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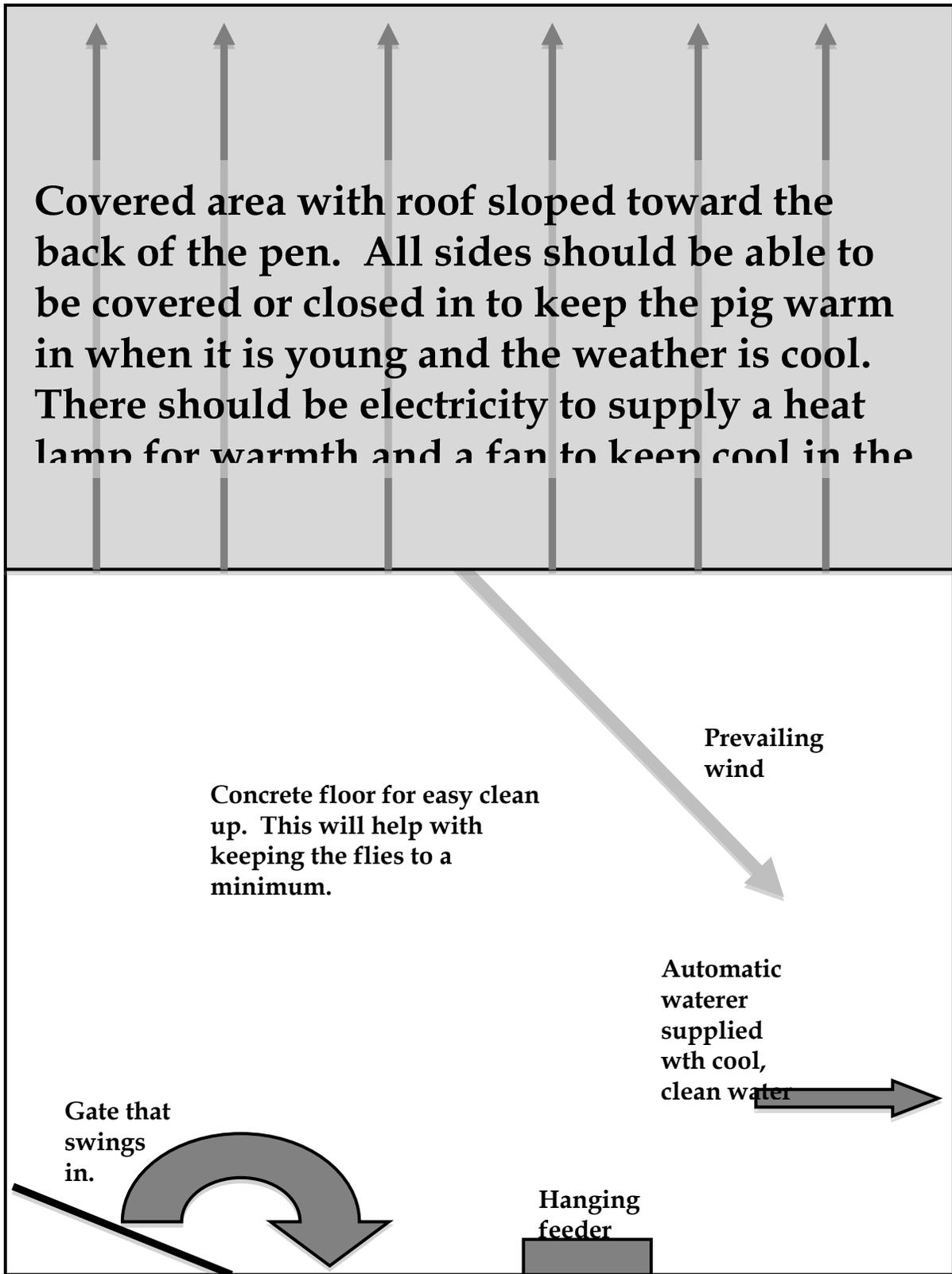
What You Should Know Before Buying a Swine Project

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 energy 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 Ceres/Central Valley Ag Farm facility, you will need to do the following:
 - A. Fill out a school farm contract.
 - B. Disinfect your pen with bleach.
 - C. Make sure the waterer and feeder work.
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.
 - 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 swine feed 1-2 days prior to receiving your animal. Check with your advisor on the kind of feed to purchase and from whom.

