

Why is Quality Assurance Important?

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Goal (learning objective)

Youth will learn about their role in quality assurance and why quality should be important to each one of them, as producers and consumers of animal products.

Supplies

- Chocolate cupcakes for each participant plus five extra
- Basic recipe for 24-28 cupcakes
 - Cupcake liners
 - 1 box chocolate cake mix
 - 1 1/4 Cups water
 - 1/2 Cup vegetable oil
 - 3 eggs
- Combine all ingredients, bake for 14-19 minutes at 350 degrees. Let cupcakes cool before frosting
- 1 can of prepared chocolate frosting.
- Mustard
- Solid food injector
- Napkins
- Disposable gloves for serving cupcakes.

Pre-lesson preparation

- Bake cupcakes and frost cupcakes
- Take the five extra cupcakes and inject them with mustard, using the solid food injector.
- Replace five normal cupcakes with five mustard cupcakes.

Lesson directions and outline

Share the following information with the youth:

Once you get your livestock project, you are now a member of the livestock industry. Your project animal will become food for a consumer in your county, state, or maybe even nation.

It is your responsibility as the producer of that livestock project to ensure that the product you are selling at the sale will end up a safe, wholesome, and quality product on someone's plate.

What is quality assurance? A promise you make by being involved in the livestock industry is the animal you raise for consumer use will be a safe, wholesome product.

Think back to when you received a product that made you disappointed in it. Would you consider purchasing the same product if it did not meet your expectations? When consumers consider a product to be high quality, they will choose to buy that product over another. If consumers purchase a product that does not meet their standards, they will buy a different product instead.

In the livestock industry, the products that we produce for consumers are also expected to be of high-quality, safe, and that they were produced in and harvested in a humane way.

Ask: When you raise an animal for the county fair and sell it, who's job is it to ensure that the products from your animal, such as meat, are safe and high quality? (The retailer? The processor? The breeder? You?)

Everyone who is a part of the livestock industry plays an integral role in helping to provide safe and wholesome products to consumers. This is known as quality assurance.

Quality Assurance begins for livestock producers from the moment an animal is conceived inside its mother to the time that a product reaches the consumer. There are many aspects to raising and caring for livestock and each aspect has quality assurance tied into it.

Quality Assurance for the producer includes the following:

- Genetics – ensuring the right breeding combinations for the end goal.
- Management - guaranteeing that your animals are comfortable and have all their needs met.
- Nutrition – providing the proper nutrients and balancing rations to meet your animal's needs.
- Animal Husbandry – allowing the proper housing size to permit the animal to grow properly and safely as well as follow safe handling practices.
- Veterinary Health – prevention of disease, injection techniques, drug usage and dosage, and residues and withdrawal times.

Conducting the activity (DO)

1. Discuss with the group what quality assurance is.
2. Hand out one cupcake to each member, randomly including the mustard cupcakes.
3. Have the youth eat the cupcakes. After the youth have eaten the cupcakes, provide the youth who received a mustard cupcake a normal cupcake.

What did we learn? (REFLECT)

- Ask: How did you feel when you ate the mustard filled cupcake? Did that product meet your expectations? Would you buy that product again?
- Ask: What are some factors that may influence the quality of the product we produce?
- Ask: What is your role in assuring safe animal products to consumers?

Why is that important? (APPLY)

- Ask: Why is it important that you contribute safe products to the food chain?
- Ask: What is a negative effect that improper quality assurance could lead to?
- Ask: How does it feel when you buy a product that breaks the first time you use it?
- Ask: How will this activity affect other things you do? At school? At home? At work?

Resources

Ohio State University Extension. (2011). Caring for Animals. *Beef resource handbook* (pages 12-5 through 12-6).

Ohio State University Extension. (2008). Caring for Animals. *Goat resource handbook* (pages 115, 162-163).

Ohio State University Extension. (2011). Caring for Animals. *Sheep resource handbook for market and breeding projects* (pages 136-139).

Ohio State University Extension. (2000). Caring for Animals. *Swine resource handbook for market and breeding projects* (pages 24-2 through 24-5).

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