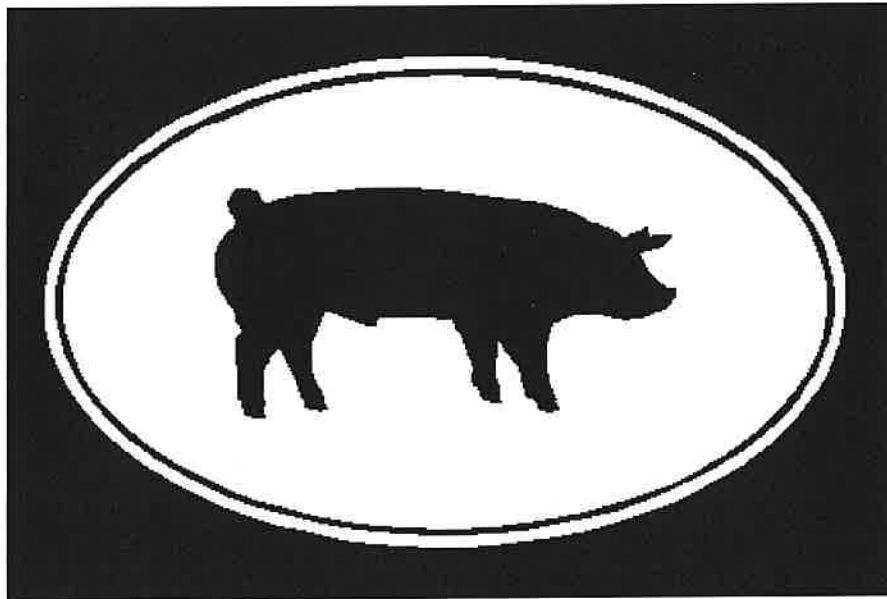


WILMAR

FFA



SWINE

EXHIBITOR

HANDBOOK

Purpose

The purpose of this handbook is to assist you in successfully raising a market swine project. The information contained in the following pages will act as a guideline. It must be understood that this material is not the only information you will need to raise your animal, but it does cover the most common aspects of the project. Should any questions arise concerning your project, don't hesitate to contact your project advisor for help.

Good luck on your endeavor of raising a market hog project. With hard work and dedication, your project will be a success!

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What You Should Know Before Buying a Swine Project

- 1. A swine project can be a very exciting and rewarding experience or a very frustrating and discouraging project depending on the amount of time and effort you put into the project.**
- 2. The duration of a market swine project is about 3-4 months. It is important that as much attention is given to your project during the last months as is given during the first months.**
- 3. Raising market swine is not a hit and miss proposition, you must be consistent in how you raise your animal. Achieving maximum results requires maximum input from you. In other words, you get out of your project what you put into it.**
- 4. It is critical that you understand that the animal will be dependent on you for every aspect of its well-being including feed, water, shelter, health, exercise, etc. You must be willing to provide for each of these areas on a daily basis for the duration of the project.**

Facilities for Your Swine Project

- 1. If you are housing your animal at the Hilmar Ag Farm facility, you will need to do the following:**
 - A. Fill out a pen rent contract.**
 - B. Disinfect your pen with bleach.**
 - C. Make sure the waterer and feeder works.**
- 2. If you plan to raise your animal at home, make sure your pen is properly prepared prior to receiving your swine project. The pen should meet the following requirements:**
 - A. It should be large enough to allow your animal to exercise (about 15' x 20').**
 - B. Shade/shelter should be provided in the pen over a concrete slab. The ENTIRE pen must be shaded in the late spring/summer time to prevent sunburn.**
 - C. Adequate feeding and watering facilities must be provided.**
 - D. The fencing should be free of loose wires, loose boards, protruding nails, etc.**
 - E. The floor should also be free of boards, wire, nails, etc.**
 - F. It should be sturdy enough to prevent the animal from getting out.**
- 3. You should purchase your feed 1-2 days prior to receiving your animal. Check with your advisor on the kind of feed to purchase.**

Purchasing Your Animal

There are different ways to purchase a swine project. No one way is right or wrong. You need to determine what is best for you in terms of your budget. The most common ways of buying an animal are:

1. **Purchasing your animal through your advisor. Your advisor will travel to various swine producers to select and purchase market animals then allow students to select from this group of animals.**
2. **Purchase an animal on your own. You MUST have advisor approval to do this.**
3. **Purchase your animal through a sale. Sometimes you find good deals at sales, but usually you end up paying more for your animal.**

Whichever way you choose to purchase your animal, make sure that you consult with your project advisor prior to buying it.

