

# Market Hog Project Guide

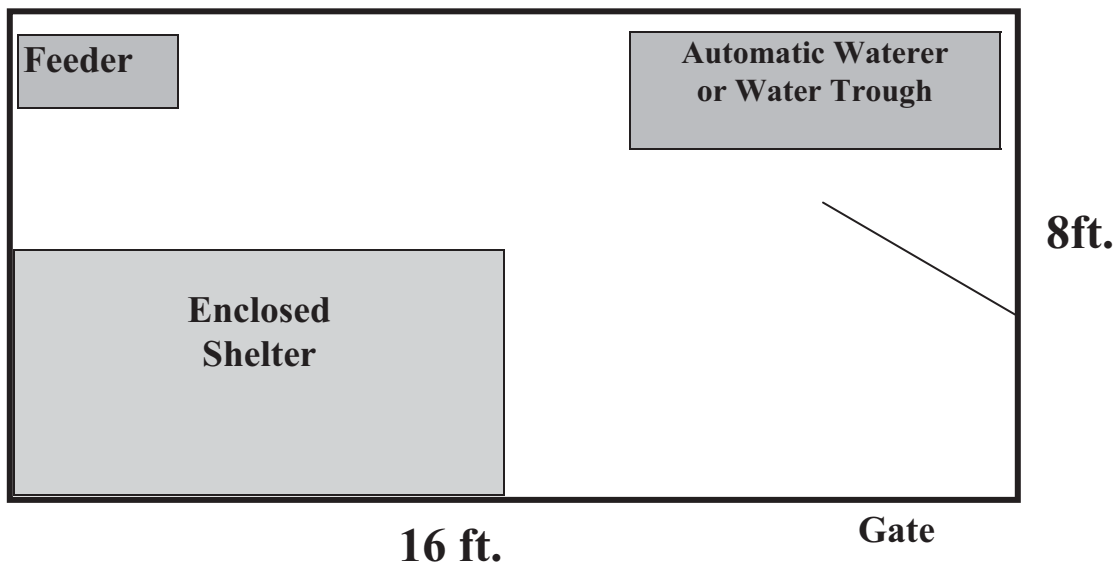
- 1 **Pen Construction**
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# Hog Pen Construction and Layout

- 1) Space-- Make sure your animals have enough space to be happy and productive. It is recommended that you allow a minimum of 15 square feet per hog for raising show hogs. This means you should at least have a pen 3 ft. by 5 ft. for each animal. Larger pens are fine because the hog will get more exercise, build more muscle and stay leaner.
- 2) Single or multiple pens--Hogs are social animals. Hogs raised together will outperform hogs raised singly as long as feed is not limited and they are from the same farm. All the hogs must be able to get all the feed they need.
- 3) Toys--hanging a rubber inner tube or similar item in the pen for a toy will increase gains and reduce fighting in multiple hog pens.
- 4) Floor material--Concrete, followed by wood are the best materials to use because you can keep them clean and dry. However, this is a market project and dirt is much cheaper. Dirt floors are harder to keep dry and free of manure, because it will be rooted up continuously.
- 5) Layout--Design is especially important when using dirt floors. The hog needs a dry, warm place to eat and sleep. Make sure the feed trough and shelter are located on the high end of the pen and that the pen has good drainage. This will not only help your hog stay healthy, but will also help keep feed from spoiling. Another advantage of having a dry area for feeding and sleeping is it makes manure cleanup much easier. Hogs will naturally go to the bathroom in wet areas away from where they sleep. Don't put the water trough under the shelter or near the feed. Hogs will spill or lay in their water trough to try and cool off. You also want your gate near the lower end of the pen so it is easy to clean it out.

This is a sample design using three 16 ft. hog panels, with one cut in half for the ends. This pen would be big enough for up to 8 hogs with a final cost of approximately \$100 including the feeder and automatic waterer.



# Feeding Your Pig



## 1) Provide Fresh Clean Water

An automatic waterer is best, but a water trough that can be easily cleaned and not turned over is fine as long as the water is continually fresh. Just make sure you check the waterer daily to make sure it is working properly.

## 2) Fresh Supply of Feed

Hand feeding twice daily is best, but automatic feeders provide a better alternative for once a day feeding. Feed slightly more than the pig cleans up at each feeding. You want the pig to have an adequate supply of feed without waste. The more feed wasted, the lower your profit will be at the end. Clean old feed out at each feeding to prevent moldy and rotting feed. Automatic feeders must be cleaned out regularly to prevent mold and maggots. Don't just look in the top of the feeder, but check the bottom where the pig actually eats. Hogs will slobber in feed and cause feed in the bottom to become damp and moldy. You want fresh, appetizing feed in front of your pigs daily.

