Meat Goat Project

South Carolina Youth Livestock Program
About the Project

Each year, 4-H and FFA project members exhibit their project animals at fairs, shows, and events in nearly every region of the state. Thousands of people have seen or learned about 4-H and FFA through these youth animal exhibits at the many fairs and events in South Carolina. This offers a tremendous opportunity for 4-H, FFA, Clemson Cooperative Extension, and the animal agriculture industry to educate and inform the general public.

The South Carolina 4-H/FFA Meat Goat Project has been educating and impacting youth since 1999. This is a market livestock project where each 4-H or FFA project member randomly draws for their wether goat from a group of pre-selected commercial animals at the project Kick-Off event in June. Wethers are provided to the project by generous producers throughout the state. Project members spend the next 4 to 5 months caring for, training, showing, and learning about goats and the goat industry. The conclusion of the project is the Final Show where youth exhibit their wether in one last show and then have the option to sell him as a market animal. The committee works hard every year to secure a buyer willing to pay fair market value for all the goats in the project.

Objectives

The South Carolina Meat Goat Project was developed to help participants:

- Develop character and life skills through 4-H and/or FFA work.
- Develop integrity and sportsmanship by caring for, training, and showing a wether goat.
- Increase experience with and knowledge about the meat goat industry and animal agriculture.
- Develop a better understanding of basic goat anatomy, nutrition, management and healthcare.
- Stimulate positive public interest in the goat industry.
- Be a positive ambassador to the public for 4-H, FFA, and animal agriculture.
- Learn and use business principles including use of animal records and financial records.

Advisory Committee

The Committee works hard to ensure high learning outcomes and successful, positive project experiences for each participant. They also develop and implement the rules and regulations that govern the project. Each county or area of South Carolina has an advisor for that area. The following individuals represent the area listed and are the first point of contact for project members in that part of the state. They are also charged with recruiting new members and holding educational workshops for their area.
President  
Brian & Tonia Gibson (864) 910-1315

Vice-President  
Chris & Christy Sweatman (843) 906-7833

Secretary  
John & Jessica Burnette (864) 809-2990

Treasurer  
Brian & Naomi Keller (803) 230-2229

Clemson Extension  
Robin Long (864) 656-0496

Greenville County  
Tom & Ginger Copelan (864) 608-0635

Greenwood County  
Billie Miller (864) 980-7505

Laurens County  
Ty & Fran Werts (864) 682-4121

Newberry County  
Matt & Nola Craven (803) 271-4954

Oconee County  
Shawn & Doug Smith (864) 634-3233 (c)

Orangeburg/Colleton/Dorchester/Charleston/Berkeley County  
Chris & Christy Sweatman (843) 906-7833

Richland County  
Jeremy & Cathy Alcorn (803) 309-0448

Saluda County  
Randall & Kim Porter (864) 445-3688

Spartanburg County  
Tyler & Mary Walker (864) 871-5686

Union County  
Russell & April Trammell (864) 230-4339

York County  
Martin & Allison Moses (704) 718-5985

If you are interested in serving on the Advisory Committee please contact the current President AND the Clemson Advisor for more information and instructions.

Elections are held each January. Announcements and details about nominations and elections will be emailed to all participants prior to official voting. All previous year’s project participants are eligible to vote for committee members (1 vote per family).

**Participant Eligibility**

Project participants must:

🧼 Be at least 5 years of age but not over 18 years of age as of January 1st of the project year. Age division is based on age on January 1st of the project year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Division</th>
<th>Age Range</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cloverbud</td>
<td>Ages 5-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloverleaf</td>
<td>Ages 9-11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior</td>
<td>Ages 12-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior</td>
<td>Ages 15-18</td>
</tr>
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</table>

🧼 Be, and remain, a current, dues paying member in active status of either 4-H or FFA. Please have your County Extension Agent or FFA Advisor sign your application to validate your current, active status with 4-H or FFA. You will not receive a goat if you do not have an active status with 4-H or FFA or have not paid current membership fees to your County Agent or FFA Teacher.

