



Showmanship of Project Animals

Introduction

Sometimes, what should be an enjoyable and challenging experience of showing a project animal becomes a traumatic experience which demoralizes youth participants. Major reasons for these calamities are lack of preparation, inadequate knowledge of how to prepare, selection of show animals that the youth is physically incapable of handling, and/or a lack of time commitment from the youth participant. The objective of this paper is to provide information to help reduce the occurrence of show ring fiascos.

Before you ever purchase a show animal, decide if you have the ability to commit to the minimum of 1 to 1½ hours per day required in caring for a show animal. Also, enlist the help of qualified volunteer leaders in selecting a market animal and in designing a feeding, handling, and animal health regimen.

Correct Selection

If you are a first time participant in showing a market animal and have not had extensive experience with large animals, a good first time project would be to either show a hog or a lamb. This will allow you to acquire useful show ring and management experience with a market animal less inclined to cause physical injury. With either hogs or lambs, the primary thing to consider (besides price) in selecting a show animal is to choose an individual with good conformation *in the correct weight range*. If your market animal is too fat at the show, don't expect to do well in a fitting and showmanship class. An important part of showmanship is correct feeding management to meet target weights for the show.

Lambs should weigh from 60 to 75 lbs. approximately 100 days before the show. If lambs weigh more than 85 lbs. at this time, it will require special management to avoid getting the lamb too fat for the show. Typical average daily gains that can be expected for lambs on a normal ration are from .50 to .75 lbs. per day.

Hogs should weigh from 55 to 70 lbs. approximately 100 days before the show. If pigs weigh much less than the minimum weight shown above, it may be difficult to obtain the correct finish on the show pig at fair time.

In addition to conformation, serious consideration should be given to disposition when choosing a market steer. Notice the flight zone and temperament of prospective show steers as you enter the corral. Range calves will have a larger flight zone than will calves raised on irrigated pasture. Even with range calves, there



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Figure 1. Notice the difference in these two heifers as the photographer approaches. The Hereford heifer on the left is more likely to wheel and run as opposed to the black white-face calf. The black white-face is also thicker than the Hereford and would make a better show prospect.

is considerable variation among individuals. Choose a steer with a blocky, growthy conformation and a mellow disposition. Avoid choosing a calf which has its head and tail raised excessively as you approach the flight zone (Figure 1). Calves with a more settled disposition will perform better on feed and be less likely to injure you or someone else in the show ring. *Remember: the show ring is likely to be a stressful place for both you and the steer. You may make great progress in gentling a wild steer at home, but he is likely to revert to his natural disposition in a stressful situation.* Likely show steer candidates will be curious as you approach them then become scared and move away as you enter the flight zone. They will not be explosive in their movements nor be snorting and blowing as you approach.

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The six “C’s” for Success

- 1. CORRECT SELECTION**
Select an animal not only with good conformation but with a personality you can work with.
- 2. CONSISTENCY**
There are no shortcuts to success. A consistent program encompassing regular workouts will accomplish more than a last minute flurry of activity two weeks before the show.
- 3. CALENDAR**
Set calendar deadlines with ration changes, halter breaking, clipping and grooming, and practice shows. Maintain a regular daily schedule of feeding, handling, and grooming your animal. Two weeks before the fair is not the time to start training your show animal.
- 4. COMPENSATION**
Learn what your animal’s conformational strengths and weaknesses are so as to successfully emphasize the positive and downplay faults. Similarly, if the show animal has a personality flaw that will make showing difficult, plan ahead and compensate for this in the show ring.
- 5. CONFIDENCE**
Show with confidence. Adequate preparation will allow you to show with a smile on your face. Be thoroughly familiar with rations, average daily gain, current weight, purchase weight, age, and breed of animal so you can answer questions from the judge. It is also important to be able to identify the different parts of the animal and the associated retail and whole sale cuts. You can help “psych” yourself up by rehearsing the show in your mind with good and bad things that could happen and how you would handle them. Performing in a practice show with members of your club or family acting as a judge and announcer and ring steward is helpful.
- 6. CHARACTER**
Demonstrate impeccable ethics in the preparation preceding the show and during the show itself. Be courteous to all other exhibitors, parents and leaders. The livestock show is the culmination of the project year for many livestock participants and the community. Youth livestock exhibitors represent the livestock industry at fairs and shows to the public. A little courtesy (as well as a lot of honesty) goes a long way in relations with the public.

