Mason FFA Market Hog Co-Op 2014

**Mission Statement**: The Mason FFA Market Hog Co-Op will provide Mason FFA members with a positive experience in both animal husbandry and entrepreneurship. Co-op members will learn responsibility, teamwork, communication and record keeping skills.

**Daily Chores**

AM chores must be completed before 9:00 am. Afternoon chores should be completed a minimum of 8 hours after morning chores. The closer chore times are to 12 hours apart the better. They are relying on you!!! So are your other co-op members!!! Please be respectful of others and the opportunity provided to you by fulfilling your responsibilities.

**Feed Program**

All market hogs will start on a full feed diet. It is important that fresh feed and water is always available for optimal growth. As pigs gain weight and mature their feed ration will change.

As we get closer to fair we will most likely need to separate animals into different pens and provide them more specialized feeding based on their weights. Some animals will need limited feed others will need to continue with high protein and energy feeds to achieve minimum market weight of 220 pounds. Maximum market weight this year is 290 pounds. All animals too light or too heavy will be shipped from the fairgrounds to market the Sunday of load in.

Please make sure you are knowledgeable and up to date on current feeding practices. I will communicate through Remind 101 and our chapter webpage www.masonffa.weebly.com.

**Exercise**

Market hogs must be walked at least three times per week. They should be walked 20 minutes each time. The exercise is important for lean weight gain, practicing your showmanship skills and overall health, especially their feet and legs.

**Weighing Pigs**

Hogs need to be weighed at least once a week. Each member will be responsible for weighing their hogs and recording their weight once each week on Mondays. There will be a master record sheet that will stay in the barn. There will be a second sheet to fill out so I can monitor growth in a computer data base. This should be done as a whole group. Accurate weights on regular intervals are critical to evaluate growth, performance and overall health of your animals. I am also exploring a google document that members will be able to fill out. The google doc or the excel document of current weights will be posted on our chapter webpage.

**Member Communication**

Communication among co-op members and to the advisor is critical for success. Each pen will have a clipboard with a sheet to record data daily. Additional observations should be written down as well. Failure to complete this task will be considered failure to do chores.

It is just as important to review previous member’s notes of chores they have completed when you are doing your chores to check for any updates or concerns.

It is also important to note any activities you complete with your lambs or to the pen on your off days, including information about exercising your animals.

In addition to the communication on barn sheets, members, will for the first time be required to take a picture of the pen and the sign in sheet and send me a text message with those images and a quick note that chores have been completed immediately following completion of chores.

Please contact and work with other members of the co-op with any chore conflicts. Text me the solutions you have worked out with other co-op members.

**Fair**

All co-op members agree to show their market hogs at the Ingham County Fair and complete all responsibilities that go along with that activity. Pen set-up, decoration set up, taking pigs to the fairgrounds, chores morning and night every day throughout fair week, pen tear down and barn clean out.

All co-op members also agree to work a minimum of 2 - four hour shifts at the Circle of Life exhibit.

**Financial**

All animals financed by the Mason FFA Chapter will remain in the Mason Agriscience Barn through the completion of the project. Financial responsibility, ultimately, belongs to the members of the co-op and is shared equally among the members. The FFA chapter will front the money for the project through its’ entirety. The Mason FFA will secure project costs from fair checks prior to members receiving their profits to simplify that process for members and protect our FFA chapter finances. New! Members who profit above $250 dollars will be accessed a $25 equipment fee. Members who profit less than $250 will be accessed a 10% equipment fee.

**Record Keeping**

Members are required to keep up to date records in their AET account to be turned in the day of pen decorating at the fair for me to trailer your livestock to the fair. A computer data base can be an excellent tool for tracking efficiency factors such as daily gain and feed conversion as well.

**Soliciting Buyers - Marketing**

All members are required to send a minimum of fifteen buyer letters. Members are required to visit and talk in person with at least five potential buyers (can be part of the fifteen).

**Consequences**

Consequences for not fulfilling your commitment will be natural in some regards. In addition to the natural consequences for not doing chores or failing to do them adequately will result in a $5 fine each time. That can add up fast! Make sure you do your job and do it well.

Incomplete records will result in a $5 fine as well.

Remember, as with everything in life, you will only get out of this experience what you put into it. I know you all can do it and I look forward to great success working with you on this project!

**Pork Quality Assurance (PQA)**

 All swine exhibitors must be current with their PQA certification. PQA training is Apr 14, 6:15 pm, Fairgrounds - RSVP to the 4-H Office at 676-7207.

**Hair follicle submission cards** are due to the 4-H office by Thursday May 15th.Mason FFA Market Hog Co-Op Contract

The Mason FFA Chapter will…

1. Provide Market Hogs
2. Provide Proper Feed Ration
3. Provide Bedding Material
4. Provide Guidance to Members Throughout Project

Members of the Co-Op will…

1. Complete Chores as described above before 9:00 am and between 4:00 and 7:00 pm each evening
2. Text Mr. Barnum image of pen and information on chore sheet immediately after completion of chores
3. Exercise my animals a minimum of three times a week.
4. Maintain an accurate record book for the project
5. Communicate with other co-op members and Mr. Barnum
6. Participate in group activities for the project such as weighing hogs, setting up, taking down and cleaning equipment and showmanship workouts
7. Show their market hogs from the project at the 2014 Ingham County Fair
8. Provide a $50 dollar deposit to participate in the project

All costs incurred for the project will be divided per member of the co-op. Those costs will be taken directly out of the member’s fair checks.

Any breach in contract by the part of the member may result in removal of the member from the co-op. Animals will be sold at market. All costs beyond those recovered from the sale of livestock at market is the responsibility of the co-op member in breach of the contract.

This contract is here by agreed upon on this \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (month) 2014

between (FFA member) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and the Mason FFA chapter.

I have read the above contract and agree to its terms.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 FFA Member Advisor

As a parent I agree to assist in the supervision of this project. I will help to insure that animals are fed on time and cared for on each co-op chore day.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Parent Signature