



**ANIMAL SCIENCE**

# STEAK SCIENCE

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA

YOUTH MEAT SCIENCE CURRICULUM  
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## EXTENSION Farm to Fork Careers

**Quick Overview:** The process of getting meat from the farm to the table is extensive and requires the work of many people. In this lesson, students will learn about job opportunities in the meat industry.

### Materials Needed:

- Flip Chart
- Markers

### Directions:

- Step 1: Have students draw out the steps that it takes to get meat from the farm to their table (simplest outline: farm-packing plant-grocery store-steak, could add in shipping, further processing, etc).
- Step 2: Once the base has been drawn, have them add in what people/careers are necessary to help at every stage of production.
- Step 3: Talk as a group about the steps that the product takes to get from the farm to their table.
- Step 4: Discuss different careers that support meat production. What careers require an animal science degree? What careers require further education (graduate school, veterinary school, etc.)? What other degrees could you pursue other than animal science to be a part of the industry (Agronomy, business, marketing, engineering, etc. Keep in mind options from 4-year institutions, tech/trade schools, and certification programs).

### The Science:

Meat science is a great career path for students interested in animal science, food production, food safety and more. It is a growing field with unlimited career potential. When you hear the term, “meat scientist” what type of job comes to mind? Do you picture someone in a lab, working with animals, in a packing plant, something else? All these careers can fall within the realm of meat science, and there is so much more!

Below is a list of a few ways to become involved in the meat industry. It is not all-inclusive, but it is a good insight into just how vast the industry is:

- Research and development: Everything that you see in the grocery store that contains meat has been researched. This includes determining the safety of the product, nutritional value, flavor, shelf life and best type of packaging for each product.
- Industry: Packing plants or butcher shops are what most people think of when considering careers in the meat industry. The fact is, they do provide a lot of opportunities. From line workers, management, marketing, and food safety controls, these businesses are incredibly important to the industry and provide thousands of jobs across the country.

### PRIOR TO:

**Delivery Type:** Hands-on or virtually using breakout rooms.

**Prep Work:** If virtual, set up platform for students to collaborate (Google Docs, Jamboard, etc. )

### Discussion Point:

How could your interests, traditionally related to agriculture or not, tie into a career in meat science?



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### The Science Continued:

- **Technology:** The amount of technology and automation within livestock and meat production is incredible. From feeding systems for the live animals, to machines that assist in harvest and fabrication, to the packaging that holds the final product, the technological advancement in the industry is abundant and continually growing. Careers developing and maintaining these technologies are plentiful.
- **Livestock Production and Health:** What happens on the farm is incredibly important in determining the quality of the final product. Sickness, stress, and bruising can all lead to later problems with the carcass. Combine that with genetics, diet and environmental factors, and people with roles in this area can make a huge impact in the meat industry.
- **University Teaching/Extension/Communication:** Universities do a lot of research for the industry and are often funded by industry organizations (US Department of Agriculture/National Cattlemen's Beef Association/NE Beef Council/etc.). This research and other scientific information is distributed to the public through teaching at the university, extension educators and communication professionals with industry groups. Although these positions may not be directly involved with meat production, they are fundamental in helping the industry advance.

The meat industry is vast and growing. No matter your interest or background, there is a place for you!

### 4-H ADAPTATION

**Presentations/Poster:** Students could prepare an oral presentation or poster about the topic promoting agricultural literacy or career development.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will illustrate the path that food takes from farm to table and be able to identify various career paths. Through this lesson, students will learn about options to connect their interests to a career in the meat industry.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