Taming the Show Animal

PIGS

The pig is our smartest farm animal. Pigs are naturally inquisitive and respond well to a regular training program. As with any young animal, the attention span is short, so training sessions should be limited to 15 to 20 minutes per day. Also, be sure to schedule training sessions during the cool part of the day to avoid stressing the pig. Pigs are unable to sweat and can become overheated easily. Never work with the pig when he is hot enough to pant. Death occurs quickly in these instances. After the pig becomes adjusted to its new surroundings, first training sessions should be to get the pig used to having you close. Next, the pig should be accustomed to the use of the show bat or whip. If a training pen can be built adjacent to the dwelling pen, you will be able to avoid competition with the feed trough. Teach the pig to turn to the right by gently tapping on the left jowl. Teach him to turn to the left by tapping on the right jowl. Teach him to move ahead by tapping lightly on the jowl or side. Teach him to stop by holding the bat in front of his nose. Don’t whack him for not responding rapidly. You want to win his confidence, not make things miserable. When you learned to tie your shoe, someone had to teach you more than once. Repetition is the mother of memory.

LAMBS

When you show the lamb, you will control it with one hand under the chin and one hand on the back of the neck. Initial efforts to control the lamb are best accomplished using a halter. After the lamb is accustomed to its surroundings, get someone to help you catch him and put a halter on him. Rub him gently to get him used to your touch and smell. First attempts to lead the lamb should occur in a small enclosed area. To help the lamb lead off, you may need to put one hand on the dock. When you do this, place the hand holding the lead rope under the chin to aid in control. *Make sure not to wrap the rope around your hand, rather fold it up in the palm of the hand.* When teaching the lamb to lead off with the lead rope, don’t apply a constant pressure on the rope. The lamb needs to feel rewarded for doing what you wish and if you apply constant pressure on the rope it never gets relief for moving off. Use gentle tugs to start the lamb moving and reward him by giving him slack when he does. If the lamb braces against you and doesn’t want to move off, step diagonally away from the head and un-track the lamb to one side. Sometimes, you may need to move the lamb diagonally from one side to another until he finally learns what you are asking him to do. After the lamb is halter broke, exercise him regularly. A rule of thumb is to walk the lamb for about one mile at least every other day.

Exercise is a key component of the training and conditioning program of lambs. However, remember that there is a fine line between adequate and excessive exercise. Exercise should be used to help build muscle, not cause the lamb to become excessively thin. A correctly finished lamb will have slight fat cover over the ribs and from .05 to .10 inches of backfat. Continue to work with the lamb in a pen without the halter to get him used to stopping, setting up, and moving forward with minimal pressure.

Sometimes a lamb may be difficult to teach to lead when it becomes attached to another lamb in the same location. If this proves to be the case, separate the lambs for several weeks to allow the show lamb to bond to the 4-Her.

STEERS

Allow the steer two or three days to get used to his new surroundings. First attempts to halter break a steer are aided by tying the steer up. Do this when you have a long weekend with two or three free days to allow you to closely monitor the steer. With the help of an experienced older youth or adult, put a halter with a long lead rope (which he won't be able to break) on the calf. It will be easier to do this in a cattle chute. If you don't have access to a chute, you can line a gate or panel with plywood and place it parallel to the fence or wall of a small pen or stall. Herd the calf into the alleyway you have made and close the gate or panel diagonally behind him and secure it well with a rope. After you have the halter on the calf, make sure the rope is plenty long to avoid having him rip the rope out of your hands when you let him out. We have found it to be effective to tie another long rope on the end of the lead rope so that the lead rope is about 20 feet long. Allow the steer's momentum to help herd him towards the secure fence post you will tie him to. Try your best to keep the steer from taking his nose away from you as this will allow him to acquire additional leverage from his shoulders to jerk you around. For the first time, tie the calf to the post at about shoulder height to help prevent him from injuring himself when he pulls back. Since he will probably pull the rope tight, dally around one post and then go to an adjacent post to tie the lead rope off in a slip knot. This will allow you to quickly release the calf if he gets in trouble and will put you out of harm's way. If the calf is explosive while being tied up, one trick is to tie the rope to a securely fastened new truck inner tube. The inner tube will provide some slack and temperamental calves will not throw themselves around as much. When the calf is tied up the first time, don't pester him by trying to pet him. Allow him to concentrate completely on giving in to the pressure of the lead rope. After the calf has been tied up for an hour or two, take the halter off him and herd him back to the pen

