



Controversy in Showing and Raising Livestock

Middle School Food and Agricultural Literacy Curriculum

Precepts

- J. Mental Growth
- J1. Think critically

National Standards

- AS.06.01.02.a. Explain the implications of animal welfare and animal rights for animal agriculture.
- NL-ENG.K-12.4 – Communication Skills
- NL-ENG.K-12.5 – Communication Strategies
- NL-ENG.K-12.12 – Applying Language Skills

Student Learning Objectives

- As a result of this **unit** the students will...
- Discuss animal issues.
- As a result of this **lesson** the students will...
- Examine the role of livestock production and show animals in relation to animal welfare concerns.

Content Outline

Objective 1. Examine the role of livestock production and show animals in relation to **animal welfare** concerns.

- A. Negative aspects of showing livestock:
 - 1. Holding feed/water to make weight
 - 2. Stress
 - 3. Drench gun, etc.
 - 4. Physical alteration
- B. Positive aspects of showing livestock:
 - 1. Show animals are fed the highest quality feed available. In many cases it's more expensive, specific, and better balanced than the diet of the owner feeding the animal.
 - 2. Constant care and attention – show animals are worked with multiple times per day.
 - 3. Climate controlled environment – kept in air-conditioned or well-ventilated barns, VERY clean.

Time

Instruction time for this lesson: 45 minutes.

Resources

Create Rubrics for your Project-Based Learning Activities. Retrieved October 27, 2009, from Rubistar Web site: <http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php?ts=1258426434> — National FFA Organization. (2009). LifeKnowledge Online. Retrieved July 9, 2009, from — <http://agedlearning.org> National FFA Organization. (2003). LifeKnowledge Precepts and Signs of Success.

Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

Writing surface
Overhead projector/transparencies
MS.AI.4.5.TM.A – one per teacher
MS.AI.4.5.TM.B – one per teacher
MS.AI.4.5.ASSESS.A – one per student
MS.AI.4.5.RUBRIC.A – one per group of 4-5

Key Terms

The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in **bold italics**:

Animal welfare

- 4. Great method to teach responsibility, healthy competition, and how to keep up with industry wants/needs. For example, the cattle of 1950 are very different from the cattle of today.

Interest Approach

Show students a commercial for the LA County Fair. One of several different options is: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d9sGbKkPdNI>. If this link is no longer direct, search 'LA County Fair' and it will be the first link that shows up. After watching the video, ask students to say things they think of when they hear the words county fair. Answers will vary, but make sure they include show animals. If you don't have access to a video clip to show, you can have students brainstorm their favorite things about going to the fair.

In a few moments, we're going to watch a commercial for the LA County Fair. Some of you may have seen this on TV, but for some of you it will be new. As you are watching, think about memories you have from the fair. If you've never been to a fair, think about what you think you would like about it, or what you have heard about fairs.



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Show video.

Now this commercial was obviously written for a very urban area, but how can a county fair have an impact on agriculture? Is it always positive? How have you changed your mind about something ag related after attending a fair?

Pause for student responses. Answers will vary, but lead them to the concept that fairs can be very educational for the public, but they can also have a negative impact. Provide local examples of how the county fair impacts your community.

Summary of Content and Teaching Strategies

Objective 1. Examine the role of livestock production and show animals in relation to animal welfare concerns.

Today, we are going to take a look at how show animals impact livestock production and **animal welfare**. A county fair is a great example to show this concept. There are educational opportunities available for people of all ages. Take a few moments and think about what people can learn from attending or participating in a fair. With a partner you have three minutes to write down two examples for each age group (young children, teenagers/participants, adults).

Write the three age groups on the writing surface. Allow students to capture their thoughts. Remind students to be creative and to think outside of the box. After time is up, ask for a couple of groups to share their thoughts.

Here are some possible examples:

Young children	Teenagers/ participants	Adults
where food comes from	what/how to feed animals	being an educated consumer
see a variety of animals	learn how to select show animals	opportunities for their children

Just like there are things to learn at a county fair, there are also several controversial issues with fairs.

The one we are going to focus on today is showing livestock. Is it ethical? Is it fair? Does it harm the animal? As you think about these questions, let's take a look at the negative side of showing livestock. Who will share a story showing a negative aspect of exhibiting and raising show livestock?

Or, if no one in the classroom has a personal story, ask for ideas on why or how a perspective on showing and raising show livestock may be negative?

Pause for response, discuss, and then show **MS.AI.4.5.TM.A**. Students should write these aspects in their notes.

Utilize the Crayon e-Moment®.

Thank you so much for sharing! That is a great example of how showing livestock can have a negative effect on the public image and also the animals. Here are a few more examples. Make sure to capture these in your notes. Be sure to highlight or underline key words that will help us remember the bullet points.

Negative aspects of showing livestock:

- Holding feed/water to make weight
- Constant stress of hauling animals to new locations/heat stress
- Using drench gun – most animals will show their dislike for this process
- Severe cases include physically altering animals such as removing a rib in market lambs etc.

What other negative aspects are there?

