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4-H member extends invitation

Letter to the Editor:

My name is Michael Olthof. I am 12 years old and have been part of the Green Acres 4-H Livestock Club for the past 10 years. I have been working on projects since October to take to the Muskegon County Youth Fair.

Projects range from a story to a baked good. I am also bringing my dairy feeder that I have worked with since February. He has been fed Calf Grower milk replacer, calf feed (grain), hay, and has been put out to pasture. He is, at this point, about 400 pounds.

I am also selling peanut butter squares, which is peanut butter with melted chocolate chips spread over it and refrigerated.

On Thursday, July 29, I will be selling my dairy feeder in the fair's large animal auction. The sale starts at 6:30 p.m.

On Saturday, July 31, I will be selling my peanut butter squares in the small animal/baked goods auction, which is held at 2 p.m.

I am writing this letter to ask you or your business to come and support me at the auctions and possibly buy my cow or peanut butter squares.

I have enclosed a schedule of the fair activities for the week. If you have any questions, feel free to call me at (616) 847-4274.

Sincerely,
Michael Olthof
Green Acres
4-H Livestock Club



Kelly Olthof will be at the fair with her market goat.



Lynn Olthof's market steer is a dairy feeder.

Muskegon County Youth Fair Livestock Auction

(Submitted by Muskegon County Youth Fair)

If you are planning to attend the livestock auction at this year's Muskegon County Youth Fair, you might need answers to these frequently asked questions.

The 4-H Livestock Auction

The 4-H Livestock Auction is the culmination of a long project year for many 4-H members. At the auction, they have the opportunity to sell their animals and learn first hand how the marketing process works. It is an educational process that begins with the selection of an animal many months before and continues until the animal is shipped to a slaughter house for you at the end of the fair.

Where does the auction take place?

The auction is held at the Muskegon County Fairgrounds, which are located at 6621 Heights Ravenna Road.

Why should I purchase an animal from the 4-H Livestock Auction?

You will receive personal satisfaction through:

1. Helping to promote 4-H youth "Learning by Doing" programs.
2. Obtaining high quality meat for your freezer or locker.
3. Free advertising you will receive as a buyer, both in various newspapers and the 4-H show book.

What types of animals will be sold?

Market rabbits and poultry will be sold at the small animal auction. Market steers, feeder steers, swine, lambs and goats will be sold at the large animal auction.

As a potential buyer, should I plan to arrive early?

It's a good idea to arrive early enough to view the sale animals and/or talk to the 4-H members/owners. A sign-up table will be in or next to the barn so that you can obtain a buyer's number. (Livestock auction booklets will be available at the clerk's table.)

Can more than one person purchase the same animal?

Yes, but make sure you provide all names, addresses and phone numbers to the clerk.

How do I bid?

When an animal you'd like to purchase is in the ring and at a price you desire, signal the auctioneer by holding up your number.

So I've bought the animal — Now What?

You will be asked to sign a bill of sale and indicate the following:

1. Indicate whether you'd like the animal processed for your personal use or resold at a stockyard.
2. Indicate your choice of processor or livestock yard.

Who will handle my payment and/or billing questions?

Farm Credit Services of West Michigan.

Baked goods must be paid for on the day of the auction.

How do I transport the animal to the processing plant or livestock yard?

Free trucking is provided at the end of the week for steers, hogs, lambs and goats. This is taken care of for you by the Livestock Committee and the 4-H members.

If I decide to have my animal processed, what do I need to do?

Make sure the clerk is aware of your processing plant choice. Contact the processor the morning following the auction sale to inform them of the number and species of the animal (s) you're having processed at their plant, with instruction of types of cuts, thickness, packaging materials, etc., that you desire. Make arrangements to pick up your packaged meat from the processor.

Can I buy an animal and not keep it?

Yes. You have two options:

1. You can market your animal. This means reselling it at a local livestock yard. Trucking and reselling will be handled for you. You will receive a check in the mail from the livestock yard.
2. You can donate your animal back to 4-H. If you choose to do this, indicate your decision to the auctioneer or the ring personnel at the time your final bid is taken. You should then check with the clerk to finalize payment.

What is live weight vs. hanging weight and what kind of yield can I expect?

Live weight is the weight of the animal before killing it. The hanging (or carcass weight) is the weight of the slaughtered animal as it hangs from the rail. At this state, the hide and viscera have been removed. The animal is then taken down and cut into salable meat. The following are examples of average yields:

- A 1,000 pound steer = 651 pound carcass = 432 pounds of salable meat
- A 210 pound hog = 150 pound carcass = 120 pounds of salable pork

If I need more information, whom do I contact?

You can either contact a representative from the Livestock Committee at (616) 675-4519 or contact the MSU Extension Office at (231) 724-6361. •

83rd Annual Muskegon County Youth Fair – July 27-31

by Sandy Kriger and Mary Weimer

It's almost time for the annual youth fair at the Muskegon County Fairgrounds on Heights Ravenna Road. Admission is free, so bring your whole family out to see the horses, dairy cows, poultry, rabbits, goats, sheep, dairy feeders, pigs, and market beef. Don't miss visiting the former school building for all the inanimate projects and baked goods. Silent auction items are located there, too, so you will want to check them out.

All week long there are free games for all ages with prizes. Some games are limited to 20 participants per age group, but most games are open to everyone who wants to play.

The large animal auction will be held on Thursday evening, July 29, At 6:30 p.m. It's a wonderful chance to fill your freezer and support 4-H at the same time. The small animal auction will be held on Saturday, July 31 in the afternoon. Baked goods will also be auctioned that afternoon. Support 4-H and satisfy your sweet tooth with cookies, cakes, pies, candy, and much more available at the auction.

The 4-H members have been working hard all year preparing for the fair. Mark your calendar to visit the fair and support their efforts. It's free, it's fun and it's not far from where you live! •



Hunter Kriger's market goat is very affectionate.



Kaitlyn Kriger took her goat Key Wee to visit her classroom at Edgewood. You can see Key Wee and Kaitlyn at the Muskegon County Youth Fair.



Karson Kriger's market goat will be much larger at fair time!



Michael Olthof is raising this dairy feeder market steer.