(if different from the one you tied him in). He should be standing quietly and not pulling back on the lead rope when you release him. *Some cattlemen recommend leaving the halter on and letting the calf drag the lead rope for two or three days. However, there is a danger in the calf getting hung up by the lead rope or in the case of a range calf, being spooked and jumping a fence.* Repeat the above process of catching, haltering, and tying up the calf for two to three more days. On the second day, you can start rubbing and brushing the calf, taking special care not to get kicked. On the third and fourth day, you can tie the calf lower to the ground (around two feet) and provide a feed tub and water bucket to him. Provide enough slack in the rope to allow him to comfortably lie down and eat. Tie him up for about three to four hours and continue to rub and brush him for short periods of time. At the end of the fourth day, the calf should be ready to be led by you and your assistant. Do not let him take his nose away from you or put his head down low and do not wrap the rope around your hand. If he tries to take his nose away, you can anchor the elbow of your right arm in his neck to provide leverage to pull his head back. If he is pulling badly, you can also bring the rope in front of your hip and anchor your left hand behind on your left seat bone and pull the calf's head with your hips and shoulders. If he does not want to move out, un-track him as described above for lambs. The assistant can also help urge the animal forward from behind. If he runs, you and your assistant should try to stay diagonal to his head at a 90 degree angle to obtain additional leverage on the long rope and pull his nose to you. However, if you don't let him take his nose away from you or get his head down, he most likely will not run.

The entire purpose in tying up a calf is to teach him to give to the pressure on the rope. If he can teach himself to do so, he will respect the rope and it will make it easier when you start teaching him to lead. What you want to avoid is to allow the animal to jerk loose from you. If he does this a few times, it will quickly become a habit.

Training and Fitting Tips

PIGS

Continue to work the show pig with the show bat as described above. Monitor weight gain to make sure the pig will be the correct weight at fair time. Extension Publication 110065, *Estimate Animal Body Weight from Body Measurements*, is an excellent way to monitor weight gain if you don't have access to a scale. One month before the show, it is a good idea to weigh the pig on an actual scale to determine what the feeding program needs to be for the final month. Even better, if you can weigh the pig at six weeks and 4 weeks before the show,

you can calculate the average daily gain. This will make it easier to decide how to adjust the feed ration. If you are unable to use a scale, monitor weight gain with a tape measure (using Extension Publication 110065) every two weeks. The ideal weight for the pig at the fair will be between 230 to 250 lbs. If the pig is gaining weight too rapidly and runs the risk of being too fat at fair time, either reduce feed to 2.5% to 3.0% of body weight per day and/or substitute 10 to 15% small alfalfa pellets (as fed to rabbits) for some of the commercial ration. Exercise in the cool of the day can also be increased.

If the pig has a tendency to be weak in the shoulders one thing which can be done is to elevate the feed trough up on a short ramp.

If pigs are not bathed until the time of the show, they may have a scaly appearance. The Pacific Northwest Extension Publication PNW 330, *4-H Swine Project* recommends that pigs be washed several times before the show, increasing to once a week before fair time and again the day before the show. They also suggested applying oil (as in mineral oil) after the pig is bathed the first time to loosen the skin scales for the next bath.

Whenever pigs are bathed use a gentle soap (dish soap or livestock shampoo) and hold the pig's ears closed with your hand as you rinse. Avoid the use of heavily fragranced or perfumed shampoos and soaps. The Pacific Northwest Publication also recommends that pigs be brushed dry (in the direction the hair lies when dry) to prevent curling of the hair on the sides.

Feet should be evaluated a month before the show to see if they need trimming. If toes are long and the pig is down on his pasterns, then the excess toe needs to be trimmed with a pair of nippers. Have an adult volunteer leader help you with this task if you have never done it before.

Clipping is done at fair time to the ears, tail, and underline. The Pacific Northwest Publication recommends trimming the tail from a point just above the switch to the tail setting. To blend the clipped hair with the unclipped hair, lightly clip the blended area with the clippers standing on their point. Additional grooming which can be done at the fair is to snip long stray hairs on the snout with a pair of scissors. A current trend is to body clip the entire hog to emphasize muscling and leanness. Check with the particular show rules to determine what grooming techniques are allowed.

