

Who Raises and Sells These Animals?

Youth livestock projects, generally raised by 4-H and FFA members, allow youth to have hands-on experience and acquire an understanding of market animal production by preparing for, purchasing, caring for, and keeping records on the animal.

They gain a better understanding of the business aspects and economics of purchasing animals, feeds, facilities, and equipment. These young people learn entrepreneurial skills and become advocates of animal agriculture.

Why should I purchase an animal raised by a local youth?

- Members select high quality animals for their project and maintain that quality until it reaches the finished product.
- Members often complete quality assurance training, ensuring their knowledge and performance of safe production practices.
- As a buyer, you will have control of how your meat is processed, cut, and wrapped.
- By purchasing, you will show pride and support to the local community and its youth.
- Buyers at fair auctions receive publicity for yourself and/or your business.
- You as a buyer have the opportunity to know the person who raised the animal, where it specifically came from, and that it was grown locally.
- The difference between the purchase price and the market value of the animal may be tax deductible if purchased at a fair livestock auction.
- While there may be a small surplus cost, it's worth the extra cost if you consider the benefits to the local youth and local economy. As well as the reassurance of knowing who produced your meat.

Knowing that all the meat comes from one, locally raised animal, knowing that you are helping a young person in your county to remain involved in agriculture, and knowing that you are helping keep farms a part of our county's landscape adds value to your purchase.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if I can't use a whole animal?

A group of friends or co-workers can pool their resources to buy an entire animal and have plenty of meat in the freezer all year round. Sellers may also offer quarter and half animals as well.

How do I get it processed?

The seller will transport animals to the processor that they have an appointment with. At that point, you can select how you would like the product cut and packaged. You will pick up the frozen meat from the processor when it is ready.

How do I purchase an animal?

If planning to purchase from a Livestock Auction at a fair, you should contact the Livestock Auction for details and instructions on how to purchase. When purchasing private treaty, the buyer and seller will negotiate details of the sale and payment.

How much freezer space will an animal take up?

Freezer space required for frozen meat can vary from 25– 35 pounds per cubic foot, depending on how it is wrapped, amount of bone, and shape of the cut.

What can I expect to spend in processing?

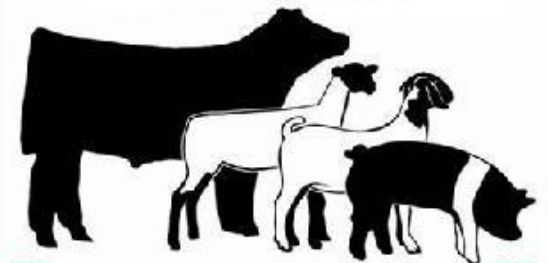
Prices for processing varies by processor and is generally broken down into two parts, slaughter and cut, wrap, and freeze, as well as extras such as smoking, etc. Slaughter costs can range from \$60-100 per animal, depending on the species. Costs to cut, wrap, and freeze, range from 80 cents to \$1.00 per pound hanging weight. Additional services, such as smoking and specialty cuts will add to costs.

****All costs are approximately. Buyers should contact the processor prior to purchase to determine exact processing costs.**

BUY LOCAL EAT LOCAL SUPPORT LOCAL

Purchasing market animals at the local fair or privately from youth is an economical way of filling your freezer with meat for youth family.

A Buyer's Guide to Purchasing from Youth Raising Livestock

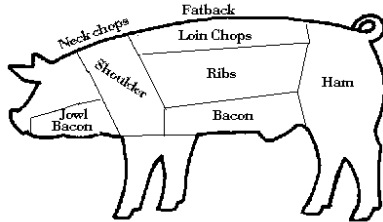


**Eastern Michigan
State Fair Youth
Livestock Auction
July 30th, 2026 1pm**

Thinking of purchasing an animal for meat raised by a local youth or at the livestock auction at your local fair?

Pork (Market Hogs)

Market hogs raised for the local fairs will typically range in weight from 220 lbs to 290 lbs. Most of the market hogs selected for these projects are lean muscular animals which produce higher than average retail cut yields. Approximately 70% of live weight will be carcass hanging weight. After trimming and cutting into meat cuts, you will take home about 80% of the carcass weight in cut and wrapped meat. You will pay price per pound of hanging or live weight to the seller, an average \$60 slaughter fee and \$.80/lb. to cut, wrap and \$1.10/lb. to smoke.



