

# IMPACT

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## Judges are trained to judge youth livestock

### The Situation

The judging of youth-owned market animals at the fair is the highlight of the work and efforts of the youth. Livestock judges are hired to evaluate youth projects at fairs. These judges are critical "point people" for agriculture and influence countless leaders and youth. Judges must be knowledgeable about current animal evaluation methods that support the mission of youth development.

The circle of knowledgeable individuals qualified to evaluate in this manner is limited. It is often difficult to find skilled judges, which necessitates the hiring of unqualified or untrained judges, greatly limiting the educational experiences for the youth.

### Our Response

University of Idaho Extension educators teamed with extension personnel in Utah, Colorado, Wyoming and Montana to put on the 2010 Intermountain Livestock Judges' Training. The training was developed to provide livestock enthusiasts current meat animal industry guidelines and up-to-date animal evaluation methods that support the mission of youth development.

The judges' training was intended to provide the opportunity for livestock enthusiasts to increase their livestock evaluation skills. Training attendees included 4-H volunteers, livestock producers, extension educators, vocational agricultural educators and fair board members.

The training goals were to help participants learn the importance of being a positive influence for youth at a livestock show; to identify livestock judging priorities; the importance of implementing carcass characteristics in judging livestock; how to recognize structural differences in livestock evaluation; to gain



A trained judge evaluating youth project animals.

the skills to train other livestock enthusiasts; and develop a list of trained judges from the geographic region.

### Program Outcomes

Training participants completed a survey at the conclusion of the 2010 training:

- 94% indicated they learned the importance of their role as the livestock judge in being a positive influence for youth
- 97% indicated they learned how to deal with youth and parents as a judge
- 94% indicated they learned how to identify livestock judging priorities
- 100% indicated they learned the importance of implementing carcass characteristics in judging livestock

- 100% indicated they learned how to recognize structural differences in livestock evaluation
- 86% indicated they gained the skills to train other livestock judging enthusiasts

Participants who attended the training were surveyed to determine the number of shows they had judged in 2009. Results indicated that participants judged 76 county fairs, 36 state shows and 8 national shows in 14 states. Those results show that the training appealed to qualified livestock judges as a way to keep their judging skills current with the industry.

A list of qualified participants who indicated their willingness to judge youth shows has been developed. The list has been distributed to participating states and added to the Idaho Judges' list posted on the Idaho 4-H webpage.

#### **The Future**

A judges' training has been planned for 2011 to accommodate potential judges in other geographic areas. A survey of all participants will be conducted to determine further training impacts.

#### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

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