Starting Off Right

1. **As soon as you get your animal, it is imperative that you observe it closely for any signs of illness. When swine are hauled from one place to another, it creates a situation of stress. Signs to watch for include runny eyes and/or nose, droopy head, and inactivity. It will take a few days for the animal to acclimate itself to its new surroundings.**
2. **Your animal may not want to eat the first day or so. This is normal. However, if it is not eating by the second day, you should contact your advisor. (Refer to the section on feeding for more information.)**
3. **SPEND TIME WITH YOUR ANIMAL! Training the animal as early as possible is important. The quicker the animal can be gentled down and work for you the better. It is much easier to teach a smaller animal to work than in a larger one. DON'T WAIT!!**

Feeding Your Market Swine Project

- 1. Nutrition is the single most important aspect of raising a quality market swine project. Consistency is the key word when feeding swine with regards to the type of feed, amount of feed, and feeding schedule. A proper feeding program can make the difference between a high quality animal and a poor quality animal.**
- 2. One of the most overlooked elements of a good feeding program is water. The water your animal drinks should be fresh, clean and cool at all times. Dirty or stagnant water can have an affect on the health of your animal. The preferred system is an automatic watering system. Make sure the supply line is not in direct sunlight as this will warm the water and the animal will not drink enough water. If using a water trough, it should be thoroughly cleaned on a daily basis. A good rule of thumb on water is if you wouldn't drink it, your animal probably wouldn't drink it either if given a choice.**
- 3. Your advisor will direct you on how to feed your animal. Feed recommendations are based on individual differences in weight, rate of gain, and conformation. It is important to know exactly how much you are feeding so that accurate average daily gains can be calculated. This information will tell you whether or not you are on track to meet the desired projected weight for your animal.**
- 4. If you are hand feeding your animal, it is very important to set feeding times in the morning and evening and then stick to them. There should be no more then a 15-minute variation in feeding times from day to day. Drastic changes in the feeding times can have an adverse affect on your animal in terms of appetite and health.**
- 5. Whenever a new feed, or an increase in feed is introduced, the change should be made gradually over a period of time. Never change feed or feed amount without checking with your advisor.**
- 6. When hand-feeding, make sure that the animal is eating all the feed at each feeding. Feed that is not consumed by the next feeding should be removed and the amount fed should be reduced in proportion to the amount left over. Your advisor will help you determine how much to feed your animal. If the amount of feed is to be increased, limit the increase to no more than one half pound per day.**
- 7. If your animal goes off feed for more than one day, contact your advisor or a veterinarian immediately. Generally, lack of appetite is one of the first signs of illness. The sooner the illness is detected, the easier it is to treat. Any type of illness will cause a decrease in the daily gain and could affect the desired end weight.**
- 8. It may be necessary to add a feed supplement to the ration. The supplement will help in increasing growth, appetite, feed efficiency, health and stress resistance. Check with your advisor before adding a supplement to your feeding program.**

Caring for Your Market Swine Project

- 1. At least once a day, observe your animal carefully to see if it appears normal. Check for the way it walks, for sores or cuts, scours, runny nose or eyes, coughing or fast breathing. If any of these occurs, consult your advisor immediately.**
- 2. Clean your pen at least once a day. Check the water and feeder to make sure they are operating properly.**
- 3. Spend time with your animal. As soon as possible, start to walk your animal. This is both for exercise and to practice for showmanship. Do this once a day before feeding.**
- 4. Do not administer any medications without consulting your advisor or a veterinarian first.**

Showmanship

- 1. The main purpose of showmanship is to present your animal to the judge in a manner that will make your animal look its best. A good showman can emphasize strong points and de-emphasize weak points of the animal.**
- 2. Success in showing begins at home. You and your animal cannot learn proper showing techniques at the last minute. It is important that you practice as often as possible. Showing can be a very rewarding experience if you take the time to learn how to show. When starting out, not only must the animal be trained, but the exhibitor must learn the proper showing techniques as well.**
- 3. Listed below are a few general characteristics of good showman.**

A good showman:

- 1. Is confident in his/her abilities.**
- 2. Understands the importance and purpose of proper showing techniques.**
- 3. Is alert in the show ring.**
- 4. Knows where the judge is at all times.**
- 5. Is conscience of the appearance of his/her animal at all times.**
- 6. Works the animal calmly and smoothly.**
- 7. Is not distracted by people or events outside the show ring.**
- 8. Starts showing from the time he/she enters the ring until he/she leaves the ring at the conclusion of the class.**
- 9. Is courteous to the other exhibitors in the ring.**
- 10. Displays good sportsmanship by congratulating the winners and accepting congratulations graciously.**
- 11. Gives his/her best effort every time he/she is in the show ring.**

