



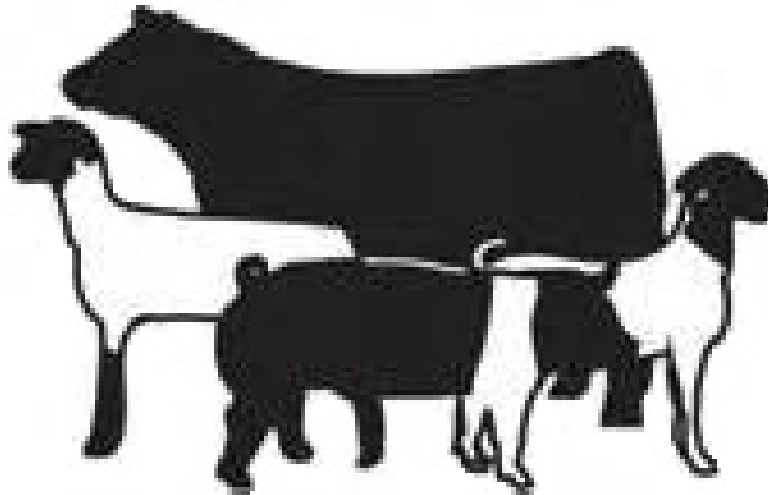
2017 Berkeley County Youth Fair

Marketing You

And Your 4-H Market Animal Project

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A Helper Guide for 4-H Exhibitors and Their Families



Reminder the Berkeley County Youth Fair Market Livestock Sale will be held Friday August 11th beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Introduction

When you complete your market animal project you will become an entrepreneur. An entrepreneur is someone who makes money on their own. The life skills you will learn in this project will help you someday be a small business owner, and help you learn basic economic principles that will guide you to achieve this goal. Economics in this case means supply and demand and the allocation of scarce resources.

Buyer's Letter

A buyer's letter is a letter that a 4-H member sends out to potential buyers before the County Fair to tell them a little about themselves and their animal and to invite them to the fair and livestock auction. This guide will help first-time 4-H youth write a successful buyer's letter and hopefully help tenured 4-H sellers improve their letters.

The Berkeley County Youth Fair Livestock Sale requires each youth to write letters to potential buyers. It is your responsibility to help get new and returning buyers to come to the livestock sales. Without new and returning buyers, a time may come when there are more animals than buyers. (Economics – supply and demand) If this happens, animals will be sold at market price. The prices may drop to a point where exhibitors are losing money by raising their animals. So it is your job to write a letter that will encourage potential buyers to come to the fair auction so there will be more buyers than animals for sale. It is also your job to sell yourself in the letter so the buyer wants to buy your animal.

How Do I Find a Buyer?

Before you begin writing your letters, it is important to **have a plan**. Who should I target to receive my buyers' letters? How many should I send out?

Suggestions for Possible Buyers:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Doctor | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family Dentist | <input type="checkbox"/> Veterinarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Eye Doctor | <input type="checkbox"/> Feed Store |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Orthodontist | <input type="checkbox"/> Equipment Dealers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance Agent | <input type="checkbox"/> Car Sales Dealers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Banker | <input type="checkbox"/> Relatives |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grocery Stores | <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbors and your Church Members |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restaurants | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hair Stylists | <input type="checkbox"/> Parents' employers |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mechanics | <input type="checkbox"/> Your employer (if you are old enough to work) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Contractors | |

Your goal is to get as many buyers as possible to the fair auction in order to have more buyers than sellers. Remember: it takes at least two bidders to make an auction! This will increase the price you will receive for your animal. You are going to have to work harder this year than in past years to get the buyers to the fair.

*Therefore, you should set a goal of sending out at least **10-25 letters**.*

Before You Write Your Letter

A research study was conducted at the Trinity County Fair in Tennessee regarding the buyers' letters that were sent out by 500 4-H youth to over 2,000 buyers. Before you begin writing your letters, you may learn a lot from this research study.

