



# Showing Your Pet in 4-H



## EXTENSION

Showing your pet at the fair can be a fun and rewarding experience. Lots of county fairs offer you the opportunity to show your pet from fish to hamsters to birds. There are just a few things you want to think about prior to showing to make the experience enjoyable.

In general, you will be judged on a combination of your pet's overall appearance, your pet's housing, the quality of care you provide, and your knowledge of the animal. Check with your County Extension Office for specific guidelines.

### ***Preparing for the show depends on the pet you have, but here are a few tips.***

1. Take your pet to the veterinarian
  - A rabies vaccination is required for ferrets
2. Check for external and internal parasites
  - Animals can't be shown if they have any parasite present
4. Learn more about your pet
  - Where is it from originally? What does it eat naturally? What is the best way to care for it?
3. Prepare your presentation
  - Start on this a few weeks before the fair
  - Practice handling your pet so its comfortable
5. Have your parents or friends ask you questions about your pet to prepare for answering the judge's questions
6. Handle your pet at least 2-3 times per week
7. Clean your pet's enclosure regularly, but make sure to tidy it up before you attend the show
8. Trim toenails or wings if needed

### ***What to bring to the show:***

1. Your pet
2. Travel cage or it's normal enclosure
  - If you need to bring a travel cage, bring along some pictures of it's normal habitat to share with the judge.
1. Food and water to show judge how you care for pet
2. Toys or other enrichment
3. Cage cover
4. Other supplies you use with your pet

### ***Many fairs will ask you to give a short presentation about your pet. Here are some ideas about what to include:***

1. Your name and age
2. Pet's name, species, age, and coloring
3. Where does your pet come from? What are some characteristics of its natural environment?
4. Discuss your pet's overall appearance and health
5. How you care for your pet
6. How often and how do you clean its cage
7. What health treatments your pet gets
8. What your pet eats and how much
9. How often do you groom it
10. How did you prepare for show
11. Something special about your pet

You are also judged on the appearance of your pet's enclosure and your own personal appearance. Make sure you are neat and tidy!

### ***What to wear:***

- White long sleeve shirt with 4-H emblem, tucked in
- At the state fair, official State Fair 4-H T-shirt provided
- Long pants (dark blue jeans)
- Closed toed shoes



Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

The 4-H Youth Development program abides with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.