Supplies and Equipment

1. The following is a list of supplies and equipment needed for your swine project.

Show whip	Hair conditioner	Rubber feed pan
Spray bottle	Nylon brush	Dish soap

Project Costs

1. Listed below are the common items and their approximate costs of a market swine project.

Cost of hog	\$350.00
Feed	250.00
Equipment	20.00
Veterinary supplies	20.00
Insurance/Misc.	<u>90.00</u>
TOTAL	\$730.00

Marketing Your Project

1. One of the first questions most new swine exhibitors ask is "How much can I make on my project?". This question is a valid one. Most students figure that if you spend a great deal of money on the project, the returns should also be great. Unfortunately, this statement is not always accurate. The animal will be sold at the fair through a public auction with the animal being sold to the highest bidder. These buyers are under no obligation to support and buy these livestock projects. It is YOUR job to find buyers for your animal. You must remember that you are selling a product and you must approach this part of your project as a salesman. The buyers will not come to you, you must go to them.
2. Before you approach a prospective buyer, you must first understand how the process works so that you can accurately answer any questions that may arise in your conversation with the buyer. You begin by calculating your break-even price. By dividing the estimated fair weight of the animal into the total cost, you will know how much per pound you need to break even. The next part of the process is to know what the buyer's options are with the animal once it has been sold. The most common option used is RESALE. The buyer simply pays the difference between the current market price and their bid. The animal is then sold by the fair to a commercial processor at the current market price. The buyer does not take possession of the animal. With the other two options, the buyer takes possession of the animal or carcass. The CUSTOM PROCESSING option allows the buyer to choose where the animal will be processed. The animal is taken to this location by the fair, and the cut and wrapped meat is then picked up by the buyer. The LIVE PICK-UP option allows the buyer to take possession of the live animal from the fair.
3. You must also be able to explain to the buyer the benefits they will receive from buying your project. A buyer basically receives two benefits - advertising at the auction and a tax deduction. The only amount of the purchase that can be deducted is any amount paid over and above the current market (resale) price.

- 4. Armed with this information, you can begin your search for buyers. Anyone can buy an animal at the fair, but the most common buyers are local businesses. The two most common methods of finding buyers is through personal contact or by writing letters to prospective buyers. Personal contact is a much preferred method because the buyer has the chance to meet the owner of the animal and ask any questions concerning the project or selling process. The letter writing method does not afford these opportunities. When meeting with a buyer, the student should approach the buyer in a business-like manner by calling ahead and making an appointment with them, dressing in the official FFA uniform, being prepared to answer questions, etc.**
- 5. Above all, be persistent in your search for buyers. You may be turned down a few times before finding someone willing to buy your animal. Don't give up. The financial success of your project depends on you finding a buyer. You may want to find more than one buyer in the event one of them does not show up at the auction.**
- 6. Another key element to successfully selling you animal is to approach buyers early. Don't wait until just before the fair to start contacting people. You will not be the only person at the fair selling an animal. Begin contacting buyers several months before the fair. Many buyers will buy from the first person that contacts them. Avoid the rush, start early.**
- 7. To find out more specific information concerning the auction process, approaching buyers, commonly asked questions, etc., contact your project advisor.**

Student's Name (print) _____

General Rules for Hilmar FFA Fair Exhibitors

- 1. Because of the importance of scholastic achievement, the Hilmar High School Ag Department requires its livestock exhibitor to maintain a satisfactory scholastic record in his/her classes. To start a project, students must have a 2.0 GPA based on the most recent quarter or semester grades. Therefore, if any exhibitor fails to meet this requirement, he/she may lose their show privileges.**
- 2. All exhibitors are to follow the directions and advice given to them by the designed advisor for that species. The advisor's directions are to be followed for the entire length of time the project is eligible for show and during the fairs when the project is being exhibited.**
- 3. All rules and regulations of Hilmar High School will apply to the students who participate at fairs since showing is a school activity.**
- 4. All exhibitors are expected to haul their animals and tack to the fair unless other arrangements are made with the advisor.**
- 5. FFA members are required to obtain their homework from all their teachers in advance of missing school for attending fairs.**
- 6. Each exhibitor must read and understand the rules and regulations in the fair's premium book.**
- 7. Where dormitories are provided, all FFA members must sleep in the dormitories.**
- 8. Where dormitories are not provided, these procedures should be followed for campsites or motels:
 - A. Los Banos or Merced Fair - Exhibitors must complete a campsite reservation form obtained from the fair in order to reserve a trailer site at the fairgrounds. This form will include the names of the students residing in the trailer, the trailer license number and the name of the adult who will be staying to chaperon these students.**
 - B. Each exhibitor will obtain permission from his/her advisor PRIOR to the fair.**
 - C. Approved adult supervision is required from 6:00 pm to 7:00 am.****
- 9. Each exhibitor is responsible for feeding, watering, grooming and keeping an eye on his/her animal(s) for the entire duration of the fair.**
- 10. Each exhibitor is required to serve barn duties as assigned and specified by the project advisor.**
- 11. All FFA exhibitors will be required to wear the official FFA show uniform described below while showing their own animal(s) or helping others in the show ring.**

