

Raising a 4-H Swine Project for the Weber County Fair

Basic Rules:

- Members must be at least 8 years old and in 3rd grade prior to January 1 of the current 4-H year to be eligible to participate in a 4-H project.
- Member must own hog a minimum of 60 days prior to the fair; hog must be tagged at a Weber County Jr. Livestock tagging day to verify ownership.
- The minimum weight for the market class at the county fair is 220 pounds.

Following are the recommendations for a 4-H member to follow to help ensure he or she raises a healthy hog for their 4-H project.

General:

- The sleeping area should be cool in the summer and warm in the winter; dry and draft free.
- Pigs must have shade in the summer.
- Clean, fresh water should be readily available.
- Fresh feed should be available.
- Pigs should have access to fresh air and space for exercising.

Selection:

- Select a pig that is the correct size, is structurally sound, and is healthy, with no obvious signs of illness (scours, discharge from nose, lethargic, etc.).
- Always keep new animals separate from pigs already on the farm for at least two weeks to avoid introducing disease.
- The average hog will gain 1.5 to 2 pounds per day.

Space: A project animal requires adequate space to achieve optimal performance. Failure to provide the necessary feed, water and living space for the pig will result in overcrowding and poor performance.

Self Feeders – one space per every 4 pigs

Waterers – one space per every 15 pigs

Floor Space:

- Pigs to 40 lbs. – 3 sq. feet/pig minimum
- 40 – 100 lbs. – 4 sq. feet/pig minimum
- 100 – 150 lbs. – 6 sq. feet/pig minimum
- 150 – market – 8 sq. feet/pig minimum

Outside Lots:

- 5 square feet under roof/pig minimum and 6-15 sq. feet/pig outside

Manure:

- Pigs can be readily toilet trained.

- To train, dampen the pen in the area where you want pigs to deposit manure. Pigs will usually dung in a wet area.
- When introducing new animals to a pen, pen them first in the area where you want them to dung for two hours before introducing them to the whole pen.
- Manure needs to be removed from the pen each day.

Water:

- Water is the most important nutrient. It must be supplied in optimal amounts for proper growth, development and performance. Even with free access to automatic watering devices, low flow rates may cause the pig to consume inadequate amounts of water. Check to make sure the water barrel is functioning every feeding.

Feed:

- Members may buy a complete, pelleted feed or mix their own ration. The nutritional needs of the pig will change as it grows. Protein levels should range between 18 percent and 22 percent. When pigs are in the growing stage they will need higher protein levels for proper growth. In the fattening stages the protein levels can drop so the pig will get fat, but not grow so fast.
- Fat levels should range between 3.5 percent (finishing pigs) to 6.5 percent (growing pigs). Finishing pigs should be on the lower end of fat percentage and growing pigs need to be toward the higher percentage.

Health:

- Internal and external parasites can be controlled with products such as Ivomec and Atguard. Establish a regular schedule for worming the show pig.
- Pay attention to withdrawal times before the fair so your pig enters the food chain clean of residue and wholesome.
- Check with your breeder or seller to make sure proper vaccinations were given. These may include vaccinations for Erysipelas, Rhinitis, Dysentery (scours) and Parvovirus.
- The following may be indicators that your pig is sick:
 - It goes off its feed
 - It gets scours
 - It does not drink
 - It goes off by itself and lays down
 - Other abnormal behavior