🧼 Be able to purchase and pay in full for their wether by the deadline. Refer to the application packet for more information.
Be able to properly house and care for their goat throughout the duration of the project (approximately 5-6 months). They then have the option to sell or keep their goat at the final show.

Be able to attend (with a parent or legal guardian) the project Kick-Off, unless other arrangements have been approved by the committee chairperson prior to the event. Each project member will draw for his/her wether that day and is responsible for getting the wether home.

Be responsible for all costs incurred during the duration of the Project (feed, housing, veterinarians, etc.).

Be aware that often members only break even and some even lose money. It is a time-consuming and sometimes costly project. The goal of a youth livestock project is learning and experiencing animal agriculture while developing life-skills!

Participants are expected and highly encouraged to submit a record book at the conclusion of the project. The record book will be provided to you at the project Kick-Off.

Any participant that is suspected of or determined to be abusing or neglecting animals or acting in an unsportsmanlike manner can be dismissed from a show, removed from the project, have their goat removed from their care, or banned from future animal projects as deemed necessary by the project committee.

If you agree to sell your wether at the end of the project and sign the Sales Contract, this is a binding agreement. You CANNOT change your mind at the Final Show!

### Participant Selection in Case of a Shortage

The Project Committee remains committed to providing as many quality wethers as possible; however, for various reasons the number of wethers the committee will be able to secure each year may fluctuate. **The following criteria have been established and will be utilized in the selection of participants from the applicant pool should the committee not be able to secure a sufficient number of wether goats:**

1. **Level of Project Participation in past years**
   - Attendance at the Pre Kick-Off Clinic.
   - Number of shows in which the applicant competed.
   - Number of clinics and workshops attended/helped with.
   - Submission and completion of the Project Record Book.

2. **Postmark Date**
   - Meat Goat project participants are encouraged to apply early. Early applicants will have priority as determined by postmark date of application.

3. **New Applicants**
   - Must have a signed statement from their Extension Agent or Agriculture Teacher stating that this applicant is believed to be an individual who can care for the animal and will be an active participant in the project activities.
It is not the desire of the Meat Goat Project Committee to eliminate anyone from participating in the project; however, if needed, the Committee will use the above guidelines in the selection of participants only in the event of a goat shortage. All decisions made by the Committee regarding the selection of project participants will be final. If you are not selected to receive a goat then you will be refunded your goat purchase fee.

Payments and Financing

For the 2015 project year the price of purchasing a wether to be in the Meat Goat Project is $125.00.

Any and all checks, cashier checks, or money orders will need to be payable to SC 4-H/FFA Meat Goat Project. Each participant is responsible for payment of his or her wether. Payment in full is due by the 1st Friday in May. Payment can be completed one of two ways:

1. The full payment can be sent in with the project registration application, OR
2. Payment can be broken up into 3 payments with the final payment being due by the 1st Friday in May.
   a. The first 2 payments can be any amount over $45. The final payment must be the remaining balance and must be received by the 1st Friday in May.
   b. No refunds will be given after the 1st Friday in May
   c. If you do not complete your payments or decide not to participate after the 1st Friday in May you will forfeit the amount you’ve already paid.
   d. Please send a completed payment stub with your payments to ensure your payment is applied to the correct child’s balance. Payment stubs can be obtained on the website or by contacting your County Advisor.

Checks, cashier checks, or money orders are the only forms of payment we can accept. If a check bounces, the project member will be notified via email and with a mailed letter. The project member will then owe the full registration amount plus a $35 bounced check fee. If the full amount owed is not received before the project Kick-Off the project member will NOT receive a project wether.

Farm Service Agency (FSA) offers Rural Youth Loans to help rural youth learn the business of agriculture. Visit your local FSA office or their website www.fsa.usda.gov for more information.