FFA Show Uniform

Boys - White pants, white dress shirt, FFA Jacket, FFA tie, belt, appropriate shoes.

Girls - White pants, white dress shirt, FFA Jacket, FFA scarf, belt, appropriate shoes.

12. All FFA members are to attend the awards program at every fair wearing his/her FFA jacket. Failure to do so could result in suspension from showing.

13. Market animal exhibitors are required to write thank you letters to their buyers.

14. All exhibitors must attend assigned meetings by the project advisor unless prior arrangements have been made.

15. The advisor of any species will have the authority to take whatever disciplinary action necessary toward any student that fails to comply with the rules.

Your signature below verifies that you have read, discussed, understand, and agree to abide by these rules. Please sign and return this form to the project advisor. If you have any questions at any time, please feel free to contact the advisor at the Hilmar Ag Department (667-8366).

Parent Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

Student's Name (please print) _____

Hilmar FFA Swine Exhibitor Rules

1. **Daily Activities**
 - A. Spend time with your hog, observe and exercise it.
 - B. Check the amount of feed in the feeder and make sure it is clean and dry. Add feed as needed if using a self-feeder or feed twice a day at scheduled times if hand feeding.
 - C. Thoroughly clean the pen. (This should be done twice a day.)
2. **Periodic Activities**
 - D. Attend, for the duration, project meetings approximately every two weeks.
 - E. Attend, for the duration, weigh days at school if your animal is housed there.
 - F. Be at your project site when the advisor weighs your animal if it is housed off school grounds.
 - G. Perform barn duty functions on a rotational basis if your animal is housed at school.
3. **Activities Prior to the Fair**
 - A. Find a buyer for your animal.
 - B. Attend and participate in a mandatory show day.
 - C. Wash and clip your hog approximately two weeks prior to the fair.
 - D. Obtain an FFA Show Uniform (white pants, white dress shirt, FFA tie/scarf, FFA jacket, belt, appropriate shoes). ALL exhibitors MUST have his/her own FFA jacket and FFA tie/scarf. Jackets and ties/scarves may be borrowed from another FFA member that is NOT exhibiting any type of livestock at the fair. Failure to have the proper show uniform for any reason will disqualify that student from showing.
 - E. Obtain the proper equipment (feed pan, show whip, brush, soap, rubbing alcohol, rags, spray bottle, hair conditioner, hose and show box).
 - F. Exhibitors are required to haul their own tack to the fair.
 - G. Exhibitors are required to haul their hog to the school if the advisor is taking it to the fair.
4. **Activities at the Fair**
 - A. Exhibitors are expected to be at the fair for the purpose of caring for and preparing their animal for show.
 - B. Exhibitors are NOT allowed in the carnival area until the completion of the last swine show day.
 - C. Exhibitors must be in the swine barn no later than the time announced by the advisor and must participate in the daily morning clean-up, feeding and meeting. Exhibitors must also participate in the evening feeding and meeting at the time announced by the advisor. Late exhibitors will be assigned an additional barn duty for each infraction.
 - D. Hogs must be regularly checked throughout the day by their owner.
 - E. Exhibitors must serve scheduled barn duties which includes being on time, keeping the hogs, pens, aisles, and tack areas clean and watering all hogs at least once during the shift. Each infraction of these responsibilities will result in an additional barn duty.
 - F. All exhibitors are required to be present on weigh day.
 - G. All exhibitors are required to show in showmanship.
 - H. On show days, all exhibitors are required to stay in the barn area for the duration of the swine show.
 - I. All exhibitors are required to attend the fair awards ceremony wearing their FFA jacket. Failure to do so could result in suspension from showing.
 - J. All exhibitors are required to help clean up and load tack on the last day of the fair.