LAMBS

Monitor the lamb's weight gain with Extension Publication 110065 in a similar fashion as detailed above for pigs. Target show weight should not exceed 110 lbs. for a small breed or 125 lbs. to 135 lbs. (depending on muscling and frame) for a large frame black faced breed.



Dean Fish

Figure 2. The lambs are set up as described in the text.

If the lamb is gaining weight too rapidly you can back him down to a grower ration (50% hay : 50% grain) or substitute with a higher fiber, lower energy grain such as oats. Thirty days before the show, you may want to replace hay in the diet with alfalfa pellets to counteract the development of a hay belly.

After the lamb is halter broke, continued daily exercise is important in keeping him firm. If the lamb has a need for increased leg muscling, hill climbing can be used to build up the muscle in the lower leg. After the lamb has had his daily walk, practice leading him without the halter to get him accustomed to the show ring procedure. If you are tall, kneel beside the lamb's shoulder to allow the judge to see. If you are small, stand in front of the lamb's head and neck to keep it from getting away. As the judge approaches the front for a view, smoothly step to the side. Train him to brace and set up for the show ring.

The lamb is set up for the judge by setting the legs wide on all four corners with the back legs extended (Figure 2). Adjust the front legs with your hand. If you are an older youth you will also be able to reach the back legs to adjust them as desired. A smaller youth will need to rock the lamb back and forth to get the hind legs as desired, then adjust them further with the toe of the boot. Another method to set up the back legs is to push the brisket of the lamb until it braces with the back legs.

Bracing is when the back and loin are held rigid for a judge's close inspection by pushing against the breast with the knee or by pulling down on the chin with your

hands. When you do this, you will be standing in front of the lamb. The object is to bow up the lamb's back and tense the loin and back muscles to make him feel more firm to the judge. Since many lambs will jump and act unruly in the show ring when the judge handles it, it is important to have the animal used to this prior to the show. Get a parent or a large teenager to help you practice handling the lamb while you keep it still and braced. It may take several short training sessions to get the lamb used to this.

Feet trimming should be done at least a month before the show to avoid getting the lamb sore. Long toenails can be trimmed with a pair of nippers.

As you work with the lamb prior to the show, you should teach it to stand quietly on a sheep stand. *Never leave a lamb unattended on a sheep stand.* This will make grooming easier. All market lambs now are shown slick sheared. Unless specified by the show rules, this does not mean it has to be done at the time of the show. What seems to work well is to shear the lamb in the early summer preceding a fall show to help keep the lamb cool and gaining well. Two weeks before the show, shear him again. This will allow enough time for the wool to grow out to cover the clipper marks. If you will wash the lamb before you clip him the last time, it will enable you to do a nicer job. Use a pair of hand shears to smooth out the clipping job. The day before the show, wash the lamb again. Stains can be removed with bleach or Woolite. Stains can also be disguised with baby powder. After washing, you may want to put a blanket on the lamb to keep it clean. Some people keep a blanket on the lamb the last two weeks preceding the show. On the day of the show, you can smooth any areas needed with the hand shears. Although the wool will be very short, some use a wool card on the rump and loin area to accentuate thickness. Slightly dampen the wool before carding.

STEERS

Steers should be on a finishing diet (70% to 80% grain) for around 140 days in order to finish properly. Feeding a high grain diet requires that special precautions be taken to avoid problems such as bloat, acidosis, and founder. Step up rations are used to bring the steer up to full feed and increases in total feed consumption for greater steer size should not exceed 2 or 3 lbs. per day. The amount of grain in a ration should not be increased by more than 10% a week when changing over from grower (50% hay : 50% grain) to finishing rations. When steers are on a finishing ration, a free choice molasses block with Rumensin® should be provided or Rumensin or Bovatec® should be added to the feed to help prevent acidosis and bloat. For more details on feeding management, see Extension Publication AZ1054, *Feeding Management for Show Steers*.