Project Participant Responsibilities

These are animals. Animals can get sick, injured, or die. Once you purchase your wether he is yours and therefore if he gets sick, injured, or dies he is your responsibility. The Meat Goat Project is not responsible for replacing wethers.

Participants should become familiar with their Project Advisory Committee Representative early. This individual can serve as or help find each project member a mentor for the duration of the project. A project mentor should be willing to help the participant learn how to properly care for, train, and show a meat goat.

Prior to registering for this project it is recommended that participants locate the nearest veterinarian that works with goats. Call various veterinarians in your area and visit with them
until you find one that is knowledgeable and willing to work with goats. Don’t wait until you have an emergency to try and find a veterinarian!

Participants should keep in close contact with their County Extension Agent or Ag Teacher regarding their project animal to ensure he is receiving proper care and training.

Any participant that is suspected of or determined to be abusing or neglecting their animal(s), or acting in an unsportsmanlike manner can be dismissed from a show, removed from the project, have their goat removed from their care, or banned from future animal projects as deemed necessary by the Project Committee.

Participants are highly encouraged to submit a Record Book each year immediately following the Final Show. Record Book scores count toward some of the year-end awards.

If you agree to sell your wether at the end of the project and sign the Sales Contract, this is a binding agreement. You CANNOT change your mind at the Final Show!

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**Project Kick-Off**

All project members (and their family) should attend the Pre Kick-Off Clinic (usually held mid-May each year). This clinic is full of useful information about the project, goat nutrition, how to take care of a goat, showmanship, and much, much more! Attendance is STRONGLY ENCOURAGED FOR ALL PROJECT MEMBERS!

The Project Kick-Off is typically in mid- to late June at the Newberry County Fairgrounds (2301 Adelaide St; Newberry, SC 29108). All participants and a parent or legal guardian must be present at Kick-Off unless approved by the Committee chairperson prior to the event. In addition, agents and teachers are encouraged to attend.

Goats will be assembled at the Newberry County Fairgrounds for Kick-Off. The producers will be responsible for transportation of goats to Newberry, but project members will be responsible for transportation of goats back to their home. If you signed up to receive a goat then it is YOUR responsibility to make arrangements to get your goat home!

Please make sure you understand proper transportation techniques for goats. Do NOT plan on carrying your goat home in the back seat of your car or on your lap!

Goats will be individually numbered and will be selected through a lottery system. Project members will draw for their goats in the order that their application was received.

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**Does**

Project participants can show doe goats in addition to their wether. There are some changes in the format of the doe classes so read the following rules carefully:

- You MUST be registered with and have purchased a wether through the Meat Goat Project to be able to participate in the doe classes.
- Participants can pre-register up to 6 does to show during the season.
- All does must have been born between September 1 of the previous year and the Kick-Off date of the current year.
• All does shown are to be market does not show does, therefore any doe shown cannot have show points in the USBGA/ABGA.
• All does MUST be checked in at Kick-Off where they will be weighed, photographed, and ear tagged.
• Participants will be charged a $5 ear tagging fee per doe.
• The does will be judged as MARKET animals.
• Classes will be established on the day of the show.
• Does will be weighed at each fairground/show location and broken into weight classes at each show.

The Project can only enforce the following at the Final Show. All other shows have different coordinators and exhibitors will be expected to follow the rules of each individual show. Please make sure you check the rules for each show prior to registration and showing.
• Each exhibitor will only be allowed to show one (1) doe per class.
• If an exhibitor has 2 or 3 does in one weight class, they will be allowed to only show one doe in that class. Exhibitors are to only show their own animal, and no one else’s doe, except in the case of championship class. Warning: no refunds will be given for entry fees if you have 2 or 3 does in one weight class and one or more does are unable to be shown.