- Content of the letter: 80% wanted to read about the youth's **history** and the raising of the animal, what you're doing in your 4-H club and other personal items.
- Pictures: 80% wanted a **picture** of the animal and the youth

- Handwritten or typed: 60% said it does not matter as long as it is **personal**
- Form Letters: 60% did not like form letters, they wanted a **personal letter**. A form letter is a generic letter addressed to all potential buyers, and not a personal letter to one buyer
- Length of the letter: 40% said at least **one page**, 40% said it does not matter as long as it is not too short
- Do you remember the best letter you have received? 25% liked **humor**, 25% liked the letter addressed to them by name and appreciate a letter that shows a lot of work went into the project, 25% liked little cartoons of the animal with a hand written letter, and 25% liked a full page letter that focused on the exhibitor that included a **picture**.

The Buyer's Letter

1. Know who you are writing to: Owner, business, use first & last names
2. Information about yourself: Name, age, school, 4-H Club years in your project; when buyers get to the fair this information helps them make a connection with you.
3. Give them information about your project: Breed of your animal, name of the animal, target final weight, your feeding program, what you hope to accomplish, goals, etc.
4. The fair dates: Let the buyer know the dates and location of the fair, show, and auction. Invite them to the fair to watch you show your animal. You can also include a livestock schedule with your letter.
5. Tell them how they can participate as a buyer: This is important if they are a first time buyer.
6. Providing potential buyers with all the necessary information this will make it easier for them to participate.
7. Inform them where they can get more information: People often have questions that you have not answered in your buyer's letter. This provides a way for them to contact you to get answers to their questions. Include a phone number and e-mail address.
8. Thank them for previous participation if they are a buyer from a previous year:
9. If you do this, it may motivate the buyer to come back and bid again. It lets them know you appreciate them taking the time to come to the fair.
10. Personalize the letter: This is good because most buyers like letters that are signed by a real person and not photocopied. They also like their name on the letter not "Dear Buyer." The more individualized a letter is, the more likely a person is to read it.
11. Include a picture of you and your animal: This helps people connect with you.
12. Make a copy of each buyer letter for your project book for your records.

Do's and Do Not's of 4-H Buyer's Letters

Do	Do Not
Write a rough draft and get your parents to proof read.	Send your rough draft without your parents checking it.
Get the name, position title, and proper address of the contact	Never send a letter "To Whom It May Concern" or "Dear Buyer"
Be personal, warm, and inviting	Use a cold short form letter
Use proper greeting: Dear Mr. Jones	Never address the person by first Name – Dear Bob
Check your spelling	Forget to use spell check
Be gracious. "Please" and "Thank you"	Never make demands
Use Sincerely to close	Do not use Fondly, or Regards. Keep it all business
Sign your letter and include contact information	Forget to sign your letter and include contact information

Example Buyer's Letter #1

(Your name and contact information)

John Doe
155 Appleway Drive
Martinsburg, WV. 25401
JohnDoe@ aol.com
(304) 262-7816

June 1, 2017

Mr. Jim Buyer
President, Marketing
Community Bank
4200 Main Street
Martinsburg, WV. 25401

Dear Mr. Buyer,

My name is John Doe and this is my second year in the Clover 4-H Club. I am 15 and attend Hedgesville High School and plan to major in Agribusiness after I graduate. My hobbies include soccer, reading, and bow hunting.

This year I am raising a hog to show at the 2017 Berkeley County Youth Fair. His name is Bacon Bits. This is my second year raising a hog, but my first year in the Fair because my hog did not make weight last year. I learned a lot from that experience and I know more about proper feeding this year so I plan to be at the Fair with Bacon Bits.

Bacon Bits and I will be at the Fair from August 6-11 and I would like to invite you to see him on show day Tuesday August 8th beginning at 8:00 a.m. and Friday August 11th 6:30 PM to bid for him at the swine auction.