## 3) Feeding Rules of Thumb

Pigs should gain 1.5-2.0 pounds per day over the whole feeding period. It takes around 3 pounds of feed to get one pound of weight gain over the whole feeding period. Feed at the same time every day to maintain optimum appetite. Use a scale when hand feeding to provide the same amount at each feeding. Increase feed gradually, about 1 additional pound per day for every 20 pounds of gain. Record each feed purchase as you buy the feed, otherwise you will forget when and how much you bought.

## 4) Feeding Guidelines

| Body Weight | % Protein | Lbs. of Feed/Day | Average Daily Gain |
|-------------|-----------|------------------|--------------------|
| 50          | 18%       | 2.5              | 1.2                |
| 70          | 18%       | 3.5              | 1.4                |
| 90          | 18%       | 4.5              | 1.7                |
| 130         | 18%       | 5.5              | 2.0                |
| 150         | 16%       | 6.5              | 2.1                |
| 190         | 16%       | 7.5              | 2.3                |
| 210 +       | 16%       | 8.5              | 2.4                |

# Keeping Your Hog Healthy

- 1) Buy only from hog producers that you know with good reputations. It is recommended that you purchase pigs from herds that are validated brucellosis and pseudorabies free.
- 2) Keep newly purchased hogs separate from each other unless they are from the same farm.
- 3) De-worm pigs 48 hours after they come home and 2-3 more times prior to the fair (every 30-45 days).
- 4) Because the major health problems affecting newly purchased pigs occur within the first 5-14 days, you should feed medicated feed for the first two bags of feed or the first 2-3 weeks when feeding multiple hogs.
- 5) The two most common forms of sickness affecting feeder pigs are digestive and respiratory diseases. Symptoms of respiratory diseases (pneumonia) are: watery eyes, constant heavy breathing, runny nose, continual sneezing, limited or zero weight gain without a loss of appetite, and prolonged, dry coughing especially following periods of exercise. Symptoms of digestive diseases (diarrhea a.k.a. scours) are: watery feces over a 24 hour period, or watery feces that is white or has blood and mucous in it. Diarrhea can be caused by other agents for example: parasites, chemicals, certain feedstuffs and changes in the diet . Diarrhea is often one symptom of a general disease. Also, you should monitor feed consumption because sick animals will typically stop eating.
- 6) Keep watch for hernias forming. These are lumps around the navel where the small intestines are coming through the lining of the gut wall. If you suspect your hog has a hernia contact your veterinarian.

**Frequent observation is important.** Close observation at least twice a day for the first two weeks, and daily there after may prevent a serious disease problem. If you see any of the symptoms listed above or notice any other unusual behavior over a 24 hour period contact your 4-H Leader, Ag Teacher, Extension Agent or Veterinarian. It is a good idea to write down your observations and when they occur so that an accurate diagnosis can be made.

\* A good general disease treatment is to use a broad-spectrum, long acting antibiotic such as LA 200 or Tylan 50. Always inject animals in the neck to prevent abscesses in high priced meat areas such as the ham or loin.

# Financing Your Project

## Market Hog Cost Estimates

|   |              |
|---|--------------|
| Initial Purchase  | \$150        |
| Feed & Wormer   | \$150        |
| Depreciation of Pen<br>Feeder, Water, Cane etc.<br>(\$200 over 4 years) | \$50         |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>\$350</b> |

## Farm Service Agency Loan Costs

|                            |             |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| Interest                   | 4%          |
| <u>\$350 expenses x 4%</u> |             |
| <b>Total</b>               | <b>\$14</b> |

## Farm Bureau Insurance

|                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 6 Month Insurance | 5% of Total    |
| Policy Premium    |                |
| <b>\$350 X 5%</b> | <b>\$17.50</b> |

## Estimated Budget

|                          |                 |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| Cost of project          | \$350           |
| Cost of Loan             | \$14            |
| <u>Cost of Insurance</u> | <u>\$17.50</u>  |
| <b>Total Costs</b>       | <b>\$381.50</b> |

## Break Even and Profit Estimate

|                                  |                  |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Average Sale Hog                 | 250 lbs.         |
| Breakeven per pound              | $\$382/250=1.53$ |
| Possible Sale Price              | \$1.60 /Pound    |
| <u>Average 250 X\$1.60=\$400</u> |                  |
| <b>Profit \$400-382=</b>         | <b>\$18</b>      |

**Make sure you have a buyer that is willing to purchase your hog for more than the breakeven price! Seek Sponsorships as well.**



# Marketing Your Project

The whole point of a hog project is for young people to start their own one animal business. Project loans, a checking account, insurance are necessary components to start a business. But, to really make a business a success, youth also need to learn how to market themselves and their businesses. The way to do that is by recruiting buyers and sponsors. People will not know about you and your project unless you tell them about it.