Sample drawing of home pig pen



Purchasing Your Animal

The Ceres/Central Valley FFA implements the following policies and procedures for project pigs:

1. The Ceres/Central Valley FFA members will purchase all hogs for the farm from the same breeder. No outside animals will be accepted at the school farm
2. Selection of animals will be based on the order students turn in their deposits.

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. Training and working with your 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 effect on the health of your animal. The water trough should be cleaned on a regular basis, preferably daily. 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. If using an automatic watering system. Make sure the pipes are not in direct sunlight as this will warm the water and the animal will not drink enough water.
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 than a 15-minute variation in feeding times from day to day. Drastic changes in the feeding times can have an adverse effect 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 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 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 MEDICATION WITHOUT CONTACTING YOUR ADVISOR OR VETERINARIAN!!**

Swine Growth / Feed Chart

Days Until Fair	Hog's Weight (lbs)	Average Daily Gain (lbs)	Amount of Feed to Be Fed Each Day (lbs)	Total Feed (lbs)
120	50 - 65	1.35	3 - 4	
113	59 - 74	1.4	3.2 - 4.2	24.5
106	69 - 84	1.5	3.5 - 4.5	49.7
99	79 - 94	1.5	3.7 - 4.7	77.7
92	90 - 105	1.6	4 - 5	109.2
85	101 - 116	1.65	4.25 - 5.25	142.1
78	113 - 128	1.75	4.5 - 5.5	177.1
71	125 - 140	1.75	4.75 - 5.75	213.78
64	138 - 153	1.85	5 - 6	252.28
57	151 - 166	1.85	5.2 - 6.2	292.18
50	164 - 179	2	5.7 - 6.7	335.93
43	178 - 193	2	6 - 7	381.43
36	192 - 207	1.85	6 - 7	426.93
29	205 - 220	1.85	5 - 7	468.93
22	218 - 233	1.5	5 - 7	510.93
15	229 - 244	1.5	4 - 7	552.93
8	240 - 255	1.5	4 - 7	594.93
1	251 - 266	1.5		636.93

Swine Management Tips

1. The above listed chart is a GUIDELINE for monitoring your pig's growth. Numbers may vary.
2. Deworm your pig once a month. Ask your FFA advisor for details
- 3 ALWAYS check with your advisor prior to making any feed/food changes
4. Weigh your pig weekly

**If you have any questions,
please call Mr. Patterson
(209)996-6601**

Showmanship

1. The main purpose of showmanship is to present your animal to the judge in a manner that will make your animal look it's best. Showing 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 the animal must 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:

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

Swine Showmanship Questions

Beginner Level Questions

1. What is your pig's ear notch?
2. How much does your pig weigh?
3. What kind of feed do you feed your pig?
4. What breed is your pig?
5. How much do you feed your pig each day?
6. What does the NSR stand for?
7. What is your favorite part about showing pigs?
8. Where does the bacon come from?
9. Where does the ham come from?
10. Why do we ear notch pigs?

Advanced Level Questions

1. What does LEA mean and what size LEA does your pig have?
2. Are pigs monogastric or ruminants?
3. Picture in your mind the average market hog today. How could the average market hog today be made better?
4. What might you tell another young person considering having a 4-H or FFA livestock project?
5. What does each ear notch mean on your pig?
6. Can you name the 5 main cuts of meat on a pig?
7. What is the most expensive cut of meat per pound?
8. What is the most valuable cut of meat in the pork industry?
9. According to symbol III what is the ideal market weight?
10. If you had to convince someone to raise and exhibit an animal at their county fair, who has never shown livestock, what would you tell them?

If all else fails, do some research!

Supplies and Equipment

1. The following is a list of supplies and equipment needed for your swine project. (some of these can be borrowed from Ceres/Central Valley FFA)