Weight of steers should be determined at 200, 140, 100, 60, 45, 30, and 15 days before the show using either a scale or by estimating from body measurements using Extension Publication 110065. If the steer is not gaining enough weight to reach the target finish weight (1100 to 1250 lbs. for medium frame steers or 1250 to 1400 lbs. for large frame steers; Extension Publication AZ1054), then the energy content of the feed ration will need to be increased. Steers on a finishing ration should be consuming approximately 2.5% of body weight in total feed per day and the ration should be around 70% grain. If the steer is not gaining weight rapidly enough to meet the target show weight, then a higher energy grain can be fed. The highest energy farm grain is corn and the lowest energy grain is oats, with rolled barley being intermediate. Most commercial show rations are comparable to oats for energy content. Slowly substituting whole shelled corn for part of the commercial ration will increase the energy content of the ration. Do this over several days and be sure to mix the ration well. If substitution of a higher energy grain still does not bring about the desired weight gain, then you may try increasing the amount of feed or increasing the ration to 80% grain. If you do this, it is critical that extra protection be taken to prevent grain bloat by providing access to Rumensin or Bovatec. Also, when feeding a high grain ration, do not allow fine particles to be present in the grain ration. It is also essential that fine particles not be allowed to accumulate in the feed box. Often as a feed bag is emptied, there will be fine particles in the bottom of the bag. Finely ground feed particles predispose a steer to developing digestive problems such as acidosis and bloat. If the steer is gaining weight too rapidly or getting fat, then reduce the energy content of the diet by substituting oats for some of the grain and increase the daily exercise from 1 mile to 1 ½ miles. If this does not work, then reduce the grain content of the ration from 70% to 65 or 60%. As a last result, reduce the total daily feed to 2% or 2.25% of body weight.

As mentioned immediately above, steers should be walked daily after they are halter broke. This will keep them firm and help ensure a good appetite. After you have exercised the steer, then spend a few minutes a few times a week teaching him to set up and get used to the show stick. Steers should be taught to stand square and straight with the legs apart on all four corners. Move a leg back by pushing on the skin in between the toes with the sharp part of the show stick. Pull a leg forward by placing the hook on the show stick behind one of the dewclaws and pulling. Move the foot sideways by pressing on the side of the foot at the coronary band. You can also adjust the position of the feet by rocking the steer with the halter.

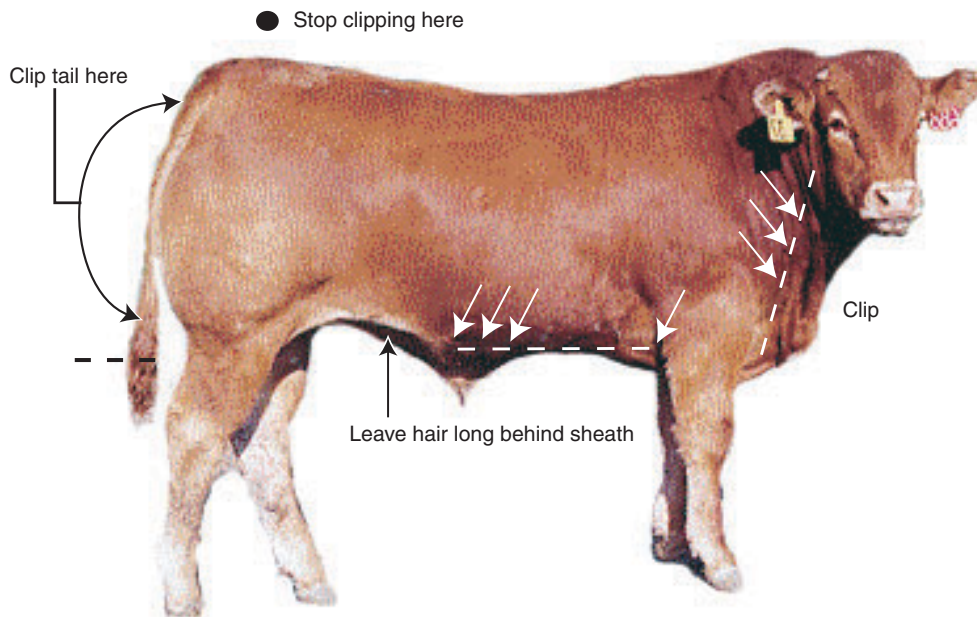
When presenting the steer to a judge on a profile, place the far side foot one foot's length in front of the foot closest to the judge. This will create the perception of depth and thickness (*Beef Showmanship*, North Carolina Extension Publication ANS95-002B) It is also helpful to have an assistant observe the best foot placement for visual evaluation of the steer.

