

# How to Prepare for Sheep and Goat Premier Exhibitor Contests



*Hannah Devall*

When exhibitors are preparing for 4-H livestock shows, they often spend the majority of their time working through their feeding and exercise routines and general care for their livestock project. Premier Exhibitor is an additional and optional opportunity available to livestock exhibitors. Some parishes and districts host local contests with rules specific to the contest location, but the remainder of this information will focus on preparing students for the sheep and goat Premier Exhibitor contests held at the LSU AgCenter Livestock Show in February.

The contest is open to exhibitors in 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grades and requires pre-entry. The registration form consists of a resume the student fills out that summarizes their livestock work over the past year. Very often, exhibitors do not spend as much time on their resume as they should. However, these forms are part of the overall score and focus on leadership and citizenship work as well as accomplishments within the sheep or goat project area.

In addition to earning a score on the resume, other sections of the contest include a written test, a skillathon, an interview and showmanship. In a skillathon, stations are set up and exhibitors work their way through the stations. Some examples of skillathon stations include feed identification, medicine label application, livestock judging, aging or mouthing, or anatomy identification. These are just examples, so be sure to look for other topics in your project books. Showmanship scores will be taken by class for sheep. Exhibitors will have the option to specify meat, dairy or market showmanship points to be added to their premier exhibitor score.

Interviews are also conducted during this process. During the interviews, judges are looking for exhibitors who can promote animal agriculture and are knowledgeable about their projects. Professionalism and communication skills are some areas of preparation to keep in mind.

## When preparing for the sheep Premier Exhibitor contest, the resources to reference are:

- All current 4-H sheep project books (available from your local parish extension office or [www.shop4-H.org](http://www.shop4-H.org)).
- Current year LSU AgCenter Livestock Show Catalog, Sheep Premier Exhibitor Study Guide (available at the LSU AgCenter Livestock Show Office website or by emailing [hdevall@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:hdevall@agcenter.lsu.edu)).
- Sheep Premier Exhibitor Feed and Nutrition document (available at the Livestock Show Office website).

## If preparing for the goat Premier Exhibitor contest, the resources to reference are:

- All current 4-H goat project books (available from your local parish extension office or [www.shop4-H.org](http://www.shop4-H.org)).
- Current year LSU AgCenter Livestock Show Catalog, the [www.goatworld.com](http://www.goatworld.com) website and equipment found on [www.premier1supplies.com](http://www.premier1supplies.com).
- Breeds at [www.ansi.okstate.edu/breeds/goats](http://www.ansi.okstate.edu/breeds/goats).

Premier Exhibitor is another way for 4-H members to showcase the dedication and knowledge gained through their 4-H projects. If you are looking for more information on the livestock Premier Exhibitor program, check our website: [https://www.lsuagcenter.com/portals/our\\_offices/departments/livestock-show-office/premierexhibitor](https://www.lsuagcenter.com/portals/our_offices/departments/livestock-show-office/premierexhibitor).



# Sheep Showmanship



## Exhibitor's Appearance

### Appearance

- Well-groomed; clothes neat and clean.

### Merits

- Bring sheep promptly into ring.
- Work quickly but not abruptly.
- Keep attention on sheep and judge.
- Quickly correct faults of sheep.
- Show animal and not self.
- Give prompt answers to questions.
- Display courteous sportsmanlike attitude.

## Cooperation With Judge

- Keep body from obstructing view of own sheep and others.
- Show awareness of judge's position and hand signals.
- Move sheep upon direction of judge.

## Good Showmanship Practices



## Sheep's Appearance

### Cleanliness

- Wool clean and free from foreign matter; head, flanks and legs clean; clean ears, nose and feet.

## Showing Sheep

### Posing and Changing Positions

- Sheep properly setup at all times.
- Sheep responds to handling and is under control.
- Sheep is shown from front when judge views from rear or left side. Otherwise, it is shown from left side only.
- It is shown from a standing or bent knee position.
- Sheep is led into the show ring on the left side with the left hand under the jaw and the right hand behind the head.
- Brace by extending fingers and applying slight pressure to muscles on side of neck or jaw.

