

# **“Marketing” Your Project**

## ***Successful Ways to Network for a Buyer***

### **DO...**

- Take the time to write a well constructed letter. The example letter took 1½ hours with many proofs and edits. Refer to your dictionary or thesaurus for correct spelling and alternate word usage. The effort will be apparent in the content of your letter and will greatly influence the recipient.
  - Keep your project description neutral. Avoid naming your project and telling sentimental anecdotes. No potential buyer will want “Apple Blossom who loves to eat apples from my hand,” as sausage on their breakfast table. Remember, some members of our community do not understand the purpose of your project.
  - Provide information on what you have learned, how this knowledge benefits you, etc. People are always willing to help those who are responsible and hardworking.
  - Explain how your buyers support will benefit you financially through education, continued projects or employment opportunities. Refrain from just saying “I’ll saving for a truck.”
- \* Keep the tone of your letter positive and upbeat, along with being informative. Avoid using words that convey a negative meaning such as; maybe you will or if you could, etc.
- Consider a Marketing Item that you can send along with your letter. A photo postcard with fun facts/story on the back, name badges for them to wear at Auction – “Jane Doe’s #1 Buyer, lapel button – “I support John Smith & FFA”, to name a few. Think of an item that will make an impression on your potential buyer. Also, if they wear or bring the item to fair, you will be able to identify them prior to the auction.
  - Follow-up on the letters you send. A postcard updating your buyer on the progress of your project or an in-person visit goes a long way in forming a connection with your potential buyer. If you visit in-person take a “Marketing” or “Thank You” item.
  - Remember to convey confidence when speaking with your potential buyer. Stand up straight, smile, speak clearly, maintain eye contact and express your enthusiasm about your project. Shake hands and thank the person for taking the time to meet with you.
  - Ask for help when needed. You have a large support system; parents, friends, fair associates, and program leaders who are willing to advise and encourage you. You have our support, so do not hesitate to ask for our assistance.
  - Have fun! This is your project and your fair, make it the very best!

# Securing Your Buyer

## September

1. Send out your first buyer letters. (Call to confirm mailing address)
2. Call after a few weeks with a gentle reminder. (Did they receive your letter?)

## October

1. Send a follow-up letter discussing how you are raising your project. How much feed, exercise, pounds gained, etc.
2. Send a picture from the day you first brought home your project.

## November

1. Call and request a meeting with the buyer.
2. Bring a picture of your project with you working your project **NOT** hugging or kissing your project.
3. Discuss what you are learning by having your project. (responsibility, record keeping, marketing, animal husbandry, etc)
4. Send in a copy of your buyer letter with addresses to the fair office.

## December

1. Call, send letter, or visit again discussing the different ways that they can buy your project or help you make a profit on your project. Discuss what price you will need for your break-even point.

## January

1. Secure your buyer. Meet with them again to confirm that they are going to buy your project.
2. When you visit with the buyer, bring your record book (in progress) showing what you have put into the project.

## February

1. Give a Thank You Buyer Basket to your buyer in the sale ring.
2. Send a follow-up thank you letter to the buyer.
3. Send a copy of your Thank you letter to the fair

Date

Your Name

Address

City, State, Zip Code

e-mail

Buyer Name

Address

City, State, Zip Code

Re: 2011 4H/FFA Swine/Steer Project

Dear Buyer Name,

My name is [XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX](#), I am a [XXXXXXXX](#) at [XXXXXX High School](#) and have participated in the [4H/FFA](#) program for [XX](#) years. This year, I am again involved in raising a project for the Martin County Fair. I began my project by acquiring my [swine/steer](#) at approximately [xx weeks/months](#) old in October. Since then I have been providing proper nutrition, housing, practicing proper sanitary guidelines and administer medications as required. My goal is to have a finished marketable animal that will meet the industry standards.

During fair week, I am given the opportunity to show my animal for judging. This judging process tells me how well I have completed my project. I also have the opportunity to participate in a showmanship event to exhibit how much I have learned during my project. The week concludes with an auction night where I will sell my market animal to an invited buyer. [The monies I receive from this sale are then applied to next year's animal project with the remainder of the monies going into a college fund account.](#)

I am asking you to consideration buying my [4H/FFA project](#) during the auction at the Martin County Fair & Youth Livestock Show. You also may join with others to form a buyers group or consider an add-on in any dollar amount to my project. As a buyer or buyers group you will receive a detailed Buyers Packet and an invitation to the Buyers Social prior to the auction. All money spent at the auction is tax deductible.

Thank you for this opportunity to introduce myself and tell you about my 2011 [4H/FFA](#) project. Your time and attention is greatly appreciated. I look forward to meeting you at the fair.

Sincerely,

*Signature*

Your Name Typed