## Contacting Buyers & Sponsors

The place to start looking for buyers and sponsors are people that know your family well. This might be people that you do business with regularly: farm supply dealer, bank, dry cleaner, car dealer, dentist, doctor, etc. The hogs will be sold at auction. Contact these folks and let them know what you are doing well in advance. Let them know that there are several options available to them.

1. They can sponsor your project. If you can get several \$25-\$50 sponsors, then you can ensure your project will not lose money.
2. They can provide add-ons for every hog in the show.
3. They can purchase the hog and have it processed into freezer pork.
4. They can purchase half a hog if they can find someone to split the carcass with.
5. They can purchase the hog and resell it. The initial buyer then only pays the difference between the sale price and the commercial price.

An auction requires at least two bidders. It is important to notify multiple potential buyers well in advance so that they can either come to the auction or have a representative bidder there for them. **The best ways to communicate with potential sponsors or buyers is in person.** Telephone calls or letters can work as well. Whatever means you use to contact potential sponsors or buyers, make sure they have all the information they need to follow through with the commitment. Even if you visit someone in person, it is good idea to have a cover letter that tells them about your individual project. Use the enclosed sheets to send them information for all of these options. This information should answer most of their questions, but always give them a phone number to contact you if they have questions. Don't expect them to figure out all the details involved with sponsorship or buying a hog. Remember they are helping you out, so give them all of the information they might need.

## Thank You Notes

Finally, marketing also involves saying thank you after the show and sale. Remember you are cultivating business relationships. It is important to let buyers or sponsors know how the project came out. Let them know what their purchase or sponsorship has meant to you. At least send a brief thank you note to acknowledge their contribution to the success of your project.

# Buyer Letter Check List

Every hog exhibitor needs to at least write three letters to potential buyers. The hogs will be sold at auction to the highest bidder. It takes two bidders to have an auction, so don't stop with simply contacting one person or business. Also, the more potential buyers present at the sale the better it will be for all of the exhibitors. Not everyone may be able to line up a definite buyer in advance.



## **Make the letter look professional.**

You are writing businesses to get support for your project. You want to make the effort to make your letter presentable and professional. Use nice stationary or computer paper, so that the reader knows you have made a real effort to gain their support. Make each letter personalized so that the potential buyer knows the letter was written for them and not a general letter run through the copy machine 20 times.



## **Easy to read and understand.**

Whether you use hand written letters or type them on a computer, make sure you read over what you write to make sure it is easy to understand and makes sense. Explain what is going on and why you would like them to purchase your hog. Make sure words are spelled correctly and that you use correct grammar. Ask your parents or a teacher to read over your letter before you send it to see if it makes sense and explains what you are asking for.



## **Brief, but with enough detail.**

Letters should be fairly short and to the point, but not so brief that you don't provide enough information. Tell them when, where and how to purchase your hog and make sure the "How to buy a hog for your freezer" sheet is included with the letter. Give them the option of sponsoring your project if they are not interested in purchasing your hog. Make sure the "Sponsorship Form" is included as well.



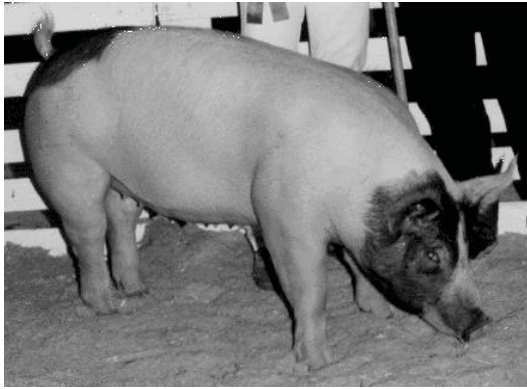
## **Tell the prospective buyer a little about yourself and your project.**

I am a member of the \_\_\_\_\_ 4-H Club or of the \_\_\_\_\_ FFA Chapter. I live in \_\_\_\_\_ and am in the \_\_\_\_\_ grade at \_\_\_\_\_ School. Tell them about your project, what you have learned, how hard you have worked to get ready for the fair. I bought my hog in \_\_\_\_\_ and have been caring for it daily. My hog has gained very quickly in the last few months and should be ready to make excellent pork for your table.



## **Sell yourself and the project.**

The bottom line is to emphasize the benefits of supporting youth with livestock projects. Why should a buyer give their money to support your projects? Why is this worth their time and expense to participate? Business people and family members are truly willing and interested in supporting young people who have enthusiasm and make the effort to better their selves.



