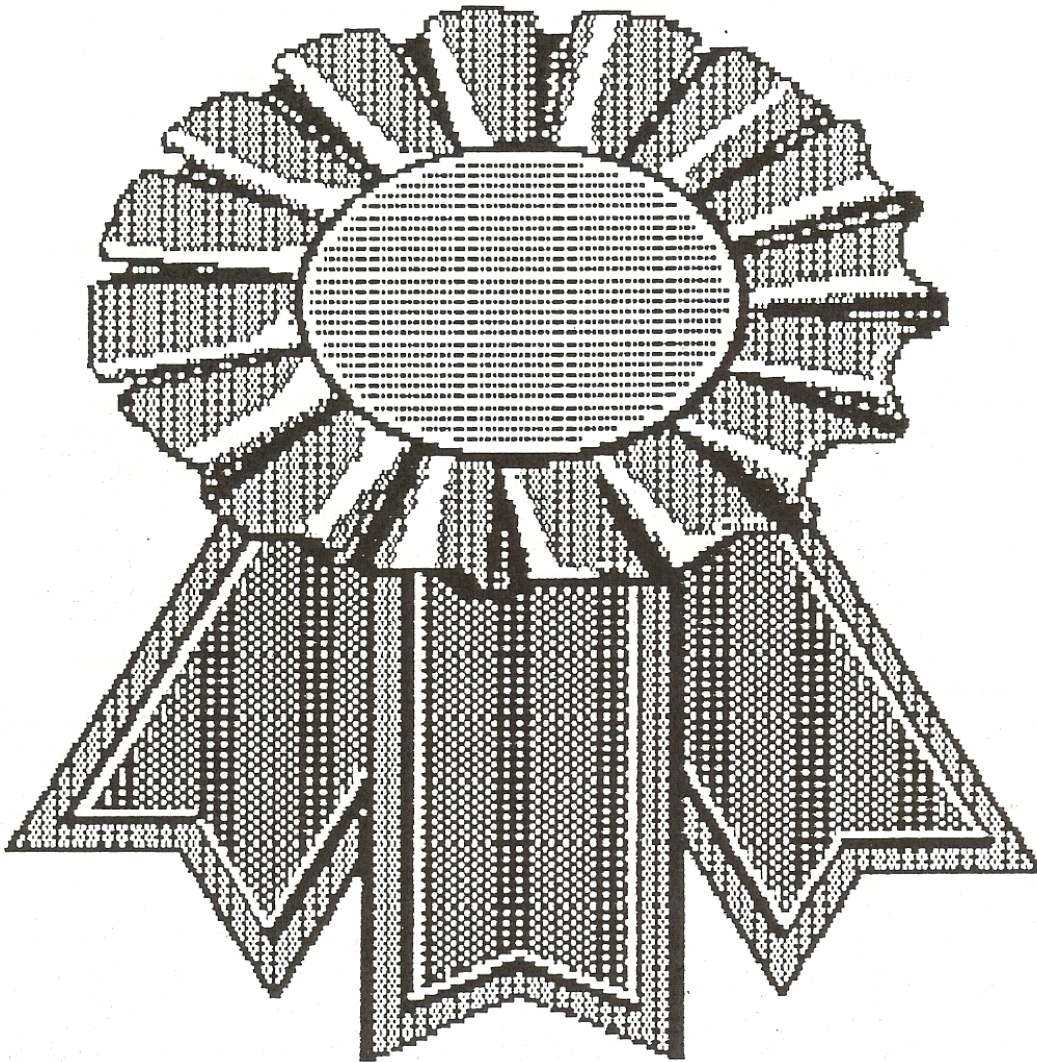


**YOU ARE A WINNER!!  
LET'S FINISH THE JOB**



## **FINDING A BUYER**

FINDING A BUYER FOR YOUR 4-H LIVESTOCK PROJECT IS AN IMPORTANT PART OF YOUR 4-H PROJECT, AND ONE THAT MANY PEOPLE TAKE FOR GRANTED.

# BUYER SEARCH TIMETABLE

## MAY

Make a list of individuals and business' that might come to the sale and purchase your animal. Don't rely on the same buyers that come every year. Try to come up with groups or business' that your family belongs to or does business with. They do not have to be related to agriculture.

For example: Doctor, Dentist, Bowling Teams, Unions, Volunteer Fire Departments, Political Candidates, Realtors, Bankers, TSC, Quality Farm & Fleet, Walmart, Meijers, How many more can you think of?

Find out the name of the manager, owner, or person in charge so you know who to deal with.

## JUNE

Set a goal of finding three potential buyers!

You will probably have to contact more than three potential buyers. At least two contacts should be to new buyers, (people or business' that have not purchased at the livestock sale before).

There are three ways to make contacts with buyers.

- 1). LETTER - helps introduce you  
- helps remind buyer  
- doesn't let buyer meet you
- 2). PHONE CALL - helps introduce you  
- helps remind buyer  
- doesn't let buyer meet you
- 3). VISIT - probably the best way to introduce yourself  
- buyer sees that you are making an effort  
- you can answer any questions that the buyer may have  
- buyer meets you and knows who to look for on the sale night

Every buyer is different, and one approach will not work for every one. A combination of letter or phone call before a visit will definitely make a good impression.

We know that making a visit is not an easy thing to do. That's why we recommend that for your first visit you visit someone that you (or your parents )already know. You will be glad you did on sale night.

**REMEMBER:** You should try to secure three potential buyers to bid on your animal. The sale of your animal depends on one buyer and one or more bidders. They all work together. If no one is there to bid against your buyer that is where the price of your animal stops.

