

Date: March 26, 2024

To: 4-H Sheep Project Members and Leaders

From: Kayla Mitchell, Program Coordinator – 4-H Youth Development

Re: 2024 4-H Sheep Updates

This is a quick update on the events that will take place for the 2024 fair season within the sheep department. Should you have questions, please feel free to contact the MSU Extension office at 269-467-5511. **Please note that the information contained in this letter is subject to change.**

NEW for 2024:

- **DNA:** Hair samples will be pulled from all market lambs at the time of weigh-in/tagging in June. Hair samples will also be pulled from the Grand and Reserve Grand Wethers and Ewes immediately following the Grand Champion Drives.

Reminders:

- Tagging/Weigh-in Dates: Countywide tagging and weigh-in dates will be **Tuesday, June 4, 2023 or Thursday, June 6, 2023** at the St. Joseph County Fairgrounds, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. Market lambs MUST attend one of these to be eligible for exhibition.
- **Possession:** Each 4-H member must remain in possession of their animals after initial tagging/weigh-in. If animal is determined to be in violation by the species Superintendent, that animal will be disqualified unless special permission is granted by the Superintendent and/or MSU Extension **prior** to moving animal to another location.
- All sheep exhibitors are subject to receiving **random farm visits** conducted by the species Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent.
- Market lambs **must be rough shorn** before they arrive to the fairgrounds for check-in.
- All market lambs (including Carcass Contest) must be 100 lbs. or more at check-in on **Friday, September 13, 2024 or Saturday, September 14, 2024**. All Sheep will be weighed at the time of unloading. There will be no reweighing of animals. Underweight animals will be sent home at check-in.
 - *Exception:* If a ewe lamb is underweight, it may cross over to the breeding stock class if the exhibitor is dually registered for both breeding stock and market class prior to fair.
 - **Underweight carcass lambs** will still be processed, but will not be eligible for placing. Carcass exhibitors will still be required to attend hanging evaluation for educational purposes.
- **All animals must be checked in by the exhibitor** or an immediate family member unless prior arrangements are made in writing and filed at the MSU Extension office 24 hours in advance of check-in times at the fair.
- All 4-H Livestock MUST have their **pen stall label cards** above their pen by Sunday, September 15, 2024 at 12:00 noon. Failure to do so may result in a yellow tag.
- **All 4-H livestock members/clubs** will be held responsible for setting up their project pen/stall and decorations before fair, as well as cleaning and tearing down their project pen/stall at the end of fair. Individuals or clubs may be assessed a \$50.00 fine for failure to do so.



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- Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) is requiring all lambs that are moved off the farm for sale or exhibition to be ear tagged with a **USDA Scrapies ID tag**. Anyone purchasing lambs should make sure the seller has tagged them prior to sale. If you raise lambs from your own herd you should contact the MDA at 1-800-292-3939 to get a premises identification number. Once you have the premises number call the USDA at 517-324-5290 to order your free tags and applicator so that you can tag your lambs prior to the initial weigh-in on June 4 or 6. Do not delay in ordering your tags from MDA; it will take some time to receive them.
- Check the 2024 St. Joseph County 4-H Fair Book (Department 6) for additional information and rules.

IMPORTANT DATES, DEADLINES & EVENTS

Event or Deadline	Date(s)	Comments
Initial Weigh-in, Tagging and Registration	June 4, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. or June 6, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. (in conjunction with Dairy Feeder Steer and Goat Weigh-in)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the fairgrounds. • Animals must have their USDA scrapies ID tag. • Only the scrapies ID tag and the 4-H ear ID tag are allowed on the animal. • All rams <u>MUST</u> be castrated or banded by weigh-in.
Entry forms due for Carcass Contest and Home Born & Raised Class	June 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due at June 4 or 6 weigh-in
Showmanship Clinic	Date and time TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the fairgrounds.
Carcass Contest Live Weigh-In	September 7, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More information to come.
Carcass Contest: Carcass Evaluation	Week of September 9, time and place TBD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance of the member is required to compete.
Fair Weigh-in	September 13, 3:30 - 7:30 p.m. or September 14, 8:00 - 11:00 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100 lbs. minimum weight requirement for market animals
Interview & Skill-a-thon	September 15, 8:00 - 11:00 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is required for all livestock exhibitors • Skill-a-thon will be in the Community Tent
4-H Market and Breeding Stock Sheep Show	September 17, 4:00 p.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show order: Showmanship, Breeding Stock, Market Wethers, Market Ewes, Home Born & Raised, Champion Drive, Adult Showmanship
4-H Market Livestock Sale (large)	September 19, 10:30 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheep sell second in the large animal sale
Animal Loading & Barn Clean out	September 22, 5:30 a.m. until done.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All members <u>must</u> clean and help put away the pens