

# 1990 Wayne County 4-H Market Steer Program Has Begun

HONESDALE (Wayne Co.) — The 4-H market steer feeding project demands a high level of management plus a sizeable investment in feed, hay, salt and minerals and other miscellaneous costs such as veterinarian fees, show supplies and equipment, trucking fees and feeding and watering equipment.

This 4-H project is open to all young people in Wayne County with a strong interest in feeding, caring for, and managing a 4-H market beef steer.

To meet the 4-H membership requirement, the young person must be at least 8 years old by January 1, 1990, and not have passed their 19th birthday as of this same date. The young person also must belong to any one of the 4-H agricultural or community clubs in Wayne County.

The 1989 - 1990 Wayne County 4-H market steer feeding program will begin on December 1, 1989.

With this thought in mind, it's now time to do some serious "steer hunting" if youth plan to participate in this year's feeding program. There are some guidelines to consider when selecting that champion steer:

4-H members need to select a steer calf that shows good conformation and correct size and age. Try to select a beef steer calf that was born between January and March, 1989. These calves should weigh at least 500 to 550 pounds or more when they are weaned off the cow and placed on full feed. Conformation means selecting

a beef steer calf that shows a strong, straight topline, has a good strong set of feet and legs, shows adequate growth, muscling and width throughout, especially through the hindquarters and down through the "twist" and hock area.

• 4-H'ers need to select market steers that are 100% beef blood. This does not mean that they must purchase purebred or registered-type stock. The calf should be sired by a 100 percent beef blood bull and from a 100 percent beef blood cow. Beef breeds include Polled Herefords, Red or Black Angus, Simmental, Charolais, Chianina, Limousin or any other beef animal that is a cross of two or more beef breeds. Again, no dairy-beef crosses should be considered for this 4-H project.

• Successfully feeding a weaned beef steer calf to a finished market steer requires a sizeable investment in different feed-stuffs. This includes grain (feed), hay, salt and minerals, and in some situations, the feeding of high-moisture shelled corn, haylage or corn silage. Members enrolled in this 4-H project must

be willing to purchase and then feed the different feeds and forages to the steer to obtain optimum growth. The feeding period begins on December 1, 1989 and continues until early August 1990 and the Wayne County Fair. This is why raising and feeding a 4-H market steer is costly, hard work and a challenge for any 4-H member.

• All market steer calves should be checked to be sure they have been properly castrated and that they are healthy. Beef calves coming off a pasture should be eating some feed.

In early December, all of the 4-H market steers will receive: two ear tags; a Bureau of Animal Industry tag and a special 4-H identification tag, an implant to help promote growth, a parasite vaccine to clear up internal and external parasites, plus each steer will be weighed to establish a starting weight for the program.

All of the 4-H market steers are shown at the junior market steer show at the Wayne County Fair and then sold through the Wayne County junior livestock sale.

The minimum qualifying

weight for the 4-H market steer show and the junior livestock sale is 900 pounds.

4-H members enrolled in this 4-H project will acquire valuable skills in showmanship, fitting, feeding, management, marketing and health practices. Also, a project record book of all expenses must be maintained throughout the feeding period.

Young people interested in this

4-H project should contact the Wayne County Extension Office at 253-5970, ext. 239, for enrollment forms and additional details. The deadline for enrolling in this 4-H project is Thursday, November 30.

The Wayne County Extension office will try to maintain a list of area beef producers that may have beef steer calves available as project animals.

## New Raw Wool Bleaching Method Discovered

American raw wool could become more attractive to the textile industry thanks to a new bleaching method developed by scientists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Agricultural Research Service. Some American raw wool has a high degree of urine stain, one of the reasons for the bleaching process. By changing the chemistry currently used for bleaching, scientists found the number of baths commonly used to whiten U.S. wool can be cut from

two to one.

The single-bleach method, currently being patented, could lower manufacturing costs and improve profits for American sheep producers, who usually breed sheep primarily for meat.

Imported wool comes primarily from sheep bred specifically for textured wool. Researchers are working on ways to bleach black hairs that appear in American wool, but have been bred out of imported wool.

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