

WHAT'S THE REAL PURPOSE OF YOUTH (4-H & FFA) LIVESTOCK PROJECTS?

One purpose is to teach young people how to feed, fit and show their animals. The more important purpose is to provide an opportunity for personal growth and development of the young person. The Josephson Institute of Ethics has developed a curriculum which identifies six core values which may help to better describe the value of youth livestock projects. This curriculum also presents the idea that people develop and strengthen character by practicing certain behaviors just as muscles are built through exercise. Therefore, the purpose of the youth livestock program (4-H and FFA) is to provide opportunities for young people to develop character. The character traits identified and some practices (exercises) that may build character follow:

- 1. TRUSTWORTHINESS - includes honesty, promise keeping and loyalty.**
 - daily feeding, watering of animals (promise keeping)
 - adheres to possession deadlines (honesty)
 - adheres to withdrawal times on drugs and de-wormer
 - only the appropriate use of approved drugs
- 2. RESPECT - includes courtesy and proper treatment of people and things.**
 - proper handling for animals, treat humanely
 - proper care of animals
 - listens to and follows advice of advisors
 - recognizes that animal projects are dependent on 4-H'er and provides daily feed and water
- 3. RESPONSIBILITY - includes the pursuit of excellence, accountability and perseverance.**
 - daily feeding and watering (even on busy, difficult days)
 - goes beyond providing the daily needs of the animal in giving additional time and attention to produce a winner
 - adheres to deadlines for entry forms and for arrival at livestock shows
 - never gives up in the show ring (perseverance)
- 4. FAIRNESS - involves consistently applying rules and standards appropriately for different age groups and ability levels.**
 - feeds only approved livestock rations
 - only the appropriate use of approved drugs
 - accepts winning or losing with grace
 - conduct in the show ring follows recommended procedure
 - fitting & grooming of animals follows recommended procedures
- 5. CARING - promoting the well being of people and things in a young person's world. It denotes action and not just feelings.**
 - daily feeding & watering
 - provides clean barn/stall for animal
 - treats animal humanely at all times
- 6. CITIZENSHIP - includes making the home community and county a better place to live for themselves and others.**
 - accepting instructions
 - winning and losing with grace
 - helping others at stock shows
 - teaching younger members
 - treating animals humanely
 - ensuring that your meat animal is safe for consumption