:

1. Approved practices
2. Demonstration of practices
3. Judging
4. Preparation of exhibits
5. Showmanship
6. Record keeping.



PROJECT MEETINGS

This leader's guide contains suggested plans for 13 project meetings. These may be used in planning your own meetings. Plans are given for more meetings than any one leader will want to use in a given year. The leader who stays with the same group, year after year, will want to bring in new material and develop new skills each succeeding year. This guide was prepared with this in mind.

Project meetings may be held either indoors or outdoors, depending upon the weather and what is planned for the meeting. Generally, outdoor meetings or at least meetings in the barn, a shed, or in another building are most appropriate for all livestock projects. Such meetings may require from 30 minutes to 1½ hours. Short, snappy, interesting meetings are very desirable in holding the members' interest.

The time schedule suggested in this leaders' guide is for a spring litter. It may be adjusted to fit a summer litter by moving dates forward three months and to fit a fall litter by moving dates forward six months. Obviously, some of the practices essential for producing a satisfactory spring litter will not apply to a summer or early fall litter and should be disregarded. The use of heat lamps is an example.

Occasionally, a leader will have members enrolled in the purebred gilt or market pig project along with sow and litter project members. In this instance, it is recommended that instruction be given to all alike. The members with purebred gilts should follow through with sow and litter projects the next year. Special attention should be given to the different project members when working on or assigning demonstrations so that demonstrations which they develop for County Achievement Day would relate to their specific project.

MEETING PLANS

I. Getting Started and Selecting Animals

Time—Fall (as early as project group is known)

Place—On a farm where some good open gilts are available to see and discuss.

1. Distribute project literature.
2. Ask members to start their 4-H Sow and Litter Record by filling in blanks at the top of the first page.
3. Discuss, then establish goals at top of second page of the record.
4. Stress importance of the record and ask members to bring their record book to every project meeting.
5. Acting as chairman have the group elect from their number a "junior project chairman".
6. Explain that the duties of the junior project chairman are such things as:
 - a. Serving as chairman of the business part of each project meeting. (See pattern for project meetings, page 9 of Manual 57)

- b. Helping to arrange for meetings.
 - c. Reminding members of time of meetings by telephone or otherwise.
 - d. Making a project report to the Community Club each month.
 - e. Assist members with project records.
7. Ask members to turn to the section in the 4-H Record headed "Selecting Animals" and check in left column the items which apply to their individual project, discussing them one by one.
 8. Discuss the parts of a hog using the picture on page 3 of the Sow and Litter project. Illustrate these on a gilt.
 9. Provide a short business meeting, planning for next meeting, with Junior Project Chairman in charge.

II. Credit

Time—At time and if credit is needed

Place—Bank or credit agency

1. Ask banker or representative of credit agency to explain:
 - a. Basis of credit
 - b. Advantages of credit
 - c. Disadvantages of credit
 - d. Interest rates
 - e. Notes
 - f. What is expected of borrower.
2. Complete arrangements for loans if feasible and possible.
3. Invite parents to participate in this meeting.

III. Distribution

Limited to cases where collective buying of original stock is done.

Time—When gilts are ready

Place—Where gilts are ready

1. Discuss the importance of good care, good feeding practices, and sanitation methods. Perhaps, ask a purebred hog producer or the County Sow and Litter Project Chairman to talk with the members.
2. Explain how distribution is to be done.
3. See that gilts are marked or numbered.
4. If there is a variation in the cost of the gilts to the boys, make plain to all concerned just what that variation is.
5. Conduct drawing. A common method is to allow members to draw from a hat numbers corresponding to the numbers of the gilts.
6. Check on the safety and comfort of the gilts after they are loaded.

IV. Breeding and Feeding Program for Sows and Gilts

Time—November or December

Place—Farm (maybe indoors, outdoors or both)

1. Review in detail the section of the Sow and Litter Circular headed "Breeding Program" (pages 3 & 4).
2. Ask members to turn to the section in the 4-H Record headed "Breeding and Feeding Program for Gilts and Sows" and check in left column the items which apply to their individual project, discussing them one by one.
3. Distribute "4-H Club Livestock Feed Record" blanks and teach members how to keep accurate feed records.
4. Demonstrate the mixing of a ration for breed sows and gilts in dry lot. This may be done either with small quantities or by actually mixing a supply of this feed for use on the farm.
5. Discuss and demonstrate the feeding of legume hay to sows.
6. Assign a demonstration for each of several members to give at next meeting. These may be as follows:
 - a. Mixing a protein supplement for bred sows and gilts on pasture
 - b. Mixing a complete ration for hand feeding for bred sows and gilts on pasture.
 - c. Mixing a complete ration for self feeding (10 to 15% protein)
 - d. Preparing a mineral mixture for hogs.
7. Provide a business meeting with Junior Project Chairman in charge
 - a. Plans for next meeting including date, place, time, etc.

V. Care From Farrowing To Weaning

Time—January

Place—Farm

1. Review in detail the section of the Sow and Litter Circular headed "Care From Farrowing To Weaning" (pages 5 & 6).
2. Ask members to turn to this section in the 4-H Record and check in the left column the items which apply to their individual project, discussing them one by one.
3. Have demonstrations by members that were assigned them at the last meeting.
4. Demonstrate one or more of the following:
 - a. Washing the sow
 - b. Cleaning and scrubbing the farrowing house or pen
 - c. Bedding the farrowing house
 - d. Clipping needle teeth
 - e. Eartnotching pigs.
5. Provide opportunity for the members to have a work period on the above subjects after you have demonstrated them.
6. Assign a demonstration for each of several members to give at the next meeting. Any of the above are appropriate at this time.

