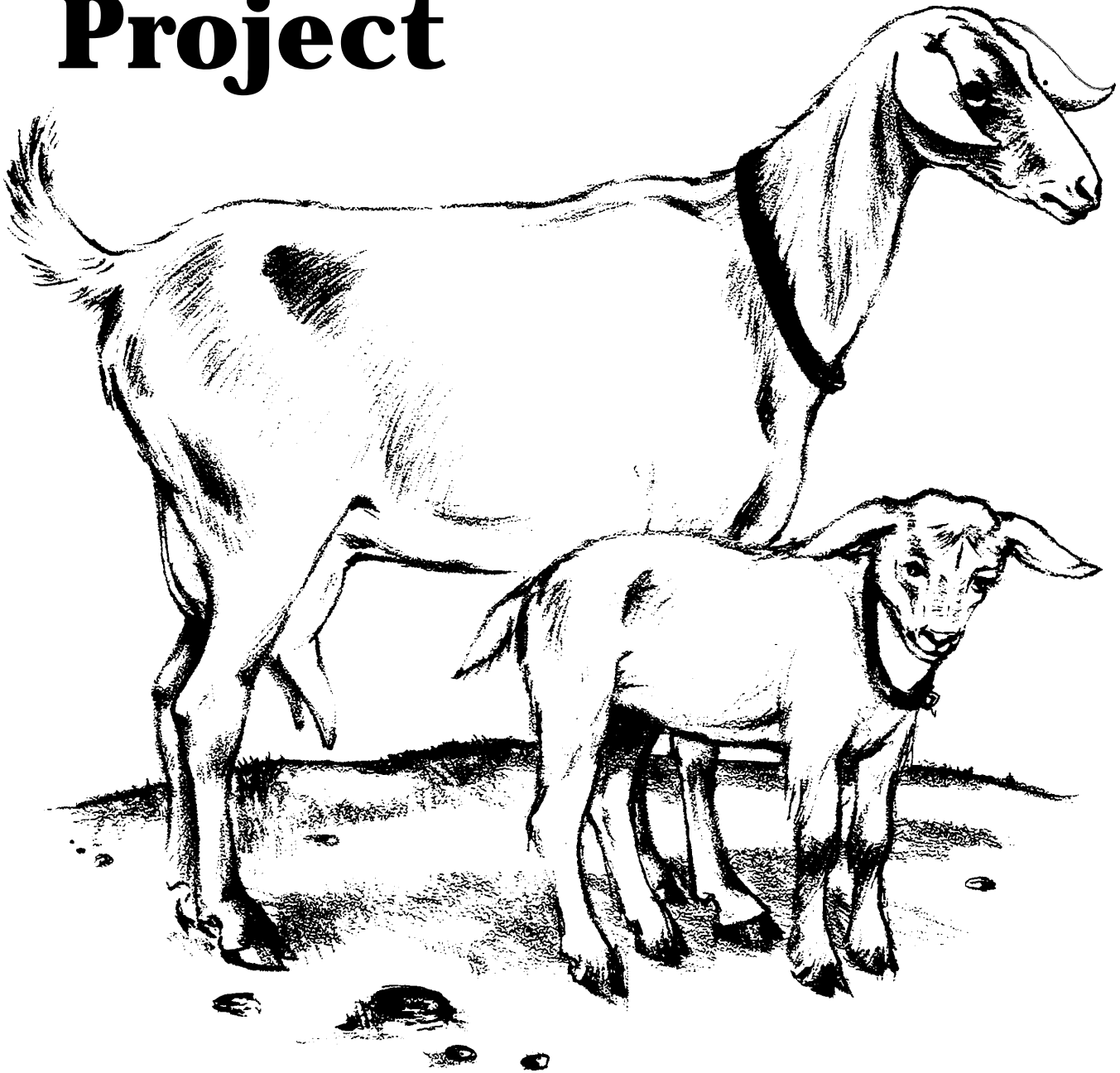


4-H Dairy Goat Project





Purpose

A 4-H dairy goat project will provide an opportunity for you to:

- Learn about breeds and how to select and judge dairy goats.
- Learn how to feed and care for your dairy goats.
- Learn responsibility by having animals of your own to care for regularly.
- Appreciate the response of animals to tender loving care.
- Develop business ability by having a business enterprise of your own.
- Learn how to keep and use records.
- Appreciate the role of goats and goat products in human nutrition throughout the world.
- Appreciate the ability of goats to use marginal land not suited to other livestock.

Opportunities

As a 4-H member, you will have a chance to:

- Belong to a 4-H dairy or livestock club with other youth.
- Attend dairy, livestock, and crop tours.
- Learn to judge livestock and participate in judging contests.
- Learn to identify crop plants, grasses, and weeds.
- Exhibit your dairy goat at fairs.
- Participate in showmanship contests.
- Give presentations related to your project at club or community meetings. Enter the public presentation contest at your county fair.

Requirements

To have a 4-H dairy goat project, you should:

- Own, lease, or have available for your use at least one female dairy goat. She need not be purebred, but one that you will be proud of. (If your animal dies during the project, you may continue as a 4-H member. You can attend meetings and tours, participate in demonstrations and judging contests, and get credit for your record book.)
- Have time each day to care for your animal.
- Have a shed or shelter to protect your animal from the weather.

- Find out if you live in an area where animals can be raised. Some towns have strict zoning regulations.
- Be responsible for feeding and caring for your dairy goat. You should do most of the work yourself.
- Have suitable pasture and other feed, and check on the equipment needed.
- Keep a record of your dairy goat project in a 4-H animal record book. Give your completed record book to your 4-H leader.

Project Activities

If possible, finance your dairy goat project with your own money. If you need to borrow money, make a business arrangement with your bank or with your parents. Be sure to meet your obligations when due.

