

# Seven Steps in Selecting Market Project Animals

## “Thinking Backwards to Get Ahead”

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Adapted to Madison County, by Kandee Boice 4-H Program Coordinator

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

Industry Standards:

Beef = 1200 – 1400 lbs

Swine = 230 – 285 lbs

Sheep = 110 – 130 lbs

Goats = 65-85 lbs

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

Madison County 4-H/FFA 2 year ADG:

Beef = 2.68 lbs/day

Swine = 1.87 lbs/day

Sheep = .67 lbs/day

Goats = .38 lbs/day

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

For 2014, these are:

Beef = 157 days (preliminary weigh-in: March 8<sup>th</sup>)

Swine = 101 days (preliminary weigh-in: May 3<sup>rd</sup>)

Sheep = 66 days (preliminary weigh-in: June 7<sup>th</sup>)

Goats = 66 days (preliminary weigh-in: June 7<sup>th</sup>)

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.

Example (beef) 157 days x 2.68 lbs/day = 421 lbs needed to gain in feeding period

1300 projected finished weight – 421 lbs needed to gain in feeding period = 879 preliminary weight at weigh-in

For 2014, preliminary weigh-in weights (assuming ADG shown in step 2)

Beef = 779 - 979

Swine = 41 - 96

Sheep = 66 - 86

Goat = 40-60

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

Example purchase date February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2014

21 days to preliminary weigh-in X 1.5 estimated daily gain = 31.5 lbs

879 lbs at preliminary weigh-in – 31.5 lbs gain from purchase date to preliminary weigh-in = 847.50 purchase weight

**Remember: Plan Now to Avoid Disappointment Later!**