I have enclosed a picture of Bacon Bits and me along with a Buyers Gate Pass for the Livestock Auction on Friday August 11th.

If there are any questions you have for me, you can call me or e-mail me and I will be happy to answer your questions. Thank you for your time and attention. Bacon Bits and I look forward to seeing you at the fair.

Sincerely,

John Doe

Example Buyer's Letter # 2

Jane Doe
56 Robin Lane
Martinsburg, WV. 25401
(304) 433-5191
JaneDoe2013@aol.com

June 1, 2017

Martins Food Market
Mr. Ryan, Manager
120 Foxcroft Ave
Martinsburg, WV. 25401

Dear Mr. Ryan,

Last year you purchased my steer from the Berkeley County Youth Fair. Thank you again for your purchase. I used the money I earned from last year's sale to buy my market steer this year and place the rest in my college fund.

I am going back to the Berkeley County Youth Fair – August 6-11. I will be showing and selling my steer, Mr. Black Jack. I have learned a lot with this 4-H project. Some critical lessons I have learned are responsibility and time management. This is important since I am trying to balance school work, school sports, and church youth group.

I want to invite you to the Fair again this year. I hope you attend the Market Steer Show on Wednesday August 9th beginning at 8:00 a.m. and the livestock auction which will be held Friday August 11, 2017 beginning at 6:30 PM. I have enclosed a livestock schedule showing all the dates and times of the animal shows and auctions along with a Buyer's Gate Pass for August 11th.

If you have any questions, please call or email me. Thanks once again for your support last year. You helped me be able to participate in another 4-H year with a Steer project and save money for my college education.

Sincerely,

Jane Doe

Follow-Up

It is important to keep your buyers informed of you and your project animal's progress. When the economy is slow, it is especially important to keep in touch with your buyers.

Suggestions:

- Thanksgiving Card
- Christmas Card
- Business Cards

- CD of pictures -
- Postcard – Picture of you and your animal

Thank You

It is very important to **thank your buyer** and other people who have helped you with your project throughout the year. It is especially important for your future years in 4-H market project to thank your buyers, fair livestock chairpersons, and your club leader.

Summary

4-H livestock projects are more than just raising, feeding, showing, and selling the animal for the most money you can get. The project is about learning life skills, one of which is **MARKETING** you. This means presenting yourself in the best possible light. The amount of effort and time **YOU** put into it will make all the difference.

If you need more help or have questions, please feel free to contact me at the WVU Extension Office at 304 264-1936 or email at Doug.Hovatter@mail.wvu.edu. Also visit our web site to review this Helper's Guide at <http://Berkeley.ext.wvu.edu>

Five Reasons to Buy a Market Animal from a 4-H Member

- 1. When you buy** 4-H market animals, it aids in **supporting the year-long hard work** of these kids.
- 2. When you buy** 4-H market animals you are buying some of **the best quality** in the nation. There is a noticeable difference when animals are raised with love on healthy food and come from strong local blood lines. The flavors are full and haven't lost their edge - and they are cared for by individuals who put care and time into the entire process of raising the animal.
- 3. When you buy** 4-H market animals it **supports the education of our children**. The lessons our kids learn by raising animals is absolutely invaluable. They learn how much time, money and energy it takes to raise an animal. These are lessons that can only be learned by direct experience. Most importantly, for many the money raised by the sale goes into the child's individual education fund.
- 4. Knowing where your food comes from** is not only very important but it teaches a life-long lesson to children, while shaping their future decisions with regards to food, cooking, and nutrition.
- 5. It's fun!** Going to the Berkeley County Youth Fair Livestock Auction is fun! The county fair atmosphere offers a one-of-a-kind experience. Being able to choose an animal by looking at it, by watching it move and identifying muscle tone is a far cry from picking a product from a purveyor's price list and listening to the auctioneer and seeing how excited the children get when their animal is purchased is an incredibly fulfilling experience.