

Kalamazoo County 4-H

Poultry Project Guidelines

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Project Objectives & Life Skills*

- Learn the basic principles of animal science by owning, caring for and keeping records on one or more birds.
- Explore knowledge of sound breeding, feeding and management practices.
- Investigate marketing and project expansion and discover how you can start a career in the poultry business.
- **Head**
 - Resiliency
 - Planning & Organizing
 - Problem Solving
 - Decision Making
- **Heart**
 - Concern for others
 - Cooperation
 - Communication
 - Accepting Differences
- **Hands**
 - Leadership
 - Teamwork
 - Self-motivation
 - Contribution to group efforts
- **Health**
 - Disease prevention
 - Managing feelings
 - Self responsibility
 - Self esteem

**note these life skills are just some examples of what 4-H members will learn in this project*

Additional Resources:

[MSU Extension Poultry Project Snapshot](#)
[4-H Poultry Fitting and Showmanship guide](#)
[Michigan 4-H Embryology D2L Course](#)
[Shop 4-H - Poultry and Embryology Curriculum](#)

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Poultry Project

General project requirements

- Members re-enrolling in the project must have signed up by the fall deadline of November 30 through 4-H online. First time project members must be enrolled by the county spring sign-up deadline of April 1. Youth may sign up after April 1 but will not be eligible to exhibit but will be encouraged to participate in watching the shows and learning from other 4-H members.
- The poultry superintendents hold at least (8) county meetings per year. Each poultry project member is encouraged to attend all meetings, but you are required to attend at least (3) meetings, or poultry educational events, per year to be eligible to show at the fair. If youth are participating in other educational events to satisfy your meeting requirements, you must let a superintendent know what educational event you attended.
- All poultry, except waterfowl, will be Pullorum tested, and health checked prior to entering the barn.
- All project members are required to serve a minimum of (2) hours of Barn Duty during fair week.
- All poultry project members must participate in the barn tear down. If a conflict develops, you must contact the superintendents to make other arrangements.
- All project members are encouraged to ask questions. We all want to see you have a good time raising your project animals. Problems and questions do arise during your project year and there are many areas of support. You may contact your project leader or superintendent for any advice or question.
- The poultry superintendents, project leaders and many feed dealers have additional resources.

Breed Poultry Projects

Section A –Breed Chickens

- All Breed/Show birds must be mature - at least 4 months old - to be shown.
- All bird-breed participants must also enter an appropriate showmanship class at the fair.
- Breed Chickens: Breed birds will not sell at the auction.

Section B - Breed Turkeys

- Birds may be adult birds of any age.
- Breed birds will not sell at the auction.
- Participants must enter an appropriate showmanship class.

Section C– Breed Waterfowl

- Breed birds may be adults of any age.
- Breed birds will not sell at the auction.
- Breed waterfowl exhibitors must enter a waterfowl science exhibit to participate.

Section D–Barnyard Poultry Pet

- Pet poultry are birds of questionable ancestry or don't qualify for the projects show bird classes.
- Entry is limited to one pet bird per exhibitor provided that the exhibitor doesn't have any other birds

entered in any other show classes.

- Birds will be judged on general health, cleanliness & condition.
- The exhibitor will be judged on their knowledge and ability to handle the bird.

Section E–Eggs

- Eggs will be shown as a uniform dozen in an egg crate and be from the member's own flock.
- Eggs should be uniform in color, size and shape.

Section F–Exotic Fowl

- Youth who show in this class will show either peafowl, quail, pheasants or guinea fowl.
- Adult birds of each species may be shown but will not be sold at the auction
- Exhibitors must also enter the educational display.

Section G -Poultry & Waterfowl Science

- Educational exhibits for the Poultry Project are encouraged but are not mandatory for all classes.
- Display may be a notebook, poster, or 3-D exhibit. If you have other ideas, please discuss it with the superintendents.
- Youth may exhibit an educational project without showing a live poultry exhibit.
- Beginner: 8 to 11 years old.
- Intermediate: 12 to 15 years old.
- Advanced: 16 to 19 years old.

Section H - Chicken Showmanship

- All participants in the breed poultry project must enter the appropriate showmanship class

Section I - Turkey Showmanship

- Any member exhibiting a breed turkey must enter the appropriate showmanship class.
- Market class participants may choose to also enter the showmanship class.

Market Poultry Projects

- All broilers, roasters, cornish, market turkeys and market ducks must be purchased through the poultry superintendents.
- Market geese should be sourced by the individual exhibitors and need to be 14 weeks of age at the time of the fair.
- A market journal report must be completed for each market project and entered for still exhibit judging. Youth will need to download the [market journal](#) and complete it.

Section J - Market Chickens

- Birds will be exhibited in uniform trios. Birds below minimum weight may be shown but will not sell at the auction.
- Members must be present for market classes unless showing in another class at the time of market

judging. Should this occur, another youth may present the market bird(s) for judging.

- **Minimum weights**
 - Roaster: Minimum weight 6 lbs.
 - Broiler: Minimum weight 3.5 lbs.
 - Comish: Minimum weight 2.0 lbs.

Section K - Market Turkeys

- Turkeys will be exhibited as individuals and must be not more than 22 weeks of age.
- Members must be present for market classes unless showing in another class at the time of the market judging. Should this occur, another youth may present the market bird(s) for judging.
- A market journal must also be completed and entered in the educational section.
- **Minimum weights**
 - Tom turkey minimum weight 16 lbs.
 - Hen turkey minimum weight 12 lbs.

Section L - Heritage Turkeys

- The purchase of heritage market turkeys is the responsibility of the exhibitor.
- Heritage Turkeys should be between 10-15 months at exhibition and of appropriate market condition for their breed.
- Because different breeds of heritage turkeys have different market weights there is not a minimum weight.
- Check the standard market weight for your breed of heritage turkeys.
- A market journal must also be completed and entered in the educational section.
- Heritage turkey market journals may be obtained from the project superintendents.

Section M - Market Waterfowl

- Market waterfowl will be exhibited in uniform trios and must enter a complete market journal report in the educational section.
- **Minimum weights**
 - Market Ducks (Peking) Minimum weight 5 lbs.
 - Heavy Ducks (Rouen) Minimum weight 5 lbs.
 - Geese Minimum weight 6 lbs.

Section N - Poultry Market Journal

- All youth enrolled in a market project must complete a [market journal](#).
- Market journals will need to be put into a three-ring binder or portfolio folder. Loose papers will not be judged.