Cane/Pipe/Stick
Hanging feeder
Nylon brush
Sunscreen

Hair conditioner
Spray bottle
Dish soap
FFA Show Uniform

Market Swine Cost Estimate

Item	quantity needed	cost				
feeder pig	1	\$ 225.00	\$	225.00	\$	225.00 Paid to Breeder
shavings	10	\$ 8.00	\$	80.00	\$	
Pig Feed(300lb)	2	\$ 112.00	\$	224.00	\$	
Dewormer	1	\$ 8.00	\$	8.00	\$	
Misc.	1	\$ 6.00	\$	6.00	\$	
Entry Fees	1	\$ 25.00	\$	25.00	\$	paid to fair
Additional Entry		\$ 15.00	\$	-	\$	paid to fair
Parking Pass	1	\$ 5.00	\$	5.00	\$	paid to fair
Parent Pass (10 day)	2	\$ 30.00	\$	60.00	\$	paid to fair <u>*Up to 2 per family*</u>
life insurance	1	\$ 25.00	\$	25.00	\$	paid to fair

Amount paid to Breeder	\$ 225.00
Amount paid to Stanco Fair	\$ 90.00
Amount paid to Ceres FFA	\$ 318.00
Total estimated cost of project	\$ 658.00

American Ag Credit Jr. Livestock Project Loan	-500
Out of Pocket Expense	\$ 158.00

Possible outcome of project

Projected Animal Weight at Fair	250lbs	Bid Price at Auction		
		\$3/pound	minus	±\$700
			auction	
			fecs(estim	
			ated)	
			-	\$658
			Projected P	\$ 42.00

Other options:
 Show Rite Feed add \$138

Keep in mind these figures are an estimation based on prices as of 5:00 PM 2/20/13 and are subject to change. Raising an animal and selling it at auction does not guarantee you will profit from this project.

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 the resale or buy-back. The buyer simply pays the difference between the current market price and their bid. The fair then sells the animal to a commercial packer for 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 the buyer then picks up wrapped meat. 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 are 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 of 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 and start early.
7. To find out more specific information concerning the auction process, approaching buyers, commonly asked questions, etc., contact your project advisor.

Buyer's Survey

The following questions were asked in a poll of potential buyers who may attend the county fair. Some of those polled have attended the local county fair and bought animals. Some have attended the fair and seldom buy animals and some have never attended the fair or received a buyer's letter but might be willing to attend in the future if they receive the right letter.

1.) What kind of content do you like to see in the buyer's letter?

60% said they like to read something about the child's history, 60% said they prefer to receive information on both the animal and history of the child, and 40% said talk about the animal. (Some of those polled put more than one answer so that accounts for the total of more than 100%).

2.) Do you like pictures of the animal with the letter?

80% said they preferred photos or drawings of the animal and 20% said it's not necessary.

3.) Which kind of letter do you prefer: hand written or typed?

20% said they preferred a typed letter, 20% said they liked a hand written letter, and 60% said it doesn't matter as long as it's personalized.

4.) Do you care how long the letter is?

20% said the length of the letter did not matter. 40% said the letters should not be more than one page, and 40% said they did not have a preference as long as the letters aren't really short.

5.) Do you like the 4-H members writing about themselves and their animals?

80% said yes, and 20% said they preferred the letter just be about the animal.

6.) Is there anything you would especially like to see in a buyer's letter that might motivate you or the people you buy for to decide to bid on a 4H member's animals?

60% said there wasn't anything specific as long as it is personalized, 20% said they did not have any preferences, and 20% like to receive a letter that comes in "flyer" format (similar to an advertisement).

7.) Is there anything that you particularly don't like to see, something that would discourage you from considering bidding?

60% said there wasn't anything that they didn't particularly like to see, 20% mentioned they didn't like form letters, and 20% said they didn't like to read about the specifics of the food or what you are going to use the money for.

8.) Do you remember the best letter or letters you have ever received and what did you like about them?

25% said they like humor in the letter, 25% said they like the letter addressed to them by name and appreciate a letter that shows a lot of work went into them. 25% said they like little cartoons of the animal with a hand written letter, and 25% said they like a full-page letter that focuses on the exhibitor.

9.) Can you think of any letters that did not encourage you to bid and can you tell me what about those letters did not motivate you to bid on the member's animals?

25% said there weren't any letters that stopped them from wanting to buy an animal, 50% said letters like form letters which are a copied signature and that says Dear Buyer instead of the buyer's name, and 25% said a letter that just invited them to the fair didn't motivate them to go to the auction.

10.) Is personal contact with a member important? If a member delivered a buyer's

letter in person and introduced him or herself, would that help you decide to bid on their animal?

80% said personal contact with a member is not really important, and 20% said it doesn't really matter until the day of the auction.

