

June 11, 2026

Dear Livestock Families,

Below is information to help you sell your livestock at the 2026 4-H livestock auction. The 4-H Livestock Sale will be held in the livestock arena on Friday, August 7, 2026, with small animals selling at 10:00 a.m., and large animals to follow at approximately 1:00 p.m. Lunch will be provided at noon for auction attendees.

For you, the seller:

- Exhibitors with market animals may withdraw their animal from the sale—except for Grand and Reserve Champions, which must be sold—by contacting the superintendent within one hour after the conclusion of their species show.
- A 6% (3% for dairy steers & market steers) commission will be deducted from the bid price of each sale. These funds are placed in an account administered by the 4-H Livestock Superintendents Association (LSA) to cover the cost of the auction, uncollected buyers' accounts, and educational opportunities for livestock project youth. Species check-offs will be deducted where required.
- Members are allowed a **maximum of eight (8) market sales**, not including Grand and Reserve Champions, which do not count as market sales. See the 2026 Kalamazoo County 4-H Fair Book or your superintendent for details.
- All carcass animals are eligible for sale at the auction.
- All youth selling at the 4-H livestock auction must include their security number in the FairEntry database. Those who choose not to will not be allowed to sell their animals during the auction. Please see the attached document that explains why this is a requirement.

Information for your buyers:

- Buyers may choose to have the animal they purchase processed, resold, taken home live, or donated to the Kalamazoo Gospel Mission or Kalamazoo Loaves and Fishes..
- Buyers can also support 4-H members by making a lump sum (also called an add on) donation to the member through the auction clerk, 4-H staff or through the link below.
- If buyers are sharing a purchase, the cost must be split by percentage (ex: 50%/50%), not whole dollars.
- Buyers' groups (4 or more buyers) MUST have one point person responsible to get a buyer number for the group, collect all money and submit it to 4-H. The point person must write a receipt to each participant and provide receipt copies to the 4-H office so all parties can be recognized as individual buyers.
- Buyers who would like to support youth without purchasing an animal may add on a specific amount for the youth. Supporters may submit their information along with the name of the youth and the amount they would like to donate at the following link – <https://forms.gle/1Zn83EQZ7SxZ4s5p8> by 6:00pm on auction day. Invoices will be sent following the auction.

4-H Member To-Do List:

- **By June 26 - Submit your buyer list to Nancy at [nancy.hostetler@affiliate.msu.edu](mailto:nancy.hostetler@affiliate.msu.edu). Please indicate if this is a returning buyer.** LSA will send your contacts an invitation letter. June 26 is a firm deadline so buyers can receive their letters on time. Many companies only forward mail that is addressed to a specific person, so we only send invitations when you submit a **complete address with the contact's first and last name**. If you know a previous contact has moved, please submit an updated address for them. When we receive letters returned to the office as undeliverable, they are removed from our mailing list.
- **By July 1, 2026**, All 4-H'ers selling livestock must complete the YQCA program. Submit your certificate to Veronica at [Bolhuisv@msu.edu](mailto:Bolhuisv@msu.edu)
- **By August 4, 2026** -Provide 2 copies of a 4 x 6 picture of you in clean show clothes with your clean animal to your superintendent. These will be mounted on boards and given to your buyer at the auction. Many buyers hang these in their business for the public to see so make sure they look great!
- **By August 8, 2026 at noon - Thank you notes to buyers are due** to the project superintendent. Thank you notes should be addressed, stamped, and unsealed. Pro Tip – Write these early and address them after the auction.

Looking for more tips?

- Letters to potential buyers [https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/10\\_tips\\_for\\_a\\_better\\_buyers\\_letter](https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/10_tips_for_a_better_buyers_letter)
- Thank you notes <http://msue.anr.msu.edu/uploads/236/66837/CYI048ThankYouNoteHandout.pdf>
- Contact me at the 4-H office, your species Superintendent or club leader.

Sincerely,

*Veronica K. Bolhuis*

Veronica Bolhuis  
4-H Program Coordinator



## Buyer Search Ideas

Finding a buyer for your market animal is an important part of your 4-H project and one that many people take for granted. **Good buyers don't grow on trees!**

### Timeline

Mid to Late May - Make a list of individuals and businesses to contact.

Do not rely on the same buyers to come every year. Try to come up with groups or businesses that your family belongs to or does business with. They do not have to be agriculture-related! For example: doctor, dentist, bowling teams, Unions, volunteer fire departments, political candidates...how many more can you think of? Find out the name of the manager or head person so you know who to deal with.

Provide contact information for your potential buyers to the 4-H office. The Kalamazoo County 4-H Livestock Superintendent Association (LSA) will send them an invitation to the auction which includes more details about what to expect during the auction.

June - Call and or visit potential buyers.

1. Make a Phone Call
  - Set up an appointment to meet with your contact.
  - Helps to remind the buyer of the upcoming auction.
  - You can answer questions the buyer has after they receive their invitation letter.
  
2. Make a Visit (bring your introduction letter with you)
  - This is the BEST way to introduce yourself.
  - The buyer sees that you are making an effort.
  - You can answer any questions the buyer may have.
  - The buyer meets you and knows who to look for on sale day.

## **At the Visit**

Every buyer is different, and one approach will not work for everyone. A phone call to set up an appointment will make a good impression.

Making a visit is not always the most comfortable thing to do. That is why we recommend you first visit someone you or your parents already know as a trial run. Then visit a new buyer when you feel more experienced. Prepare for your visit by brushing up on the sale questions the buyer might ask you.

- **When is it? Where? What time?**
- **Do I need a parking pass to get in? Where do I get the pass?** Contacts who you've submitted to the 4-H office will receive an invitation letter but will not need a parking or entrance pass for 2025.
- **What do I do with the animal?** Personal use, business Bar-B-Que, promotional sale, resell the animal at market price or donate it. Remember, not all animals are eligible to go through resale.
- **Do I have to be present at the auction?** No. Proxy forms are available from the 4-H office for your buyer to complete. These are provided to the auctioneers on the day of the auction for bids to be placed.
- **If I buy an animal, do I have to take it to the processor?** No, trucking is provided by the Kalamazoo County 4-H Livestock Superintendents Association. 4-H members will take care of the animal until it is trucked to the processor. On sale day the buyer must indicate the destination of the animal. The buyers of large animals should contact the processor for specific butchering details. Carcass animals will be standard cut unless prearrangements are made.
- **What does the buyer get out of this?** Advertising, publicity, goodwill, tax write off (they should talk with their personal tax representative), the knowledge of supporting a 4-H member, tasty meat!

## **SAMPLE LETTER TO INTRODUCE YOURSELF**

Be sure to add some personal information to make it unique.

Date

Contact Person's Name

Business Name

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Dear (Contact's name):

I am writing to invite you to the annual Kalamazoo County 4-H Livestock Auction to be held on Friday, August 7, 2026 at 10:00 a.m., in the covered show arena at the Kalamazoo County Fairgrounds, 2900 Lake St., Kalamazoo, MI 49048.

The sale highlights the work of young people in and around Kalamazoo County. Through 4-H I have learned about selection, feeding, fitting, and marketing my livestock. I've learned several life skills such as record keeping, goal setting, disease prevention, self-responsibility and so much more.

I have provided your name and address to the MSU Extension, Kalamazoo County 4-H office. They will be sending you a registration packet including an informational letter that will share details about the 4-H livestock auction.

I hope that you will be able to attend the sale. If you come early, the animals can be viewed in their respective barns. I hope that you will enjoy the auction and will consider bidding on my (fill in specie). Thank you.

Sincerely,

(Your name)

(Your parents contact information in case they have questions)