**THINK ABOUT THESE POINTS:** Try to be helpful and friendly to anyone who walks through the barns during the week and especially on sale night. Anyone could be a potential buyer if you are courteous and helpful. We are all working together and that means we wish the best for others as well as for ourselves. That goes for the entire week of competition and not just on sale night.

One of the hardest thing to do may be selling a 4-H animal that you've treated like a pet for months. However this isn't the only reason it's hard to sell an animal. It's not easy because, in order to make a profit you need to work hard making sure there are buyers and bidders at the fair the night of the sale to bid on and buy your animal.

The buyers come from the community where you and your parents shop and work and live. You may even go with your Mom and Dad when they shop at local businesses. These are potential buyers.

**VISIT CHECK LIST:** Information Brochure, The 4-H office puts out a very informative brochure answering buyers questions that you may want to give directly to your potential buyer. Posters for the store windows. Your animals picture, this adds a personal touch to the contact. Remind the potential buyer, of the availability of a fair pass and dinner ticket, upon request of the Fair office. Talk to kids leaving 4-H in their last year they may be taking a buyer with them when they leave because they have no one to pass the name on to.

# SAMPLE INTRODUCTION LETTER

Date

Buyer's or Business' name  
Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Manager's Name,

I am writing to invite you to the annual Ingham County Fair Livestock Auction to be held on (date), at (time), in the Multipurpose Arena at the Ingham County Fairgrounds.

The sale highlights the work of young people in Ingham County. Through 4-H I have learned about selection, feeding, fitting, and marketing of livestock.

I hope that you will be able to attend the sale. If you come early, the animals can be viewed in any of the livestock buildings on the fairgrounds. I will be stopping by to see you after July 1st. If you are interested we will send you a packet that includes fair admission and dinner for both the large and small animal auctions.

Sincerely,

Your Name  
Address

# WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW BEFORE YOU VISIT A POTENTIAL BUYER

These are questions potential buyers may ask you when you visit.

**When is it? Where is it? What time is it?**

**Do I need a parking pass to get in? Where do I get the pass?**

**What do I do with the animal?**

- 1) personal use
- 2) business Bar-B-Q or promotional sale
- 3) resell the animal at market price (the livestock sale committee handles transportation to a processing plant, or livestock yard.
- 4) donate to your favorite charity

**Do I have to be present at the auction?**

No, if you are unable to attend, there are people who will volunteer to act on your behalf( the sale committee).

**Can I share my purchase?**

Yes, two (or more) firms can go together to purchase an animal. Be careful when reporting who is to be charged for the purchase.

**Are my purchases tax deductible?**

If you keep the meat, you may deduct the difference between the market price and local market price.

If you resell the animal, you may deduct the difference between the market price received and the price paid at the sale.

An individual whould file the deduction as a donation to 4-H or FFA, whole a business may charge the loss to advertising and publicity.

**If I buy an animal, what happens then? How do I get it to a processor?**

The member selling the animal is responsible for the animal's care until it can be trucked to the processor. On sale night the buyer must indicate the destination for the animal, whether that is a livestock yard for resale, or a processing plant for slaughter.

**What does the buyer get out of all this?**

Advertising, publicity, good will, and a chance to support the youth of Ingham County.

# THANKING A BUYER

All right, so you did your job before the sale, got a buyer to the sale, and sold your animal. Your job is **not done yet!** We still need to thank that buyer so he/she will attend again next year!

1) The night of the sale, find out who bought your animal and than them right there. Everyone who purchased an animal should be thanked. You will also be given a sign with the buyers name to be placed over your animal's pen.

2) At the fairgrounds, outside of the 4-H office, stationary, envelopes and a mailing drop box will be available for you to write a thank you note right away.

3) Within two weeks of the sale, a thankyou letter should be sent to each buyer. If two or more people went together to buyyour animal, you will need to send a thank you letter to each one. Don't put it off!! In the thank you letter tell the buyer what you learned in the project, and what you intend to do with the money.

4) Two weeks after the fair a formal Thank You Advertisement will appear in all the local newspapers around the county. You may also choose to place a small personal thank you ad in your local paper. These are inexpensive and an excellent way to send a little extra publicity to the business that purchased your animal. Other things you may do to make your thank you a special one include: Send a bunch of flowers, have a T-Shirt made thanking your buyer, take him/her a batch of cookies. You may even want to remind the buyer how much you appreciate his/her efforts by sending him a Christmas Card. Each of these little things help the buyer remember who you are and show how much you really appreciate him/her buying your animal.

Remember that every person that you contact will not be able to purchase an animal. The company office may tell a local branch manager "You can spend \$200.00 and no more," and the person attends the sale, bids on your animal, but the bidding goes too high. That person still deserves a THANK YOU! Have Mom or Dad, or your 4-H leader watch who bids on your animal, and try to thank those who bid, but didn't buy, after the sale.

## A FEW WORDS ON ATTITUDE

Sometimes we don't get the price that we want for our animals. Don't walk out of the sale ring with a long face. If you get a price for your animal that is higher than current market price, you have received a gift! Hide your disappointment (if that is how you feel) so the person who bought your animal doesn't feel cheap or unappreciated. The buvers don't have to be there.

# A SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER

Date

Buyer's name  
Address  
City, State, Zip Code

Dear Buyer's Name,

Thank you for purchasing my (steer, lamb, hog, rabbit, goat, chicken, turkey, etc.) at the Ingham County Fair Livestock Auction. I really appreciate your support for my project.

In 4-H this year I have learned (fill in what you have learned). The money I earned from the sale of my (fill in your animal) will be (saved, used for) for (saved or used for what?).

Again, let me say "Thanks!" for purchasing my animal.

Sincerely,

Your Name  
Address

(send a picture of you and your animal if you have one)