11.) If you have received a buyer's letter from a particular member in the past, does that influence your decision to bid on their animal in the future?

75% said yes it does influence them, and 25% said it depends on how well the letter is written.

Buyer Letter Format

YOUR NAME
YOUR STREET ADDRESS
CITY, STATE ZIP-0000

INVITEE NAME (or BUSINESS)
STREET ADDRESS
CITY, STATE ZIP – 0000
TODAY'S DATE

DEAR _____ ,

In the first paragraph talk about yourself and what you have done in 4-H (example: My name is _____. I am in the _____ FFA chapter and this is my _____ year in FFA.

In the second paragraph talk about the fair you go to and talk about the kind of animal you are raising and how many years you have raised that animal as a 4-H project.

In the third paragraph tell them when the fair and auction are. Invite the buyer to the fair. Encourage the buyer to go to the auction. Also, advise the buyer of the showmanship date and time for your species and encourage them to attend that event at the Fair.

In the fourth paragraph, tell the buyer that you hope to see them at the Fair and hope they will consider bidding on one of your animals.

Sincerely,

your name

The Art of Thank You

- Use stationery or plain note cards and proper postage. Avoid the pre-inscribed 'Thank you!' cards, there are more appropriate choices for this time. Stay away from full-size sheets - note cards are best, as your message will be brief, and would look silly swimming around on a full-size page.
- When you are writing a thank you note, always plan ahead. Be sure the message is clear and that all the information needed is in a logical sequence--you don't want to confuse the reader.
- Use blue or black ink. Colored ink or markers are not the best choices.
- Hand-write the notes, even if your handwriting is not so good. Thank-you notes are traditionally written in cursive, unless the sender is a young writer in which case printing may be a better choice.
- Take the time to write as neatly as possible.
- Keep it short and sweet yet vivid and complete.
- Think of how you would feel to receive a thank-you note like the one you are sending.

1. Greet the Giver

Dear Mr. Smith,

2. Express Your Gratitude

Thank you so much for purchasing my FFA market hog at the auction.

ETC.

From the smallest donation to the largest, each individual and company gives what they feel they are able to and receiving a sincere thank-you will go a long way towards making sure they include the FFA program in their plans for next year's donations. Sponsorship does not just "happen," it is something that donors budget and plan for all year long.

3. Discuss Use

"I plan to start a savings account for college." OR "I will be using investing the money earned into next year's project."

Say something nice about the item and how you will use it. Let's say it's something you actually love and will use a lot - then say so.

Be a little personal. Is this your first year of FFA or first year in this project? Write something about that. Is this your last year of FFA and you are heading to college? Write something about that, perhaps telling the donor where you are going to college and what you plan to study, maybe even how FFA has helped prepare you for your college endeavors.

5. Thanks again

Thanks again for your generous donation. It's not overkill to say thanks again. So say it.

6. Regards

Simply wrap it up. Use whatever works for you: Yours Truly, With Thanks, Sincerely, Regards. Then sign your name and you're done. Now get it to your Ag Teacher for approval. Make sure the envelope is properly and neatly addressed to ensure it will be delivered to the recipient.

You will need to show proof of a thank you before you can receive your auction check.

Record Keeping

In addition to having your thank you notes written and approved by your Ag teacher, you must finish your FFA Record Book before receiving your auction check. Record keeping is a vital part of any business. Your SAE is an ownership business—YOU OWN THE BUSINESS—so act like it!

The FFA record book is broken down into several parts. These parts need to be filled out at specific times throughout the project.

Cover:

- If you are planning on using a paper record book, the cover is one of the only pages that will be filled out in ink. Record books will run a calendar year from January 1st to December 31st of a given year. Be sure to use your full first and last names.

Introduction page:

- This is where you will identify your various SAE's and their enterprise types. For a market swine project, you will fill in "OWNERSHIP." Notice that the enterprises are identified by the letter A, B, C, or D. these titles will appear at the top of each journal page to help keep things organized.

Calendar:

- All important dates should be included on the calendar including FFA meetings, conferences...etc

Enterprise agreements:

- If you are keeping your pig at the school farm, your enterprise agreement should look the one found on page 17. If you are keeping your animal at an alternate location, you will need to address all parts of the agreement: equipment, land, buildings (for storage of feed and supplies as well your pen), capital (money), management (who will do the work...you), and profit or loss (who gets the money or assumes a financial loss)
- These agreements must be filled out in pen and signatures from all parties involved MUST BE RECEIVED BEFORE THE PROJECT STARTS!

