

Marketing Your Project for the Jr. Livestock Sale

YOUR JOB

As an exhibitor, your job is two-prong:

- ✓ Raising a quality, market ready animal *AND*
- ✓ Marketing your animal by contacting potential buyers who will come to the Junior Livestock Auction.

Treat your project as your business, and you are the face of that business.

MARKETING YOURSELF

Marketing yourself is just as important as marketing your animal.

Ethics are an important part of marketing your animal for the Junior Livestock Auction. How you present yourself always, including on social media, and how you treat your animal is very important before and during the fair. Be careful what you post on all social media sites, negative information that a buyer (or the public) can view or hear about is bad publicity and could affect the sale of your animal.

Remember - unfortunately, negative news spreads quickly and reaches more people than positive news usually does.

Remember how you represent yourself, your club and/or chapter. You are trying to sell a product for far more than the current market rate.

Example:

You have a hog that weighs 250 pounds and the current market price for hogs is \$0.72. This means your animal at a public auction yard would only be worth \$180. You are trying to sell that same hog to a business or individual at the Junior Livestock Auction for \$5.00 per pound and receive \$1,250. You are asking a buyer to pay \$1,070 over market price for your hog.

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HOW TO MARKET TO BUYERS

You are marketing to businesses and individuals that you may or may not know.

Look up businesses in your local area OR obtain the Buyer's List from your leader, advisor or fair office and choose 10-15 businesses or individuals to write and mail buyer letters to and pick a minimum of 3 to personally contact and visit in person.

Write to buyers that have participated in the auction in years past, but also write to potential buyers that haven't participated. New buyers are always needed, and are essential to make the event grow!

Attempting to visit buyers in person, to hold a brief conversation and deliver your buyer letter is huge and will be appreciated by any potential buyer.

People remember FACES better than names. Always dress appropriately when visiting potential buyers and conduct yourself professionally. Wearing your official uniform/dress is always a good idea.

WHY MARKETING IS IMPORTANT

You need a minimum of 30% of your prospective buyers to show up for you to successfully sell your animal. On auction day, not everyone can participate and not everyone you contact will attend. Therefore, the more you market yourself, the better your chances are to have buyers to bid on your animal.

- ✓ It is up to YOU to bring buyers to the auction to bid on your animal.
- ✓ Do NOT wait until the week of the fair- start contacting buyers now, or at least several weeks in advance to make sure the buyer is aware of your project and can make plans to attend the sale.
- ✓ The marketing time you put in will show in your sale price.

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SUCCESSFUL BUYER'S LETTERS

Make your letter ORIGINAL and put some thought into it!

- ✓ You are marketing yourself and your project in the letter.
- ✓ The purpose of the letter is to invite your potential buyers to the fair to see your project and to the junior livestock auction to bid on your project.
- ✓ Handwritten letters are the best, but if you type your letter make it personal to each buyer. Address the letter appropriately and *always* include an original signature.
- ✓ Grammar and spelling is important. Have someone check your letter for errors.

WHAT TO INCLUDE

- Who are you?
- How old are you?
- What school do you attend?
- What grade are you in?
- Why are you writing?
- What club or chapter do you belong to?
- How long have you been involved in that club or chapter?
- What other school and/or community activities are you involved in?
- What animal are you taking to the fair?
- What is the breed of your animal?
- What did you name your animal?
- Approximate weight of your animal?
- How long have you cared for your animal?
- What are the days and times you show at the fair?
- What day is the auction and what times does the auction start?
- Invite them to the Buyer's Breakfast and include the Buyer's Pamphlet.

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AFTER THE SALE

- ✓ Always thank your buyer in person after you sell your animal. A simple handshake is sufficient. Some exhibitors choose to give their buyers', a small gift. This is completely optional. If you're unsure who bought your animal, find your leader/advisor or parent to find out where your buyer was sitting to go introduce yourself and thank your buyer.
- ✓ Thank you letters to buyers in a timely manner are a MUST!
- ✓ You don't want your buyer to receive a "thank you" months after the auction. You want to thank your buyer right away telling them how much you appreciate their participation in the junior livestock auction.
- ✓ Remember your buyer has taken time out of his/her busy schedule to come purchase your animal at above market price!
- ✓ Turn in your thank you letter to your leader/advisor, addressed and ready for mailing. Most clubs/chapters will not issue your sale check until a thank you note/letter is written and submitted.

WHO YOU SHOULD THANK

- ✓ Thank anyone you know that also bid on your animal and supported you, but was not successful at purchasing your animal.
- ✓ Anyone that you receive price support (floors, add-on's) from also deserves a thank you. For those buyers that didn't make it auction day, write a note telling them how you did. A simple note telling a buyer that didn't make it to the auction will help you the following year when you invite that buyer back