7. Provide a business meeting with Junior Project Chairman in charge.
 - a. Plans for next meeting including date, place, time, etc.
8. Refreshments (hot chocolate, cookies or apple) would "hit the spot" with the members after adjournment.

VI. Feeding The Sow And Litter

Time—February

Place—Farm

1. Review in detail the section of the Sow and Litter Circular headed "Feeding the Sow and Litter" (pages 6 and 7)
2. Ask members to turn to this section in the 4-H Record and check in the left column the items which apply to their individual project, discussing them one by one.
3. Have demonstrations by members that were assigned at last meeting.
4. Demonstrate giving iron injections to baby pigs for the prevention of anemia.
5. Discuss creep rations for pigs. It may be advantageous for the members to purchase some of the ingredients cooperatively, especially those needed in rather small quantities.
6. Provide a business meeting with Junior Project Chairman in charge.

VII. Special Meeting—Castration

Time—Late February or March

Place—Farm where there are numerous pigs ready to be castrated.

1. Demonstrate or have a good hog producer demonstrate the correct method of castrating.
2. Give every member the opportunity to castrate two or more pigs.
3. Urge members to castrate their pigs before they are three weeks old.

VIII. Growing And Finishing, 50 to 200 Pounds

Time—April

Place—Farm

1. Review in detail the section of the Sow and Litter Circular headed "Growing And Finishing, 50 to 200 Pounds" (pages 7 & 8).
2. Have each member decide which of the four methods of feeding he will follow. This decision may need to be made in consultation with the parents, so it may be well to have the fathers of members attend this project meeting.
3. Ask members to turn to this section in the 4-H Record and check in the left column the items which apply to their individual project, discussing them one by one.
4. Demonstrate the spraying of hogs with toxaphene or lindane to control lice and mange.

5. Arrange the above demonstration so that the members can do some of the actual spraying.
6. Provide a business meeting with Junior Project Chairman in charge.
 - a. Plans for next meeting. It could be a tour to all project members' homes or other special meeting on demonstrations.

IX. Demonstrating

Time—May or June

Place—Farm

1. Review demonstrations that have been given or ask members to repeat demonstrations they have given.
2. Discuss demonstrations that would be good for the community to see. List them.
3. Select one or two and have group elect members to give them publicly.
4. Some subjects that may be demonstrated are listed below.

Individual demonstration subjects: (Partial list)

- a. Ear marking pigs
- b. Clipping needle teeth
- c. Mixing a mineral mixture
- d. Giving iron injections to baby pigs
- e. Spraying hogs to control lice and mange
- f. Mixing a ration
- g. Making a flapper for driving hogs
- h. Grooming a hog for show
- i. Handling a hog in the show ring
- j. How to probe a hog for back fat.

Team demonstration subjects: (Partial list)

- a. Washing a sow
 - b. Preparing the farrowing house for the sow
 - c. Constructing an individual hog house
 - d. Constructing a farrowing crate
 - e. Constructing a self-feeder
 - f. Making an electric pig brooder
 - g. Use of electric fence for enclosing sow and litter.
5. Select demonstration to be given at county achievement day.
 6. Discuss the principles of good demonstrating. Use the current circular on demonstrations available from your County University Extension Center.

X. Judging

Time—Anytime

Place—Where a good class is available

1. Use an animal to review the parts of a hog, discussing what is desirable in a gilt, market barrow, sow, etc.
2. Select a class of four animals that are placeable. An easy top, easy bottom, and a close middle pair makes

a good judging class. Obviously, it is just as logical to have a close top pair or bottom pair. A class that easily falls into a top pair and a bottom pair with one or both of the pairs close is a good class for training.

3. Number the animals one, two, three, and four, across the back with colored chalk.
4. Give the members placing cards and instruct them in how to use them.
5. Allow ten to fifteen minutes for placing. Discourage conversation regarding the class on the part of members and bystanders while the boys and girls are judging.
6. Collect the cards.
7. Take a position apart from the group and ask the members to come to you one at a time and give the reasons for placing. Two minutes are usually allowed for this, but, as a rule, no one keeps the time. It is desirable to hear the member through before interrupting with questions. In fact, one who takes reasons must first be a good listener. Questions may be directed toward him about things that have been omitted or about errors of judgment.
8. After reasons have all been given, give the judge's placing and his reasons.
9. Use "Livestock Judging Guide—For 4-H Club Members" as a reference.

XI. Fitting For Show

Time—Summer

Place—Barn lot

1. Demonstrate fitting a gilt or barrow for the show ring.
2. Assign a pig to each member and ask him to fit it.
3. Demonstrate handling a pig in the show ring.
4. Allow each member to show the pig he has fitted.

XII. Exhibiting

Time—Two weeks before the show

Place—Barn lot

1. Discuss feeding an animal before movement to and during the show.
2. Discuss packing the equipment that should be taken to the show.
3. Discuss show ring etiquette.
4. Ask each member to demonstrate handling a pig in the ring.

XIII. Parasite Control

Time—If and when needed

Place—Barn lot

1. Demonstrate the approved method of control of the parasite that presents a problem.
 - a. Intestinal worms—Piperazine or Cadmium oxide.
 - b. Mange and lice—Toxaphene or lindane sprays.

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