Budget:

The information from the cost estimate needs to be recorded on the budget page BEFORE starting your project. Keep in mind that this is a budget, not necessarily the actual expenses and profit.

Journal:

- This is the day-to-day record keeping area. Every time you purchase something, it must be recorded. Every week you should total the number of hours you've spent feeding, cleaning, and exercising your pig.
- If you make a purchase, record it on the date it happens. Include your time spent in making the purchase and round up to the nearest whole hour. DON'T record equipment purchases in the journal.
- If you receive a sponsorship or donation (check in hand, not 'promised' money) it needs to be recorded on the date you receive the check. This should be recorded as income. If you traveled to a business and spent time with the owner/donor, record your time.
- Fair entries can be counted as expenses...after all, you had to pay to show and sell!
- All totals from previous months need to be brought forward and a sum total of hours, income and expenses should be current at the end of every month.

Loan:

- If you received a loan, you must record that you borrowed money. When you pay the loan back, you must show on the loan page that you paid the debt.

Depreciable Property:

- If you purchased any equipment, it must be recorded in the depreciable property section. See the record book help page or your AG teacher for additional information on this page.

Financial statement:

- This page cannot be completed until you have received the total from ALL income on your project. The information for this page can be found in the last page of the journal

Income Summary:

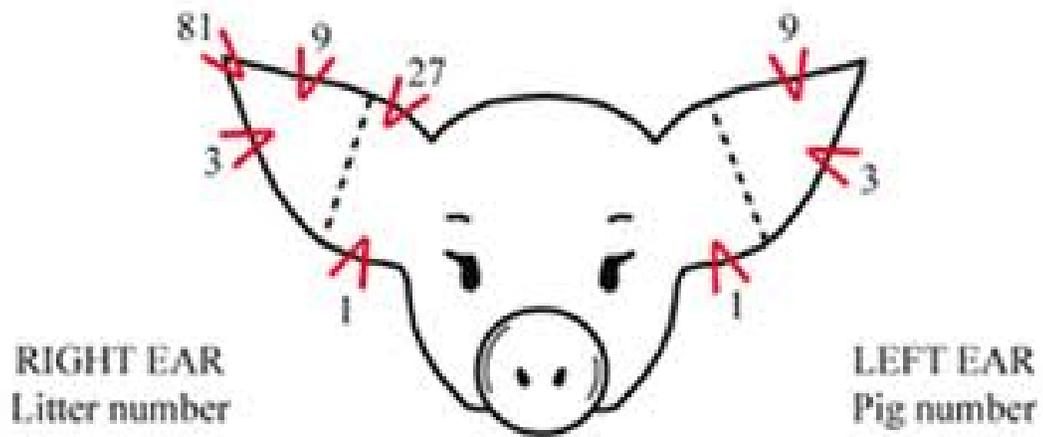
- This information will allow you to close out your record book. If you have other enterprises, you can keep line 21 open, but all other market swine lines must be filled in.

Other record book pages:

- You should fill in these community service and FFA activity pages as you complete the activities.

Sample business Agreement between “Student,” “Parent,” and “FFA Advisor”

Student agrees to work within the guidelines of the Ceres Unified School District Farm and the guidance of the FFA advisor. Student and FFA Advisor will work together to purchase a feeder pig at least 60 days prior the county fair. Once Student purchases the pig, it will be transported to the CUSD farm. Student will be responsible for the cleaning and everyday maintenance of the pen, feeder and watering system. FFA advisor will supply all shovels, brooms and rakes to keep the pen clean. FFA Advisor will also supply a feeder and a pen. Student will be responsible for purchasing all feed and other related supplies in advance from the FFA chapter. In return, FFA advisor will pick up all feed, related supplies and medications purchased in advance by student. Student will work with FFA Advisor to decide a feeding and vaccination schedule, as well as all other health decisions made throughout the course of the project. Student will attend all school farm meetings, and weigh his pig weekly to assist in evaluation of feeding program. At the end of the project, Student agrees to provide a written thank-you letter and completed record book. Once these items are received, Student will receive his fair check. Student assumes all profit or loss associated with the market swine project.



WHOLESALE CUTS OF PORK

