



# Budgeting for Feed Expenses

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## Goal (learning objective)

Youth will learn how to develop a budget for expected feed expenses in raising market livestock animals.

## Supplies

- Computer with Microsoft Excel
- 4-H Market Livestock Budget Template Excel spreadsheet from <https://www.uidaho.edu/-/media/UIIdaho-Responsive/Files/Extension/4-H/Projects/PP-4-H-Livestock-Budget-Template.xls>

## Pre-lesson preparation

- Read and rereview lesson
- Practice using the 4-H Market Livestock Budget Template

## Lesson directions and outline

Feed costs are the largest expense in raising livestock. Animals “partition” feed in a specific order. They first meet their maintenance requirement (what they need to just stay alive), followed by growth, lactation, and then reproduction. Growth only comes when we supply animals with nutrition levels above their maintenance needs. The more they consume on a daily basis above their maintenance needs, the faster they put on weight.

Animals that are fed to gain weight quicker will require fewer days on feed to reach market weight. This will result in less feed overall going towards maintenance and more to your saleable product.

Examples:

- Beef steer weighs in at 800 lbs. with an estimated finish weight of 1,300 lbs. If fed a ration of hay and steer chow to achieve a 4 lb. average daily gain, it will require 125 days on feed to gain the needed 500 lbs. The same steer fed to gain 3

pounds per day will require 167 days on feed to gain the needed 500 lbs. The steer fed to gain only 3 lbs. per day will require an extra 42 days on feed to reach the desired market weight. Youth (and parents) should also remember the need for a project animal to be ready and at market weight on weigh-in day at the fair.

- Market lamb weighs in at 75 lbs. with an estimated finish weight of 135 lbs. If fed a ration of 25% high quality alfalfa hay and 75% high quality grain mix to achieve a .85 average daily gain, it will require approximately 70 days on feed to reach a finish weight of 135 lbs. The same lamb fed to gain .5 pounds per day will require 125 days on feed to reach the desired finish weight. The slower gaining lamb will unlikely be in ideal market condition at the fair if it even makes minimum weight requirements to be eligible.

## Conducting the activity (DO)

1. Download the 4-H Market Livestock Budget Template.
2. Have youth complete a budget for each of their market livestock projects.

## What did we learn? (REFLECT)

- Ask: How much feed will be required to get your project to market weight?
- Ask: What will be the anticipated feed cost?
- Ask: How can feed a better quality ration save you money?

### Why is that important?

- Ask: Why would it be more important for a market animal to reach market weight more quickly?
- Ask: Where else can you apply this same type of knowledge?
- Ask: Have you heard the phrase that time is money? What might that mean in terms of feeding and other aspects of livestock production?

### Resources

Ohio State University Extension. (2011). Nutrition and Feeding. *Beef resource handbook* (pages 7-19 through 7-26).

Ohio State University Extension. (2008). Nutrition. *Goat resource handbook* (pages 64-78).

Ohio State University Extension. (2011). Nutrition. *Sheep resource handbook for market and breeding projects* (pages 56-65).

Ohio State University Extension. (2000). Nutrition. *Swine resource handbook for market and breeding projects* (pages 8-5 through 8-14).