Another purpose of the show stick is to correct a sagging back. By rubbing the belly with the hook on the show stick, you can encourage the steer to raise his back. You can also use the show stick to level out the topline by gently rubbing along the spine.

Steers should be taught to travel with the head up with your right hand 6 to 12 inches away from the head. Excess rope or strap on the lead is neatly coiled in the right hand. The show stick is carried with the handle up in the left hand. Never let a steer turn his nose away from you as you are leading him as this allows him to use the weight advantage he has in his shoulders to pull you

around. Teach the steer to lead forward with pressure and release so you are not having to tug on him all the way around the ring.

One of the biggest challenges we face in Arizona with show steers is keeping the hair long in order to have something to work with when the steer is blocked for the fair. Some things which can be done to help keep hair longer are: 1) keep the calf in the shade during the daytime; 2) use an electric fan or misting system in front of the calf's stall; 3) rinse the steer (water only) during the cool of the evening and comb the hair upward and forward with a Scotch comb; and 4) allow the steer to be in an outside lot during the evening (*4-H Beef Project*, Oregon State University Extension Publication 4-H 141). Another thing the Oregon publication suggested to do to stimulate hair growth was to body clip the steer above the hocks in late April (time will vary based upon Arizona elevation zone and the time when winter hair starts slipping).



*Figure 3. Clipping a show steer. The body area (not the legs) below the dotted line is clipped. Areas above the dotted line are blended in by holding clippers upright and backwards on the point of the clippers. The tail is clipped from two hands width above the end of the tail bone up to the area where the rump starts curving inward and the muscle starts to separate. The switch of the tail is cut off to 1 to 2 inches below the end of the tail bone and combed through. The underline is clipped from the point of the elbow back to where the belly starts curving upward. On large framed steers needing more depth, the tail and underline may be shaped with less hair being removed. The neck is clipped for about one clipper blade width behind the poll straight down to the brisket. The object is to create a chiseled appearance to the shoulders. The topline is leveled **very carefully** by holding the left hand under the clipping hand to guide the clippers over the spine, stopping at the point indicated. Next, the back is again carefully clipped in the same manner for two clipper widths on each side of the backbone. Then, the clippers are held upright and backwards on the point of the clippers and the turn of the loin is blended in to accentuate the loin muscle. Do not make the back look flat on the top as this suggests over-finish. The hair on the hind legs is brushed forward and the hair on the front legs is brushed down.*

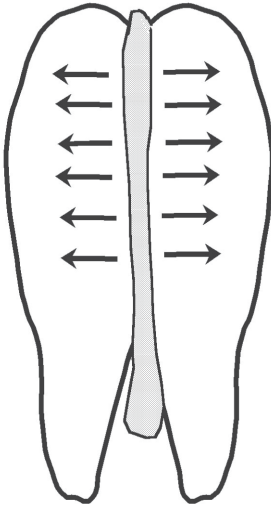


Figure 4. To accentuate the thickness of the hinqarters, the clippers are held upright and backwards on the point of the clippers and parallel adjoining horizontal strokes are made towards the side of the steer. These blending strokes extend to the depth of the clipped area of the tail.

When a steer is blocked properly, it can enhance show appearance. The first time you clip a show steer, you should get someone experienced to help you. As with lambs, the steer should be washed prior to being clipped. This will help maintain sharpness of your clipper blades and most closely simulate “show-ready” hair. At least one week before the show, the steer’s head and tail should be clipped. This will allow some time for the hair to smooth out. The head is slick sheared except for the ears and an optional top knot. The only exception to shearing the head would be for horned cattle, which should not exist in a market class. The clipping line for the head is about one clipper’s width behind the poll straight down on either side of the neck. Figures 3 and 4 illustrate some of the key points of blocking a steer for the show. The object is to have the hindquarters and loin appear thick and the shoulders and underline trim. However, you do not want to make the flank appear “cut up”, since this indicates a lack of finish.

As the steer is being groomed throughout the summer, the hair is trained upwards by first combing the hair down, then horizontally, then finally diagonally towards the withers. The one exception are the front legs which are combed down. When training an animal’s hair, you can use a pint of hair conditioner and a pint of rubbing alcohol mixed in a gallon of water to build body, condition hair and reduce tangles.