- Keep accurate, monthly records of your dairy goat. Records are interesting and can be fun if used properly.
- Learn the different breeds of dairy goats.
- Learn the parts of dairy goats so you can talk about them.
- Learn how to feed kids so they will grow and develop properly.
- Learn how to feed a milking doe for milk production.
- Learn about diseases of goats and keep your animal free from parasites.
- Teach your goat to lead while it is young.
- Be kind to your animal. Teach it to trust and respect you.
- Make your animal comfortable. Be sure it has shade, fresh water, salt, a dry place to lie down, and freedom from flies, lice, and other pests.
- Dehorn your dairy goat during the first week of age.

Project Materials

You will want to collect a library of materials dealing with goats. Some of these are available from your local office of the Oregon State University Extension Service, but your leader may refer you to other publications and materials from organizations or publishers.



Fitting and Showing

When you take your dairy goat to a fair, you and your goat will want to look your best. Since this is your project, you will want to be the one who does all the training and fitting.

Selecting

Select your best dairy goat for the fair. Show only a strong, healthy animal. Faulty udders and extra teats are undesirable. Goats should be hornless or neatly dehorned.

Young animals should be in good growing condition, showing dairy character. A producing doe should be in good condition, but not fat.

Training

Work with your dairy goat until it is gentle and will lead or stand as you desire. Working with your goat for a few minutes a day for several weeks is better than several hours a day just before the fair. Teach your animal to lead easily and to walk slowly with its head up. Teach it to stop, to stand quietly, and to take a few steps backward when you push back on the collar and on its shoulder with your hand.

Do not make sudden moves, jerk, or abuse your goat, but hold it so that it cannot get away. Teach your goat to stand quietly when someone handles it.

Fitting

Cleaning

Wash only the soiled or stained parts of your goat, since washing will remove natural oils. Brush thoroughly to remove dirt from the body. Remove burrs, sticks, and straw and clean the feet.

Clipping

Clip the entire animal 1 week to 10 days before the show date to allow for a neat regrowth of hair before showing. Older goats usually require more clipping. Each animal needs to be clipped according to its own conformation.

Clip the long hairs from between the front legs and over the breastbone.

Clip the lower front legs from the hoof to the knee joint. Scissors may be better than clippers around the hooves.

Clip the long hairs along the backbone to improve the appearance of the top line.

Clip the sides of the hind legs with an upward sweep of the clippers to make them appear slim and straight. Clip the flanks and udder to show dairy character.

The head may be clipped to remove long hairs from the crown and to remove the beard. The ears are always clipped.

Trim the hair from the tail to about 2 inches from the end, leaving a tuft on the end of the tail.

Trim the feet so that the animal stands straight on its legs. Trim as often as necessary, usually once every 6 weeks and several days before the show.

Final Preparation

Before taking your goat into the show ring, brush it down carefully; remove all straw; clean the ears, nostrils, and feet with a cloth. Be ready when your class is called.

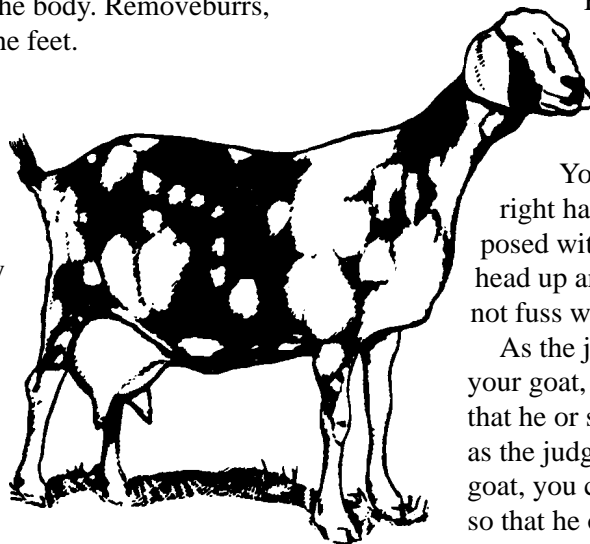
Showing

Dairy goats are shown with a leather collar or neck chain. Lead your goat slowly, holding the collar with your right hand, and walk forward. If the judge is on the outside of the circle, lead with your left hand. Always lead from the side of your goat that is away from the judge. Lead in a clockwise direction or follow the judge's directions. Do not crowd the goat ahead of you nor go so slowly that the exhibitors crowd up behind you.

Keep your eye on the judge so that you can stop, pose your goat, or move as he or she directs. When you stop, take the collar in your left hand.

You can place the goat with your right hand. When your goat is properly posed with feet positioned squarely and its head up and alert, let it stand naturally. Do not fuss with it more than is necessary.

As the judge walks around to the left of your goat, you can step a little to the front so that he or she can get a good side view. Then, as the judge walks on around in front of your goat, you can step back quietly to the left side so that he or she can get a good front view.





If your animal stands well, allow it to stand in that position. Show your animal to its best advantage.

Always pay attention to your goat and to the position of the judge. Continue showing during the entire time you are in the ring.

Courtesy

Regardless of where your goat may place, be courteous and pleasant. Pay careful attention to the reasons the judge gives. Wait until your name is called or the class is dismissed before leaving the show ring.

Grooming

Be sure your hands, face, fingernails, clothes, and shoes are clean.

Have your clothes pressed, shirttail in, shoes tied, and your hair combed. Jeans or slacks, with a tank top, shirt, blouse, or T-shirt (and a jacket, if it is cool) are acceptable. Colored clothes are satisfactory and often more practical than white clothes.

In 4-H we always do our best. We learn from experience so we can “Make The Best Better.”