Should I take a FEEDER CALF as a 4-H project?

Choosing to take a livestock project in 4-H should involve sound decision-making. This fact sheet provides basic information to help you make a good decision.

SPACE NEEDED
• 30 - 40 square feet per animal in confinement
• 400 – 600 square feet exercise area

COMFORT ZONE
• 40-65° F for optimal performance

WATER REQUIREMENTS
• Access to clean, fresh, cool water is critical
• 6 - 10 gallons per day

FEED CONSIDERATIONS
• Will eat 9 - 15 pounds of feed per day (3% of body weight per day)
• Will gain from 3 – 2.8 pounds per day (Average Daily Gain or ADG)
• Needs approximately 5 pounds of feed per pound of gain (Feed Efficiency)

MARKET CONSIDERATIONS
• Approximate purchase cost for a 300 lb. calf is $1.20/lb for a dairy feeder or $1.50/lb for a beef feeder (more for show cattle)
• Should weigh 400 - 800 pounds when project is completed
• Should reach this weight at approximately 8-10 months of age

BUDGETING
• Projected market price is $1.40 per pound
• Projected feed cost is around $320 and includes:
  o Hay
  o Corn
  o Soybean Meal
  o Salt & Mineral

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