The day before the show, the steer is washed well with a mild dish soap like Ivory® or a livestock shampoo like

Orvus®. Next, in order to help set the hair, mix 2 cups of Downy® in a bucket of water. Rub the Downy in the steer’s haircoat with your hands. Rinse well, then blow dry the hair to fluff it. The final passes with the blow drier should be diagonal up towards the withers. On the day of the show, apply Sho-Glow® or a similar livestock spray, comb up the hair, and finish off with a blow drier.

Showing Tips

GENERAL

Preparation for the show begins months ahead as a daily training, grooming, and feeding schedule is established. Practice shows with club and family members will build confidence and will help you spot problems early on. Review in your mind the good and bad things which could happen in the show ring and how you would handle them. Know what your animal’s conformational strengths and weaknesses are and compensate accordingly in the show ring. Be familiar with the performance record, history, and management of your show animal so you can answer the judge’s questions knowledgeably. If the show animal has a disposition problem, maintain a greater distance from other animals. If you have a steer that likes to kick, make sure you warn the judge as he or she moves in close for inspection.

Your job is to present the show animal to the judge in the best possible manner. Don’t stop the animal and set it up with its feet in a hole. Doing so will make the back sag. It is preferable to stop the animal on level ground or with the feet uphill. Take your time and don’t get flustered if something goes wrong. Most judges will allow you time to properly set up your animal. Oftentimes, showmanship classes are won when the youth showing an animal reacts wisely during an emergency.



Dean Fish

Figure 5. Two hog exhibitors have their pigs out of the crowd and in excellent position for the judge to evaluate the animal.

Maintain eye contact with the judge **and** your show animal. As the judge moves in closer to view your animal, make sure you are not in his or her line of view. As the judge passes from one side of the animal to another, smoothly shift your position to the opposite side so as not to obstruct his or her view of your show animal.

An important thing to remember about showing in a strange place is that the show animal may not want to drink the water. You can overcome this problem by flavoring his drinking water for 7 to 10 days prior to the show with something like molasses.

PIGS

If you practice showing in the actual showing, it is recommended to exit the pig out of different gates instead of only one gate. Exiting from the same gate each time may result in too much familiarity with the process by the pig, causing it to hover in the corner around the gate during the actual show.

Keep your animal at a respectable distance (Figure 5) from the judge to allow him or her to see the animal (10 to 20 feet). If you think ahead, you can avoid getting caught in a traffic jam where the judge can't see your pig. Don't move the pig's feet with your hands, position the feet using your bat. Always keep the pig between you and the judge. It is a cardinal sin to beat on your pig in the show ring. Excessive force with a pig will cause bruising in the carcass the buyer purchases. If two pigs get in a fight, stand away, and wait for someone with a hog board to break it up. As a final note, carry a small brush with you to brush shavings off the pig's back.

LAMBS AND BEEF

Maintain adequate space between your animal and those immediately adjacent. If the judge can't see your animal because you are too close to someone else it could influence how you place in the class. Keep at least 3 feet between animals when you are lined up side by side and at least one animal length between animals when lined up in profile. It is rude to crowd someone else's animal as it may be in heat or have a disposition problem which could be disruptive. Also, a polite gesture to the judge is to close up large gaps when animals are moved out of the line. When you are called upon to switch places in a side by side lineup, move through the line and push on the

animal's head to turn to the right and come back through the hole you just left. Move to your new slot from the rear of the animals.

BEEF

If you think your steer is underfinished, turn your steer's head towards the judge as he or she handles your steer. If you think the steer is overfinished or too fat, turn your steer's head away from the judge to firm up the steer (*4-H Beef Project*, Oregon State University Extension Publication 4-H 141). Carry a Scotch curry comb in your pocket to smooth the steer's hair back up after the judge handles him.

Conclusion

Showing an animal can be a rewarding and memorable experience, especially if you have worked hard and are prepared. Thomas Paine said, "What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly: 'Tis dearness only that gives every thing its value."

As you show, be considerate to others in the ring. Allow them to have as pleasant of an experience as you hope to have. Always be ethical in your show ring preparation and don't use any illegal drugs or practice inhumane treatment of your market animal as you prepare.

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