

Junior Livestock Sale Etiquette

Understand Project Rules

- BUY your market animals. Every market animal is required to be owned by the exhibitor.
- Read the show and sale rules in the premium guide or on the Bedford County Fair website.
- Attend the required number of club meetings per year.

Understand the Sale

- Understand that even though you are walking your animal through the sale ring and “bids” are taken, this sale is not a livestock auction in the true meaning of the words. Very few bidders actually buy the animal and have the animal processed for the meat.
- Your animal actually gets sold to a livestock dealer (packer). The bidder marks the sales slip to send the animal to the buyback, which gives them a guaranteed price for an animal they wish to sell to someone else. The bidder pays the balance between the buyback price and their bid price.
- Remember that any amount you receive above the market value of that animal is a **gift** from the sale bidder to you as an exhibitor. The bidders are contributing to you in support of the great work you have done with your project animal.

Pre-Sale

- Invite potential livestock sale bidders to the Junior Livestock Sale. Don't just ask someone to directly bid on your project animal. Send these invitations 2-3 weeks prior to the fair.
- Invitations can be in the form of a letter, card, or phone call. Be sure to include the following information:
 - Information about your, your parents, club and your project animal
 - Ask them to “support the sale” (not specifically buy your animal)
 - Date, time, and location of the sale
 - Photo of you with your animals
 - Proper spelling and grammar are important. Make sure all words are spelled correctly and hand-written notes are easy to read.
- Only contact potential bidders that you have a personal connection with, such as:
 - Feed store or livestock supply stores
 - Businesses that you or your family patronize
 - Family members/friends of family
 - Buyers who have purchased your animal in the past. Be sure to thank them again in your invitation.

During the Fair

- If you sold livestock at the previous year's fair, display some type of poster or banner thanking them for purchasing your animal last year. This thank you does not have to be expensive or fancy, just a sincere sign of appreciation. Bidders often walk through the barns and appreciate seeing their names recognized.
- Always present your animals to the best of your ability. Buyers who walk through the barns appreciate the work that you do to keep your animals, their pens and the aisles clean. Be sure that all areas look their best on sale day.

Sale Day

- DO NOT be late for the sale! Make sure you and your animal, particularly lambs and goats, are in line for the sale. Superintendents should not have to run up the hill looking for you.
- Complete a donations card on sale day for all donations that you plan to make as a percentage of the sale price of your animal. Cards are available at sale clerks' table.
- IT IS NEVER APPROPRIATE FOR AN EXHIBITOR OR A PARENT TO APPROACH A BIDDER AT THE SALE! NEVER ASK FOR ADDITIONAL MONEY, TO BUY AN ANIMAL ALREADY SOLD THROUGH THE SALE OR ASK FOR THE ANIMAL TO BE DONATED TO AN EXHIBITOR.
- DO NOT approach buyback buyers about purchasing animals in the buyback. No animal can be removed from the buyback
- Youth or family members breaking the above two rules will be banned from the show and sale the following year.
- Youth and family members should NOT be in the show arena during the sale unless they are in the ring selling or thanking a bidder AFTER their animal has been sold. The only people who should be in the show arena are those bidding on animals.
- Take time to find your bidders and express your appreciation after your animal is sold. Shake their hand and tell them thank you directly. Remember to thank your contending bidders as they helped to increase the price of your animal. Please remember that the sale is still going on during this time and be mindful to show respect to the bidder's time. They may still be bidding on other animals.
- Bidders have expressed discomfort and frustration about being approached by families to bid or add on bids at the sale. Several bidders have expressed that they do not intend to return to the fair sale because of the "greed" and "lack of appreciation" they feel is being exhibited by some families. Again, any amount you receive above the market value of that animal is a gift from the sale bidder to you as an exhibitor. Nobody is under any obligation to bid or give you more money.
- Clean your swine, lamb, or goat pens before leaving the fairgrounds on the last day of the fair.
- Remember to thank your 4-H Leaders and FFA Advisors for their time and efforts.

Post-Sale

- Always write thank you cards to your sale bidders. Thank you notes should be sent within a week after the sale.
- Thank you notes should:
 - Express appreciation for a bidder's support in buying your animal
 - Share something you learned or a skill you gained from the project
 - Give your name and the name of your club
 - Include a photo of you from the fair if possible
- Send thank you notes to all sponsors of awards that you received at the fair such as showmanship or judging contest awards and champion or reserve champion banners.
- Thank you notes can be mailed or delivered in person. Dress nicely when you deliver thank you notes and be sure to express your appreciation verbally as well.
- You might also consider buying an ad in a local newspaper to thank your bidders after the fair.