

# Kid's KOrner

## Kids Fit Beef For Show Ring

LOU ANN GOOD

Lancaster Farming Staff

MOUNT JOY (Lancaster Co.) — "When you wash your steer, make sure you get it clean under the briskets and flank," Debra Hess told members of the Red Rose 4-H Beef Club.

It was hands-on practice for about 22 members who gathered at Bob and Debra Hess's Mount Joy farm to learn the proper way to clean and fit a steer for the show ring.

With hose, water bucket, and brushes, the Hesses ten-year-old son John demonstrated the proper way to scrub a steer. Rocket and Astro stood patiently in the hot summer sun seemingly enjoying being splashed and hosed with cold water, but John said that he has been kicked plenty of times.

"Some (steers) are touchy at the feet. And, you gotta watch that you don't get water in their ears or they will jump," John said. "You gotta close their ears," he added as he demonstrated how to squeeze the steer's ears together to keep water from going into them.

After John scrubbed the steers, he threw buckets of Laser Sheen over the steers. John mixes the Laser Sheen himself. He said that it's a mixture of vinegar and water to keep bugs out of the steer's hide and helps prevent dandruff.

John spends 4 to 5 hours each day with his steers. "It's a full-time job," he said. "At first the steers ran away from me when I went toward them, but now I got 'em tamed and used to being washed."

John walks his steers about two miles everyday to keep them in

shape and get them used to walking with him.

Rocket and Astro are purebred Polled Herefords purchased from Salunga Acres, owned by John's grandparents, C. George and Dorothy Metzler.

"I like red ones (Herefords) because they are real friendly," John said. "One thing I don't want is a black one. They are so stubborn. If you tell them to move, they won't. Once a got kicked in the brim of the hat by one."

John's parents are leaders of the Red Rose 4-H Beef Club that includes members from Elizabethtown, Marietta, Mount Joy, and Manheim. This is the first year, that the club did not sponsor a tour, but instead held the workshop to teach members how to clip and dress the steers for the show ring.

Members watched how leg adhesive sprays are used and hair pulled up to give the steers a classy image. After they got a chance at trying their hand at it, the members worked on showmanship which included using show sticks.

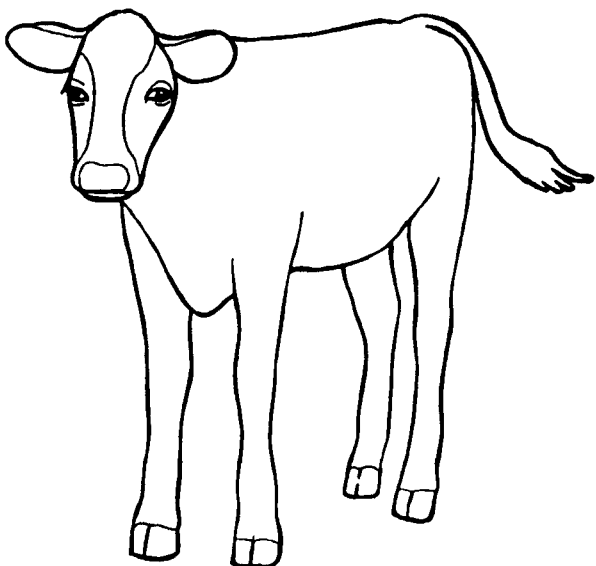
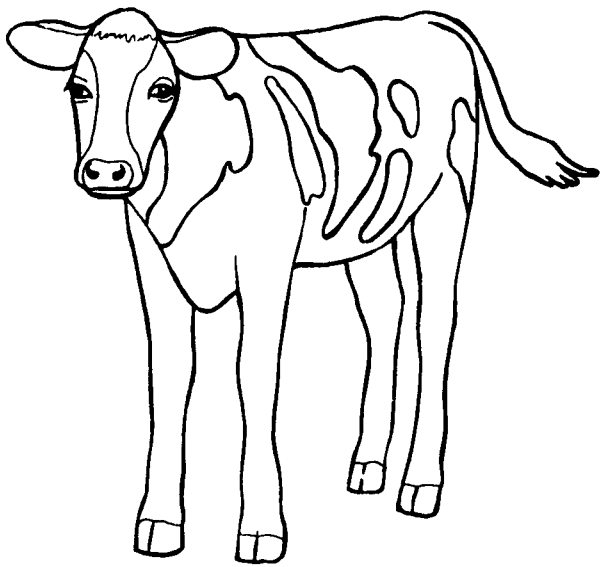
Last year, the first year John showed, he placed third in Junior Showmanship at the Pennsylvania Farm Show. It is unusual for a first year exhibitor to place in showmanship, but John credits his parents for teaching him all that they had learned from the time when they were in 4-H competition. John also had the champion preview steer and the champion 4-H carcass lamb at the Manheim Fair last year. He is also a member of the 4-H judging team.



John Hess demonstrates preparing a steer for the show ring while his siblings and cousins watch. With John, from left, Nicole Hess, 7, sister; Jesse Hess, 10, cousin; C.J. Hess, 8, cousin; and Christopher Hess, 5, brother.



According to John Hess, a bucketful of Laser Sheen, a mixture of vinegar and water, keeps bugs out of the hide and helps control dandruff in cattle.



Finish drawing this calf so it looks like the one above it. Color both calves.



Bob and Debra Hess of Mount Joy lead the Red Rose 4-H Beef Club of which their son John, center, is a member. Another leader, Greg Musser, is not pictured.