These are animals and unfortunately they sometimes die for various reasons and the Committee does not want to exclude youth from participating in these situations. So, if your wether dies you can still continue to show any pre-registered does in showmanship and doe classes. If you did NOT pre-register any does we still want you to be able to participate in the project so the following guidelines have been established:
• A doe not registered with the project can be used in showmanship. However, if a participant wants to show in the doe classes the doe must be registered with the project.
• Participants can only register a doe after kick-off ONLY in the event that their original project wether dies.
• She must have been born between September 1 of the previous year to Kick-Off date of the current year.
• Participants are limited to only registering one (1) doe.
• Participants can show only in showmanship and doe classes.
• Participants must pay the $5 ear tagging fee.
• Participants will need to contact their County Advisor and the President of Meat Goat Committee (Tonia Gibson) in order to purchase a tag for $5.
• If you tagged a doe at kickoff, you will not be allowed to purchase an additional doe tag.

Final Show & Sale of Wethers

The Final Show occurs in November each year and is the conclusion of the project. All participants are eligible to show at the final show.

Record Books are due one (1) hour after the conclusion of the Final Show.

All participants are expected to sell $25 in ads for the Final Show Ad Book. Ads can be personal (wishing their favorite 4-H’er or FFA member good luck) or professional (promoting a
business). See the ad form for more details. If you prefer to just pay the $25 that option is available on the Application at the start of the project year.

Wethers must pass a health inspection before being weighed in to be sold at the Final Show. If the Committee deems your goat not fit for sale your goat will be removed from the sale list and you will not receive a check and you will be responsible for taking your goat back home. The committee reserves the right to refuse any goat that is not in acceptable health or body condition.

If you agree to sell your wether at the end of the project and sign the Sales Contract, this is a binding agreement. You CANNOT change your mind at the Final Show!

### Project Awards

The Meat Goat Project gives as much back to the project youth as possible. The number of placings for each award may vary depending on the amount of money available each year. The scoring and award calculations will be as follows:

**Overall Exhibitor**

Highest score placing first based on the following formula:

overall showmanship score + total record book score + weight gain score + on-foot quality score = Overall Exhibitor Score

**Overall Showmanship**

- Points given at each Meat Goat Project Show for actual placings in showmanship based on the scale below. Will be separated by age division (Cloverbud, Cloverleaf, Junior and Senior):

  1. **1st place** 5 points
  2. **2nd place** 4 points
  3. **3rd place** 3 points
  4. **4th place** 2 points
  5. **5th place and below** 1 point

- Exhibitor with highest points total in each age division will be “Season Showmanship Champion” for that age division.
- Exhibitor with second highest points total in each age division will “Season Showmanship Reserve Champion” for that age division.
- The highest points total for all age divisions will be the “Season Grand Champion Showman.”
- The second highest points total for all age divisions will be the “Season Reserve Grand Champion Showman.”

**Tiebreakers**

- Number of shows attended.
- Record Book score.
Record Books
Record Books are distributed at the project Kick-Off and will be scored based on score sheet included in back of the Record Book. Scoring to be determined by a team of judges selected by show management. Points will be determined for each section of the Record Book and awarded by the judges based on quality and completeness of work. Awards will be given for each age division.

Weight Gain
This is NOT based on total pounds gained but on the percent of weight gained of a participant’s wether. Weight gain will be based on beginning weight and the last official recorded weight, even if the goat dies. This is the formula to calculate % weight gained:

\[
\text{(Final Weight – Initial Weight)} \div \text{(Initial Weight)} \times 100 = \% \text{ weight gained}
\]

Goat Management Test – High Score
Highest score on the Goat Management Test will be awarded for each division, Junior and Senior.

Season Grand Champion Wether
- To be awarded “Season Grand Champion Wether” and “Season Reserve Grand Champion Wether” wethers must be shown at the Final Show.
- Points given at each Meat Goat Project Show for actual placings in each market weight division class based on the scale below.
- This scale will also be used to calculate the Project’s Top Producer Awards.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4th</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5th</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Below 5th</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Bonus points awarded at each show for Grand Champion Wether and Reserve Grand Champion Wether based on the scale below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Champion</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grand Champion</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reserve Grand Champion</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The wether that has accumulated the highest points total will be the “Season Grand Champion Wether.”
- The wether that has accumulated the second highest points total will be the “Season Reserve Grand Champion Wether.”