## How to Buy a Hog for Your Freezer at the Jackson County Fair

### When:

The 4-H and FFA youth will be offering their market hogs for sale at a public auction to be held on **Tuesday, October 7, 2008 at 6:30PM** at the **Jackson County Fair** (Jackson County Agriculture Center). You are also welcome to join us for the showmanship competition at 1:00 PM followed by the actual Market Hog Show immediately (~2 or 2:30). The Swine Show and Sale provide an opportunity to showcase the hard work of 4-H and FFA youth and support their beginning ventures into an agricultural business of their own.

### Where:

The Jackson County Agriculture Center, located 2 miles west of Marianna on Highway 90. The Hog auction will be held in the small livestock arena in the main front building of the Agriculture Center. Go through the center doors at the main entrance from the paved parking lot.

### How:

The hogs will be auctioned off to the highest bidder. There will be a base minimum market price established the day of the sale by a commercial hog buyer willing to purchase the hogs. Hogs will be sold to a commercial buyer if there are no bidders willing to pay more than the base price or if the highest buyer does not actually want to consume the meat.

### What To Do with the Hog Once Purchased:

Buyers have two options for the hogs they purchase:

1. All market hogs must go to slaughter. Buyers will not be able to take these hogs home. Buyers may have the hog processed by a local meat-packing house into retail cuts for personal consumption. The packer of choice must be designated by the buyer at the time of sale. The hogs will be picked up by the local meat-packers on Wednesday afternoon or following the sale. **Buyers will not be required to haul or handle the pigs.**
  - a. The buyer must provide instructions to the packer on how and when they would like their hog processed.
  - b. Two local meat packers in the area are willing to process your animals for you. The buyer is responsible for the meat processing fees associated with the animals purchased. These fees are not included in the bid price. The following meat packers have agreed to handle the processing for hogs from the fair auction. Buyers should contact the meat packer within a week of the sale.

| Packer                         | Contact Information                                 | Approximate Processing Fees   |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| Corbin's 4-Point Packing House | 850-638-1149<br>3681 Highway 273<br>Chipley, FL     | \$10 slaughter fee<br>\$0.35/lb. cut & wrap fee<br>\$0.40/lb. curing or smoke fee |
| Dilmore Meats                  | 850-352-4407<br>2321 Dilmore Road<br>Cottondale, FL |   |

- c. Some buyers may want to split a hog between two families. There is no problem with this, but one individual should do the bidding at the auction and make the processing arrangements. The processor must be notified so that the meat can be wrapped for two separate families.
2. Re-sell the hog to the commercial buyer and pay the difference between the bid price and the commercial price. **The buyer must notify the auctioneer that the hog should be re-sold at the auction instead of designating a local meat packer.**

Example:

Auction price \$1.20 per pound on 250 pound hog = \$300

Commercial price of \$0.50 per pound x 250 lbs. = \$125

Auction Buyer pays the difference \$240 - \$108= \$175

Commercial Buyer pays \$125

This allows businesses or family members to support the youth project and provide incentives for continued project experiences without actually having the meat processed for consumption by the buyer. The Fair Swine Committee will make the arrangements for this option.

The Jackson County Fair Swine Committee would like your help in supporting 4-H and FFA youth with market hog projects. By purchasing a hog for consumption or re-sale, you are directly supporting these young people with their beginning ventures into the agricultural business world. These youth are only raising a few animals, so they cannot cover their expenses selling their projects at commercial production prices. Your purchase of a Fair Project Hog will encourage youth to continue to learn business skills, such as money and time management, and responsibility through livestock projects in future years.

If you would like to support these youth, but are not able to purchase a hog, you can also provide sponsorships that go directly to the exhibitors. The Exhibitors have sponsorship forms that can be sent in with each contribution. Sponsorship checks should be made payable to the **Jackson County Swine Show** and mailed to the Extension office by **September 29**. Youth will receive the money along with the funds generated through the auction.

If you have questions about the show, sale or sponsorship of exhibitors at the Jackson County Fair, please contact Ted Bruner, Market Swine Committee Chairman at 850-592-2690 or Doug Mayo at the Jackson County Extension Office at 850-482-9620.



# Jackson County Market Hog Show & Sale Sponsor Pledge Card



### Exhibitor Information:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

4-H Club or FFA Chapter \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

### Sponsor Information:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Business \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**“I agree to sponsor \_\_\_\_\_ in the amount of  
\$\_\_\_\_\_ to help him/her offset the costs of their hog project.**

Sponsor signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to the **Jackson County Swine Show**.  
Please mail your check to:  
2741 Pennsylvania Ave, Ste#3, Marianna, FL 32448

Please mail in sponsor forms no later than **Monday, September 29, 2008**, so that you, your business, or organization can be recognized during the auction and for publicity purposes.