Pause for response.

Those are some excellent examples you all came up with. Now let's take a look at the other side of the spectrum, because we all know there are two sides to every story. Who will share some positives of showing livestock?

Pause for response, discuss, and then show **MS.AI.4.5.TM.B** to show other possibilities. Students should write these aspects in their notes.

That is a great example. Thank you for sharing! Many of us are very aware of the many positives that come from showing livestock and we hold it near and dear to our hearts. Here are some common examples for you to have in your notes.



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Positive aspects of showing livestock:

- Show animals are fed the highest quality feed available. In many cases it's more expensive, specific, and better balanced than the diet of the owner feeding the animal.
- Constant care and attention – show animals are worked with multiple times per day.
- Climate controlled environment – kept in air-conditioned or well-ventilated barns, VERY clean.
- Great method to teach responsibility, healthy competition, and how to keep up with industry wants/needs. For example, the cattle of 1950 are very different from the cattle of today.

With both of these situations in mind, how can we manage the public image of animal agriculture? If you raise an animal do you want it to be unhappy or unhealthy? Why not?

Lead students to understand the goal of raising livestock is to make a profit. If your animal is unhealthy, it will not grow, therefore resulting in decreased profit for you. If your animal is unhappy or leads a very stressful life, it will most likely not eat, once again decreasing your chance to profit. The moral of the story is that the better you treat your animal (animal welfare) the more money you can make.

Exactly! If your animal is not healthy, happy, and well treated, you will not make any money. If the animal is sick you do what you can to make it happy. You provide your animal with the most comfortable living space possible. In some cases people have barns that are cleaner and more extravagant than the houses they live in. In many situations, show animals "live the life."

Review/Summary

As we stop to think about what we've learned today, you will have the opportunity to create a 30-second commercial. This will not be any ordinary commercial. Your goal is to use your short time period to project how showing livestock can have a positive impact on the agriculture industry, most specifically **animal welfare**.

Provide students with **MS.AI.4.5.ASSESS.A** and discuss how their commercial will be evaluated. Break students into groups of three or four depending upon class size, and give them five minutes to create their commercial. Be sure they are ready to present their commercials to the class.

Here you will find the rubric I will be using to evaluate your commercials. Take the next 30 seconds to read the criteria for a perfect advertisement. What questions are there? When I say COMMERCIAL BREAK you will have five minutes to prepare your commercial and get ready to present it to the class. How long do you have? Correct, five minutes. What questions are there? COMMERCIAL BREAK!

As students are working, encourage them to be creative and really reach out to the market that needs to hear this commercial (people not familiar with the positives of livestock shows). As you hear good ideas compliment the groups and tell them you look forward to seeing their final product! Give frequent time updates to keep students on task.

I can't wait to see these commercials! I heard some great ideas as you were planning your commercials. What group will volunteer to go first?

Briefly discuss commercials after each group presents. Be sure to highlight how they showed the positive aspects of showing livestock.

Well done! Great examples!

After sharing, and if time remains, put students into groups of two or three and use the Eye Witness News e-Moment to have them review what they learned today.

As we leave today, let's continue to think about how showing livestock relates to **animal welfare**. If you think of any new examples or questions, jot them down and we will discuss them first thing tomorrow! Thanks for all your hard work today.



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Application

Extended classroom activity:

Show a video of local FFA members exhibiting, fitting, and caring for their show animals. Allow students to read through a county livestock show rule book and discuss rules that have been created for the well-being of animals.

FFA activity:

Host an educational booth at the county fair in conjunction with a community agricultural organization. Focus on teaching small children where their food comes from.

SAE activity:

Tour livestock SAE programs of upper classmen, more specifically those who show livestock, to learn some of their best practices.

Evaluation

MS.AI.4.5.ASSESS.A

Answers to Evaluation

Answers will vary.



Negative aspects of showing livestock:

- **Holding feed/water to make weight**
- **Stress**
- **Clipping, drench gun, etc**
- **Physical alteration**



Positive aspects of showing livestock:

- **Highest quality feed**
- **Constant care and attention (TLC)**
- **Clean, climate-controlled environment**
- **Educational opportunity for young people**



CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Content	Shows a full understanding of the topic.	Shows a good understanding of the topic.	Shows a good understanding of parts of the topic.	Does not seem to understand the topic very well.
Collaboration with Peers	Almost always listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others in the group. Tries to keep people working well together.	Usually listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others in the group. Does not cause "waves" in the group.	Often listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others in the group but sometimes is not a good team member.	Rarely listens to, shares with, and supports the efforts of others in the group. Often is not a good team member.
Speaks Clearly	Speaks clearly and distinctly all (100-95%) the time, and mispronounces no words.	Speaks clearly and distinctly all (100-95%) the time, but mispronounces one word.	Speaks clearly and distinctly most (94-85%) of the time. Mispronounces no more than one word.	Often mumbles or cannot be understood OR mispronounces more than one word



Name _____

Directions: Select the three most important items you learned from today's lesson relating to animal welfare. Describe the three items below using complete sentences.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