## Poor Showmanship Practices





# Goat Showmanship



## Dairy Goats

### Exhibitor's Appearance:

- Neat and clean and dressed properly (white shirt preferred).

### Goat's Appearance:

- Normal growth.
- Neither too thin nor too fat.
- Hair clean and properly groomed.
- Hooves trimmed.
- Neatly disbudded.
- Entire body clipped with neatly trimmed tail and ears.
- Entire body free from stains.

### Showing the Goat:

- Hold the goat's head high and lead it slowly around the ring in a clockwise direction. The goat should lead readily and respond quickly. Hold the goat's collar or neck chain with your right hand. Line up with plenty of space between your goat and the next one. Set goat up with front feet directly under withers. Set up back feet farther back and apart. Set up the end of the goat nearest the judge first. Squat or stand next to the goat. Keep the goat between you and the judge. Lead from the side away from the judge. Answer the judge's questions about the goat scorecard, parts of the animal, goat facts and your goat.

## Meat Goats

### Exhibitor's Appearance:

- Exhibitor should be well-groomed and clothes clean and neat.
- No gum and no hats.

### Goat's Appearance:

- Clean, slick shorn and dry; shearing/trimming/fitting. Feet should be trimmed so that the goat walks and stands naturally and correct.

### Presentation and Changing Positions:

- Goat should be well presented and between the exhibitor and judge at all times. Show evidence of training; hold the head up high. Goat should be led with one hand holding the neck chain or collar and the other hand held to the showman's side. Maintain proper distance from other exhibitors. On a profile/side view/head to tail presentation, the goat should be allowed to stand naturally without bracing.

### Cooperation With Judge:

- Be aware of judge's location. Stay in position to efficiently show and move the goat. Move forward in line as the judge pulls others into lineup.

### Merits:

- Brings goat into ring promptly. Responsive to judge and ringmaster's requests. Works quickly but not abruptly. Recognizes and corrects faults of animal's position efficiently. Not distracted by persons and things outside of show ring. Shows animal, not self. Does not leave ring until released by ring official. Displays a courteous and sportsmanlike attitude.



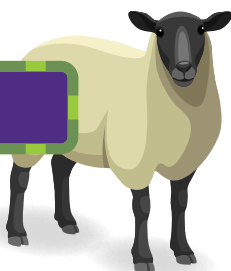
# Sheep and Goat Premier Exhibitor



## Sheep

### Premier Sheep Exhibitor Resources:

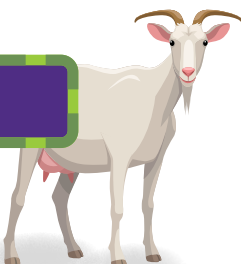
- All current 4-H sheep project books.
- Current year LSU AgCenter Livestock Show Catalog.
- Sheep Premier Exhibitor Study Guide (Livestock Show Office website).
- Sheep Premier Exhibitor Feed and Nutrition document (Livestock Show Office website).



## Goats

### Premier Goat Exhibitor Resources:

- All current 4-H goat project books.
- Current year LSU AgCenter Livestock Show Catalog.
- **Goat website:** [www.goatworld.com](http://www.goatworld.com).
- **Equipment:** [www.premier1supplies.com](http://www.premier1supplies.com).
- **Breeds:** [www.ansi.okstate.edu/breeds/goats](http://www.ansi.okstate.edu/breeds/goats).



## Scoring System



**Overall Possible Score:  
1,000 Points**

### Phase I Points:

- **Resume (See Premier Exhibitor Entry Form):** 100 points.
- **Written exam:** 300 points.
- **Skillathon:** Five activities, 300 points.
- Top 10 Exhibitors from Phase I will be invited to compete in Phase II.

### Phase II Points\*:

- **Showmanship (declare breeding or market for goats):** 100 points (50 points for participation, plus five-point break first through 10th place).
- **Interview:** 200 points.
  - Introduction speech:**  
Maximum of five minutes.
  - Questions from panel:**  
Maximum of 10 minutes.

**\* In the event there are less than 20 total participants, Phases I and II may be combined.**

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