



Youth Project Market Animal Weight Guidelines

To maximize productivity and efficiency livestock breeders strive to produce animals that grow fast and become market ready. Some of these livestock are purchased by youth to raise as a project animal with the goal of exhibiting the animal at a fair. Hopefully these animals are productive and efficient for the youth. Ending weights are important for those in the livestock production industry because the producer is paid by either a live animal weight or a dressed carcass weight. Youth project animals typically have to be raised with specific weigh-in dates and weight requirements for the local fair. Each fair may have specific ending weight requirements based on floor buyers and the local market.

In Idaho, market cattle projects need to be owned for a minimum of 150 days and on a uniform county feeding period for a minimum of 130 days. Hogs need to be owned for at least 100 days and on a uniform county feeding period for a minimum of 80 days. For lambs and meat goats they must be owned for a minimum of 70 days and on a uniform county feeding period for a minimum of 60 days. The table below provides guidelines for final weights at the fair.

Guidelines for final weights for project animals at the fair

Species	Min Final Wt.	Max Final Wt.	Desired Range	Minimum ADG
Cattle	1100	1500	1250 – 1450	2.0
Hogs	230	300	250 – 290	1.5
Lambs	110	165	125 – 145	.40
Meat Goat	65	110	80 – 95	.25

The above table is not intended to be the weights used at all fairs but rather as a guide to make sure animals being raised for market are in an industry acceptable window. **Again, these are guidelines, not state requirements.**

*The majority of market cattle need to weigh well over 1100 pounds to be market ready.

*Market hogs have enough muscle that in many cases they are not market ready at less than 230 pounds.

*Market lambs have been bred so that they need to weigh at least 110 pounds in order to have a chance to be market ready.

*Meat goat standards are not yet established, but typically goats that weigh less than 65 pounds are not market ready.