Calculate Your Costs

$$\text{Live weight} \times 70\% = \text{Carcass weight}$$

$$\text{Carcass weight} \times 80\% = \text{Lbs of meat to freezer}$$

$$\text{Live/Carcass wt} \times \$\$ \text{ per lb} = \$\$ \text{ paid to seller}$$

$$\text{Carcass wt} \times \$0.48 + \text{Lbs. meat smoked} \times \$0.56 + \$40 = \text{Processing cost}$$

$$\text{Processing cost} + \text{process cost} \div \text{lbs of meat} = \text{cost per lb}$$

$$\text{cost per lb} \times \text{lbs of meat} = \text{total cost}$$

Average Cost of Pork in U.S. Grocery Stores = \$5/lb. Cost to purchase whole pig in a store would be \$845

Beef (Market Steers/Heifer)

Market steers raised for the local fair will typically range in weight from about 900 to 1,500 pounds. The large weight range in beef steers is mainly due to the different breeds of animals. A 1,400 pound beef will dressed out at 62% carcass weight. After trimming and cutting into meat cuts you will take home about 71% of the carcass weight in wrapped meat, providing about 600 pounds of usable meat for your family. Too much meat for your family? A group of friends or co-workers can pool their resources to buy an entire animal and have plenty of meat in the freezer all year round. Sellers may also offer quarter and half animals as well. Costs include purchase price per lb. of the animal, \$100 slaughter fee and \$.80/lb. to cut and wrap.

Calculate Your Costs

$$\text{Live weight} \times 62\% = \text{Carcass weight}$$

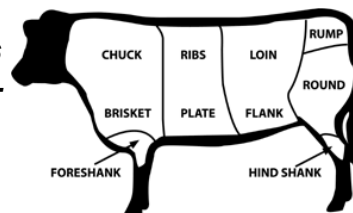
$$\text{Carcass weight} \times 71\% = \text{Lbs of meat to freezer}$$

$$\text{Live/Carcass wt} \times \$\$ \text{ per lb} = \$\$ \text{ paid to seller}$$

$$\text{Carcass wt} \times \$0.50 + \$65 = \text{Processing cost}$$

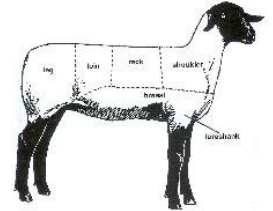
$$\text{Processing cost} + \text{process cost} \div \text{lbs of meat} = \text{cost per lb}$$

Average Cost of Beef in U.S. Grocery Stores = \$7.40/lb. Cost to purchase whole beef in a store would be \$4140



Sheep (Market Lambs)

Market lambs raised for the local fairs typically will range in weight from 90 lbs to 140 lbs. and will provide an approximate 55% carcass weight. After cutting, you will take home about 73% of cut & wrapped meat. You will price per lb. hanging or live weight to seller, a slaughter and processing fee of approximately \$110. Estimates are based on a 120 pound market lamb.



Goats (Market Goats)

Market goats at the local fairs will range in weight from 50 lbs to 100 lbs. Goat meat, often called chevon, is 50-65% less fat than similarly prepared beef with a similar protein content. Note: Goat cuts are the same as the lamb cuts in the diagram above. Estimates are based on a 80 pound market goat.

Calculate Your Costs

$$\text{Live weight} \times 55\% = \text{Carcass weight}$$

$$\text{Carcass weight} \times 73\% = \text{Lbs of meat to freezer}$$

$$\text{Live/Carcass wt} \times \$\$ \text{ per lb} = \$\$ \text{ paid to seller}$$

$$\text{Processing cost} + \$55 \div \text{lbs of meat} = \text{cost per lb}$$

Average Cost of Lamb in U.S. Grocery Stores = \$11/lb. Cost to purchase whole lamb in a store would be \$740

Average Cost of Goat in U.S. Grocery Stores \$10/lb. Cost to purchase whole goat in a store would be \$352