Tiebreaker
- Number of individual show Grand Championships.
- Number of shows attended.
Top Ad Seller
The participant (or family) that sells the most dollar amount in ads for the Final Show Ad Book is awarded a premium for working so hard to help raise money for other awards.

College Scholarship Contest

The South Carolina Meat Goat Project works hard every year to find sponsors for scholarships for our Senior participants to compete for. Each year a Scholarship Application Packet will be distributed to all age eligible participants. Please review the Scholarship Application Packet carefully for rules, contest requirements, and contest format information.

Awards Banquet

Each January the Project holds its annual Awards Banquet. All final awards and scholarships will be announced at the Banquet.

Announcements about the upcoming project year will be made and usually the project applications for the upcoming year will be available at the Banquet.

All project members and their families are invited and encouraged to attend. Information about the Banquet is available on the website or by contacting your Project County Advisor.

Questions or Concerns

If you have questions or your goat might have a health concern CALL YOUR VET! Please don’t wait until he is very sick, and please don’t let non-veterinarians perform veterinary procedures on your goat! This can turn a simple issue into a very big problem!

If you experience any problems or concerns about or during the Meat Goat Project please contact these individuals in the appropriate order.

1) Your veterinarian (if a health concern)
2) Your leader, agriculture teacher, or project helper
3) County Extension 4-H or Livestock Agent
4) Your local Goat Project Advisory Committee County Advisor
5) Goat Project Advisory Committee

Any questions or concerns that are brought to the Advisory Committee will be acted on and their decision will be final.
Approximate Costs

One of the most common questions with livestock projects is: “What is this going to cost?” While we, the Project Committee, do not have a crystal ball and cannot give you an exact amount as prices can fluctuate and there are many unforeseen circumstances, there are a few known costs and we can give you some ideas on expenses.

Please remember these are not exact amounts as prices on these items tend to fluctuate! It is also inevitable that some goats will incur a larger cost than others. THESE ARE APPROXIMATE COSTS FOR ONE GOAT! Your actual expenses will most likely be different!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial cost of wether (registration)</td>
<td>$125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roughages (600 lbs x $10/bale)</td>
<td>$120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concentrate (500 lbs x $20/50 lb bag)</td>
<td>$200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health &amp; Medical</td>
<td>$50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>$50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>$50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximate cost of project</td>
<td>$595</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale price of wethers in 2014</td>
<td>$2.12/lb (average $154.76)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Cost may vary depending on type of goat, market prices, purchase type (bulk vs. packaged), and amount you need to feed your wether. If your wether requires more or less feed this amount will change as well. This also depends on if you have grass for grazing available. You may not need to purchase as much roughage if your goat has a full pasture to graze.

Roughages: This number is calculated based on feeding your goat 2.5-4 lbs of hay per day and a bale weighing 50 lbs. This number will be different based on the type of hay you buy or if you have grass available for your goat to graze.

Concentrates: You want your goat to eat on average 2-3 lbs of feed/day. This amount will fluctuate as he grows. Over 150 days that equals 300-500 lbs. Your average size bag of feed is 50 lbs so we used 500 lbs of feed. You will need approximately 10 bags of feed. You can go to your local feed store to determine what it would cost you in feed alone for this project. The number given here is merely an example.

Please make sure you understand how to feed your goat properly. These numbers are here purely as a guideline. Your goat’s needs may be very different and it is vital that you feed and care for your goat properly. If you have questions, ASK!

2These costs are based on routine management practices such as vaccinations, deworming, pest prevention, etc. This does not include home visits, emergencies, or sickness expenses.

3This is a general idea. This can vary greatly depending on what equipment you already have on hand as well as how much you end up paying for certain items.

4These costs include items not added anywhere else and can vary greatly.

REMEMBER: This is only a calculation of some known variables; each person may experience different costs due to many reasons.
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