DAIRY GOAT PROJECT AREA

The dairy industry is one of the foundations of agriculture; there’s so much more to it than just producing milk! Most think of only dairy cattle that produce dairy products. Time to consider the dairy goat project area.

Ideas for Project Area Learning
• Acquire skills in dairy goat production through ownership and care of dairy goats.
• Learn marketing, processing, distribution, consumption, and use of dairy products.
• Discover selecting your project, raising it, or finding a career in the industry.
• Learn the nutritive value of dairy products and promote their use.
• Know your dairy breeds.
• Select your animal.
• Identify parts of the animal.
• Groom your animal.
• Learn showmanship techniques.
• Ramp up your judging skills.
• Make ethical decisions.
• Identify a sick animal, how to treat it, and learn future prevention.
• Learn the appropriate handling techniques and housing of dairy goats.
• Evaluate feed quality and how it affects digestion.
• Debate animal welfare issues.
• Use records to make management decisions.
• Investigate the signs and causes of mastitis.
• Learn about breeding and reproduction techniques.
• Promote the dairy industry.
• Learn how to register and keep records on your animal project.

APPLY WHAT YOU’VE LEARNED

Communication
• Design a poster on dairy goat breeds.
• Teach others about showmanship techniques.
• Give a speech on the importance of the dairy industry.

Civic Engagement
• Have your animal as part of a petting zoo and share the importance of dairy.
• Be a part of a dairy promotional event.
• Lead tours of Dairy Farm Operations within your community.

Leadership
• Arrange for your class to tour a dairy goat farm.
• Organize a county grooming clinic.
• Attend a national or regional conference and encourage other youth to attend.

Entrepreneurship
• Sell milk, butter, and cheeses to local businesses and markets.
• Create a small animal petting zoo.
Goal Setting and Record Keeping
Goal setting is an ongoing process that guides your project area learning. Having goals is like having a road map to show you how to get you to where you want to go. Record keeping is also an ongoing process and another important life skill. In 4-H, you are encouraged to select from a variety of record keeping formats to meet your own personal needs and your preferred learning style. Keeping records of your learning experiences helps you determine how well you met your goals. Goal setting and record keeping improve your skills in organization, communication, planning, and evaluating.

Iowa 4-H Event Opportunities
• Participate in county and state fair exhibit classes.
• Check with your local county 4-H youth development staff to see if there are special events or workshops in your county that you want to attend to learn more about your project areas.
• Iowa 4-H members in grades 9–12 can apply for State Project Area Awards at State Recognition Day. Applications are open December through January.
• Meet young people from around the state who have completed grades 8–12, and share your interests at the Iowa 4-H Youth Conference held at Iowa State University in late June.

Share Your Learning With an Exhibit
• Assemble an emergency medical kit.
• Create a poster explaining how to tack your dairy goat properly.
• Design a poster on the many dairy goat breeds.
• Give a demonstration of proper feeding techniques for showing.
• Create a display on proper feed rations.
• Prepare a dairy goat show kit.
• Describe the proper terms when talking about dairy goats.

CAREER CONNECTIONS
• Agricultural education teachers teach students about livestock production, lead activities, and get students involved in the community.
• Food science technicians test food and food additives and help scientists with food research, development, and quality control.
• Livestock judges evaluate animals at shows and teach exhibitors more about their animals through effective communication.

EDUCATION CONNECTIONS
• Learn how to effectively run a farm, as well as how to use marketing, finance, operations, and production to excel with farm management.
• Students who study veterinary medicine learn more about biology and microbiology, with an emphasis on animal studies.
• Study food and nutrition if you are interested in maintaining health, preventing diseases, and bettering nutrition.
• Study dairy science if you are interested in animal health, management, and how lactation works in animals.

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