

Seven Steps in Selecting Market Project Animals

“Thinking Backwards to Get Ahead”

Jim Wilson, UI Area 4-H/Youth Extension Educator

1. Determine the projected proper finished weight your project animal needs to be.

Industry standards:

Beef = 1,100 – 1,325 lbs.

Swine = 240 – 280 lbs.

Sheep = 110 – 135 lbs.

Goats = 60 – 90 lbs.

2. Estimate the average daily gain that you will achieve from weigh-in to Fair.

Industry standards:

Beef = at least 3.0 lbs./day

Swine = at least 1.8 lbs./day

Sheep = at least 0.6 lbs./day

Goats = at least 0.35 lbs./day

3. Calculate the number of days from preliminary weigh-in to Fair (feeding period).

For 2013, these are:

Beef = 136 days {preliminary weigh-in: April 6th} {total = 408 lbs.}

Swine = 94 days {preliminary weigh-in: May 18th} {total = 169 lbs.}

Sheep = 59 days {preliminary weigh-in: June 22nd} {total = 35 lbs.}

Goats = 59 days {preliminary weigh-in: June 22nd} {total = 21 lbs.}

4. Multiply the number of days in the feeding period (step 3) by the estimated average daily gain (step 2). That will give you the number of pounds your animal will need to gain during the feeding period. Subtract this from the projected proper finished weight (step 1) to determine how much your animal needs to weigh at preliminary weigh-in.

For 2013, preliminary weigh-in weights (assuming ADG shown in step 2):

Beef = 692 – 917 lbs.

Swine = 71 – 111 lbs.

Sheep = 75 – 100 lbs.

Goats = 39 – 69 lbs.

5. Determine the number of days from date of purchase to preliminary weigh-in.

6. Estimate the average daily gain that will be achieved from date of purchase to preliminary weigh-in.

7. Multiply the number of days to the preliminary weigh-in (step 5) by the estimated average daily gain prior to weigh-in (step 6). Subtract that total from your projected preliminary weigh-in weight (step 4). The resulting figure then provides you with an estimated weight range for your project animal at the time of purchase.

Remember: Plan Now to Avoid Disappointment Later!