- K. All exhibitors are required to work together, follow all instructions from the advisor, and cooperate with a **POSITIVE ATTITUDE**.
- L. Each exhibitor also agrees to allow any Hilmar FFA advisor to pick up his/her auction check from the fair.
- M. All exhibitors are required to purchase, from the FFA, at least one thank you gift for their buyer. In the event of multiple buyers, gifts for the additional buyers can be purchased at the student's option.
- N. At the conclusion of the fair, each exhibitor will be required to write a thank you letter to the buyer(s) of his/her animal, the breeder of their hog, and the Perry family (if the livestock loan program was used) and pay any remaining money owed to Hilmar FFA before receiving his/her auction check. The letters must be written and the money paid within fourteen (14) day from the date of the Junior Livestock Auction. Failure to do so will result in the exhibitor not being able to participate in any fairs for one (1) year.

5. Disciplinary Procedures

- A. A "Three Strike" discipline system is used by the Hilmar FFA advisors. Any student failing to fulfill the obligations of the project in accordance to the rules and guidelines set forth by the project advisor will receive a "strike". Infractions include, but are not limited to, missing a project meeting/weigh day without prior notice, neglect of animal (feeder empty, not feeding on time, pen not cleaned, etc.), failure to perform required duties before and/or during the fair. Once a student has received three strikes, he/she forfeits his/her privilege to show with Hilmar FFA.
- B. Other disciplinary problems may result in the removal of exhibitor and animal from the school farm (if housed there) or fair, withdrawal of animal from the fair livestock auction, and/or loss of showing privileges with Hilmar FFA for one or more years.

Your signature below verifies that you have read, discussed, understand, and agree to abide by these rules. Please sign and return this form to the project advisor. If you have any questions at any time, please feel free to contact the advisor at the Hilmar Ag Department (667-8366).

Parent Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

Hilmar Ag Department Ag Farm Use Contract

Exhibitor (print) _____ Date _____

Fair (circle one) LOS BANOS MERCED Year _____

Species (circle one) SWINE SHEEP GOAT

The Hilmar Ag Department will provide use of the Ag Farm facilities under the following terms:

1. The student agrees to pay all expenses incurred to Hilmar FFA.
2. Pay \$10 pen rent for each animal.
3. Make sure that the animal is properly cared for on a daily basis based on the project advisor's instructions.
4. Keep the pen, feed room, and livestock area clean at all times.
5. Participate in required clean-up days.
6. Hilmar FFA, Hilmar Ag Department, project advisors, and Hilmar School District is NOT responsible for loss of animals, equipment, or personal property due to theft, vandalism, or accident.
7. Students may be required to remove his/her animal from the Ag Farm and lose showing privileges with Hilmar FFA if the above conditions are not met.

Your signature below verifies that you have read, discussed, understand, and agree to abide by these rules. Please sign and return this form to the project advisor. If you have any questions at any time, please feel free to contact the advisor at the Hilmar Ag Department (667-8366).

Parent Signature _____

Student Signature _____

Advisor Signature _____

Hilmar FFA Fair Check Proxy

Exhibitor (print) _____ Date _____

Fair (circle one) **LOS BANOS** **MERCED** Year _____

Species (circle one) **SWINE** **SHEEP** **GOATBEEF**

I, (the above named exhibitor) allow any Hilmar FFA Advisor to pick up my livestock auction check for me from the above indicated fair.

If you have any questions you may contact an advisor at the Hilmar High School Ag Department (667-8366).

Parent Signature _____

Student Signature _____

Advisor Signature _____

Hilmar FFA Perry Project Animal Loan Contract

Date _____

Student (print) _____ Phone# _____

Mailing Address _____

Fair (circle one) LOS BANOS MERCED

Species (circle one) SWINE SHEEP GOAT

Amount of loan \$ _____
(This amount cannot exceed the average price of the animals purchased by the FFA.)

Due Date _____
(Due date is two weeks after the date of the Junior Livestock Auction.)

The above named student will receive the amount requested above provided the following conditions are met.

1. The student agrees to maintain a quality project.
2. The student must take full responsibility for the proper care of the animal.
3. Repay the loan plus 2% interest within two weeks of the Junior Livestock Auction.
4. Write a thank you note to the Perry family for his/her loan.

Your signature below verifies that you have read, discussed, understand, and agree to abide by these rules. Please sign and return this form to the project advisor. If you have any questions at any time, please feel free to contact the advisor at the Hilmar Ag Department (667-8366).

Parent Signature _____

Student Signature _____

Advisor Signature _____

