



WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

WSU Extension Youth and Families Program Unit
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, HUMAN, AND NATURAL RESOURCE SCIENCES

March 27, 2020

Dear 4-H Youth Development Families,

First of all, I hope all of you, your family and staff are staying safe and doing well during these uncertain times. For the past few weeks, there have been questions and concerns regarding weigh-ins, tagging of animals, fairs, shows and market sales. With shutdown orders, stay at home proclamations and safety factors, the Washington State 4-H Animal Science Team is proposing these guidelines to assist families in dealing with the uncertainties that may be in our future.

Purchasing of Animals - Many youth have already purchased their animal with the added expense of feeding their animal. Soon, many more youth and their families will plan to purchase the market animal. Youth and their families need to understand the risk of purchasing the animal. This is done assuming that there will be a junior market sale at the fair or show. Should this event be cancelled for safety reasons, please have an alternative plan in place for selling the market animal. If the event is postponed, there will be additional feed and care costs for the animal and there is no guarantee that the youth will receive a premium price for the animal. The youth could receive the market price and lose money on the market animal project.

Tagging and weighing of animals - As you know WSU Extension recommends postponing or cancelling weighing and tagging of animals in a central location until further notice for safety reasons. There could be potential issues with tagging and weigh-ins, so please stay in contact with your fair management and/ or sale committees.

Other market animal strategies- As an alternative to a market animal, consider purchasing a breeding animal such as a gilt, ewe, doe, breeding heifer and retain to begin your own herd/flock or sell at a later date as a breeding animal. Perhaps consider purchasing a smaller animal such as poultry or rabbit and sell in the fur and feather sale. Perhaps, your market sale committee will allow this option under these extenuating circumstances if they don't presently have fur and feather animals in the sale. With a breeding project, youth will still be able to participate in fitting and showing, herdsmanship and other fair/show activities.

Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA)- YQCA Instructor led training meeting are postponed until the ban on large gatherings and social distance is removed. Youth can still register at <http://yqca.org> and certify through web-based training. Look for an email from Paul Kuber concerning YQCA updates. If you have any questions, please contact your county Extension office.

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We are all unsure about what this Spring and Summer will look like and are optimistic that everything will soon be back to normal. Your Extension Office, 4-H, and fair superintendents are here to support families in these uncomfortable times. Our goal moving forward is to continue to communicate regularly and keep you as up to date as possible as information is available.

Please continue to encourage one another and show your support for our community with the generosity we know our 4-H family already practices. Stay safe and take care of yourself and each other. If you have any concerns or know of 4-H families struggling with their project, contact the 4-H Extension Office.

Warmly,

Nancy

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