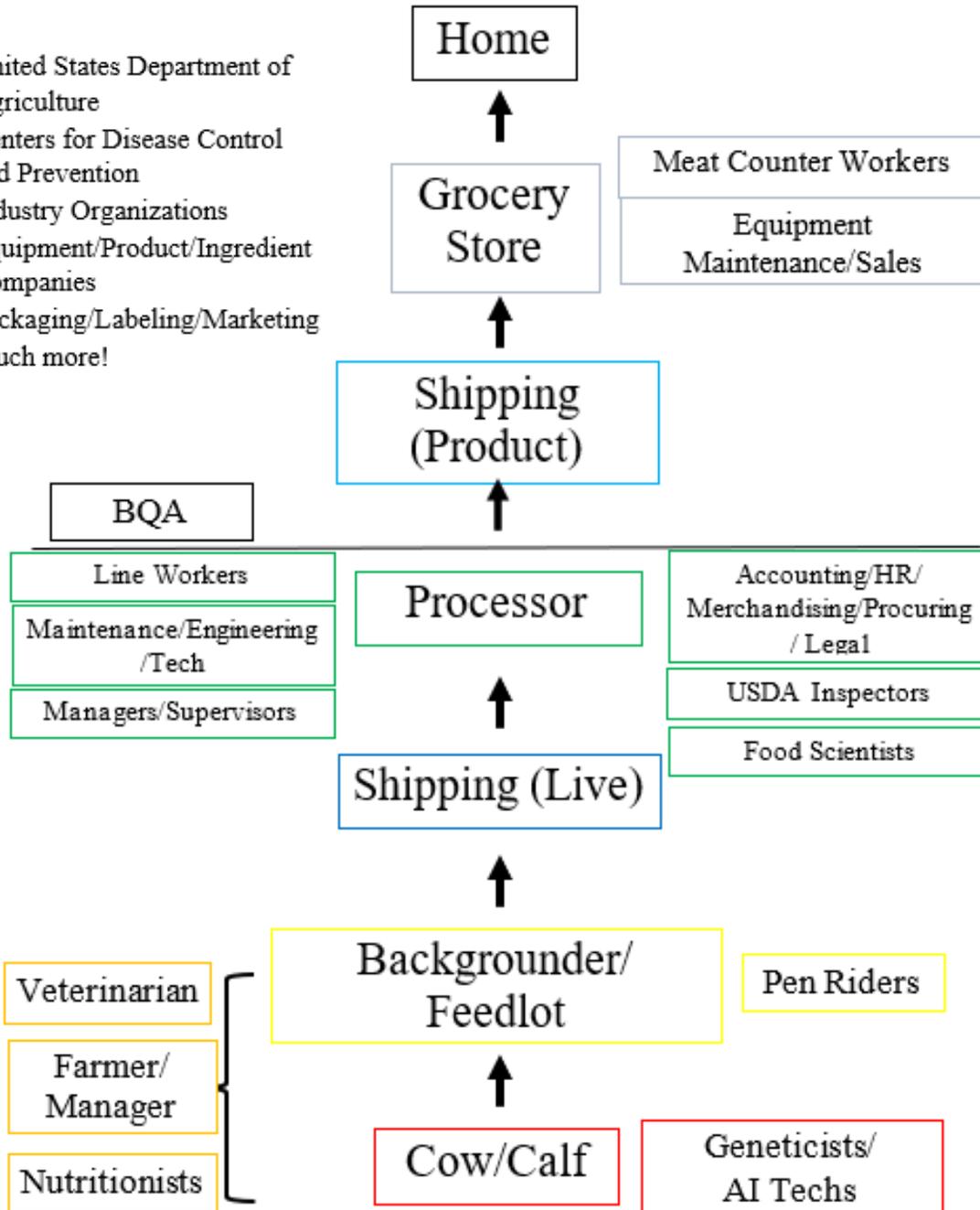
What are the interests of students in the class? Are there ways to tie in their interests into careers in the industry? Ex. Students who like art and design may like a career in marketing (labels, advertising, promotion, industry organizations, etc.). Tie in the interests and skills that they have to help make this lesson more engaging and applicable.



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Others:

- United States Department of Agriculture
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Industry Organizations
- Equipment/Product/Ingredient Companies
- Packaging/Labeling/Marketing
- Much more!



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