

DATE: February 6, 2026

TO: All 4-H Market Livestock Project Members & Leaders

FROM: Kayla Mitchell, 4-H Program Coordinator

RE: 4-H Market Livestock Sale Promotion

The 2026 4-H Small Animal Sale and Large Animal Sale are both scheduled for **Thursday, September 24, 2026**, as part of the St. Joseph County Grange Fair. With that important date in mind, it's time to be out and about making contacts with prospective buyers!

Developing a market for your animals is the final step in completing your 4-H Market Livestock project. Your enthusiasm for contacting prospective buyers is directly related to the successful sale of your livestock. The harder you are willing to work on buyer contacts, the greater the reward you are likely to receive for your months of dedication and hard work with your market animals.

Who Should You Contact?

Ask people you know - your neighbors, friends and relatives. Ask people and businesses with whom you and your family do business. The better you know the person you ask, the more likely that person is to say "yes" to your request.



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Should You Contact More Than One Person or Business?

Yes, by all means! Some people will likely say no or fail to attend the sale, so make as many contacts as possible. If several people attend the sale as a result of your contacts, you not only help sell your own animal, but provide buyers for other members as well. In this way, each member helps expand buyer support for the sale and everyone benefits.

What Should You Say To Prospective Buyers?

1. Tell them about what you've learned by participating in a 4-H market livestock project.
2. Provide reasons why you would like them to consider bidding on your animal (s) at the sale (see enclosed sheet).
3. Ask if they have questions about the sale. If you don't know the answer, tell them you'll find out and get back to them right away - then follow through!
4. Thank them for their time and interest in listening to your request.

Remember that personal contacts are the most effective method of building buyer support for the sale. Prospective buyers like to feel appreciated! It means more to them when you take the time to contact them with a personal visit.

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Identifying New Prospective Buyers

Please use the enclosed ***Prospective New Buyer Identification Sheet*** (one per family) to register up to ten "new" prospective buyers with the St. Joseph County MSU Extension office (see the sheet for a description of "new" buyer).

Deadline For Submitting New Buyer Information Sheet

The deadline for submitting your completed ***Prospective New Buyer Identification Sheet*** to the St. Joseph County MSU Extension office is **August 15**. It is very important that this deadline be met in order to ensure that the individuals/companies you have spoken with regarding the sale (s) receive their ***Buyer Information Letter*** and one-day admission pass in a timely manner. There is a drop box (black mailbox) next to the employee entrance on the east side of the building for after-hours drop-offs.

Note: Any individual/business/organization that HAS purchased livestock any time during the past three (3) years has a record in the 4-H Market Livestock Buyer computer database, and will automatically receive a "Buyer Information Letter" and a one-day car and driver fair admission pass.

Care and Feeding of Market Livestock at Fair

The care and feeding of market livestock is your responsibility from the time your animal(s) arrives at the fairgrounds until it is shipped out on Sunday, September 27, following the fair. Your best insurance of repeat support is to do an ***excellent job*** of caring for your animal(s) the entire week of fair. Buyers remember 4-H members who are responsible about caring for their animals (and also those who are not responsible), and buy accordingly the next year.

Please do not hesitate to call me at 269/467-5511 if you have questions regarding information contained in this mailing.

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Order of Sale for the each of the 4-H market livestock sales on **Thursday, September 24, 2026:**

- ◆ ***Small Animal Sale*** (East end of Show Arena, 10:00 a.m.) = rabbits, goats, turkeys, & chickens (in that order)
- ◆ ***Large Animal Sale*** (West end of Show Arena, 10:30 a.m.) = lambs, market beef, dairy market steers, *“Gallon of Milk”, feeder steers, hogs, lambs (in that order)

* Proceeds from the sale of the milk will be divided as follows: after expenses, 2% to Dairy Cattle Project Developmental Fund, 5% (capped at \$500.00) to 1st place Dairy Cattle Senior Showmanship winner, each remaining senior showmanship class participant split 5%, with the balance divided among Dairy Cattle project members based on number of dairy animals shown at the fair. If a 4-H member is leasing their dairy project animals: beginning members receive gallon of milk money not to exceed two animals worth, intermediate members may receive gallon of milk money not to exceed three animals worth, senior members may receive gallon of milk money not to exceed four animals worth. Based on the leasing program.