Cavy
4-H Project Newsletter

CANADA
4-H Nova Scotia

This Cavy Project Newsletter contains information specific to the Cavy Project. Please use it in conjunction with the General 4-H Information Bulletin, so that you are aware of Achievement Day completion requirements as well as general opportunities and information pertaining to all 4-H members. This Project Newsletter, as well as the General 4-H Information Bulletin, will be updated each year, if necessary, based on changes made at the 4-H Nova Scotia Leadership Forum.

Welcome to the 4-H Cavy Project! This newsletter will give you an overview of the Cavy project, answer some of your questions concerning expectations of the project and provide you with project ideas and some resources. Project newsletters are an excellent reference to keep on hand to refer to throughout the year. Enjoy your year in the Cavy project and when working on your project, remember to "Learn to do by Doing." If you have any questions, please contact your Regional Program Coordinator (RPC).

Project Work Requirements

Showmanship is the project work requirement for the Cavy Project. On Achievement Day, Cavy members must complete showmanship with their own 4-H registered animal to complete the project work requirement. Please note the dress code for all Cavy showmanship and conformation classes is a white lab coat or white pants and a white long-sleeved shirt. Hard soled boots are encouraged for member's safety. Members can wear sun-safety hats when showing livestock in an outdoor area.The dress code will be enforced at 4-H Nova Scotia shows.

Livestock Registration

4-H members must select their 4-H animals by May 1st of the current 4-H year and must submit livestock registration information to 4-H Nova Scotia by May 15th of the current 4-H year. Livestock Registration will only be accepted through the online Livestock Registration Form; if you need assistance with this form, please contact your RPC directly. Information in this form is necessary to assist with county show/exhibition planning, including judges, class schedules, awards, etc. The following information must be submitted for Livestock Registration requirements: name of member, junior member/senior member, conformation class entered, sex of animal, breed of animal, and date of birth of animal.

4-H animals may be substituted between the registration deadline of May 15th and Achievement Day in the case of injury, sickness, disease or death of the animal. If an animal is to be substituted prior to Achievement Day, pre-approval from their RPC is necessary. A vet certificate may be required. After Achievement Day, no substitutions are permitted. 4-H members who complete their livestock project with their own registered/approved animal on Achievement Day may use another 4-H member's 4-H animal in a showmanship class at county show/exhibition and the 4-H Nova Scotia Provincial Show.

Conformation Classes

Although conformation is not an Achievement Day requirement, livestock conformation classes are held at county level competitions and 4-H Nova Scotia Provincial Show. Cavy Conformation classes are divided based on sex and age of cavy. Members may exhibit a maximum of 3 sections per 4-H year.

Class 38: Cavy

Section 1:	Junior Sow	Female, born January 1, current year, to April 1 current year.
Section 2:	Senior Sow	Female, born before January 1, current year. *(previous calendar year or earlier)*
Section 3:	Junior Boar	Male, born January 1, current year, to April 1 current year.
Section 4:	Senior Boar	Male, born before January 1, current year. *(previous calendar year or earlier)*
Section 5:	Pet Cavy	

The Top Cavy in each section will be eligible to attend the 4-H Nova Scotia Provincial Show (Top Section 1 - Junior Sow; Top Section 2 - Senior Sow; Top Section 3 - Junior Boar; Top Section 4 - Senior Boar; Top Section 5 - Pet). Champion Cavy (Sow or Boar) will be awarded.

Conformation classes will be judged according to the Standard of Perfection.

There are 13 breeds of Cavy currently. Breeds available are Abyssinian (rosettes); Abyssinian Satin; American Smooth; American Satin; Coronet (long hair with a crest); Peruvian (long hair); Peruvian Satin (long hair); Silkie (long hair); Silkie Satin (long hair); Teddy; Teddy Satin; Texel; White Crested (sometimes called American Crested). All breeds of cavy will show in the same class, the class will be divided according to sex (boar or sow) and according to age (junior or senior).

American Rabbit Breeders Association (ARBA) Standards of Perfection Book
The Standards of Perfection book is a great resource containing the detailed standards for each breed of cavy. There is a copy available from each 4-H office for reference, and if you'd like to purchase a copy for yourself or your club, you can visit www.arba.net.

Section 5: Pet Cavy (Doe or Buck) – Born prior to April 10th the current year.
The Pet Cavy Category is for cavy members who have a cavy that is not eligible for competition in Sections 1-4. Cavies that may be disqualified because of the ARBA guidelines may be exhibited in the Pet Category. This includes cavies that are not purebred or have been spayed or neutered. Cavies exhibited in the Pet Category must be born prior to April 10 of the current year. Members may only enter one (1) cavy in the Pet Category per year. There will be only one (1) Pet Category Class; bucks and does will be judged together. Members can take a Pet Cavy as a 4-H Cavy Project beyond the first year.

Cavy in the Pet Category will be judged on:

- Condition – Overall body and fur condition including cleanliness.
- Health – Good overall health, alertness, showing no signs of ailments.
- Behaviour/Temperament – Calm, showing no signs of aggression.
- Cavy in this category will not be judged per ARBA disqualifications.

Cage Guidelines/Sizes
Please read this section carefully. The perfect cage should:

- Minimum size for one cavy/guinea pig is 4 square feet and 18" high. Cages should be 60 x 60 x 45.5 cm (24" x 24" x 18") high;
- Be structurally sound and in good repair (i.e. No sharp edges or abrasive surfaces in contact with the animal);
- Allow freedom of movement;
- Be escape proof;
- Allow food and water to be provided so that spillage is not a problem;
- Be easy to clean;
- Allow adequate view of the animal both for exhibit purposes and for general observation to

prevent problems;

- Try to keep cage out of direct sunlight; Floor surface is recommended to be solid to prevent foot injuries, and that the floor be moisture resistant;
- Protect cavy from drafts and dampness.

Note: Cages should not be stacked without water tight pans between them. 4-H Nova Scotia requires that all cages have waterproof pans at 4-H Nova Scotia Provincial Show.

Project Meeting Ideas:

- Identify common breed characteristics
- Learn the history and facts about cavies
- Learn the nutritional needs of the cavy
- Learn about diseases and illnesses affecting cavies and prevention
- Learn the Standard of Perfection, and how to judge and give reasons
- Take in a local show
- Visit a vet clinic
- Have a showmanship clinic and invite a local breeder to present

Contagious/Infectious Disease & Quarantine:

4-H members, leaders, parents and livestock owners are reminded that 4-H achievement days and shows are showcases for the 4-H program, and the agricultural industry in this province. They are reminded that infectious diseases can be transmitted during transport, as well as at the show. As such, it is strongly recommended for the protection of the public, participants, and the animals at the show, that animals having or showing signs of infectious diseases not be brought to shows. As well, livestock exhibitors and owners must understand that in attending 4-H Shows, there is a risk of their animal contracting disease regardless of the best efforts of all involved.

If you suspect that your animal has a contagious/infectious disease, please contact your local veterinarian immediately and learn more about the consequences, treatment, and transmission of the disease.

The brochure, "Fact Sheet: Animal Health and Safety Best Practices" are available. If you wish to receive a copy by mail or email, please contact your Regional Program Coordinator. It contains important information for all livestock members on this topic and will be critical to review with 4-H Clubs, livestock owners, and your local veterinarian when making decisions about attending 4-H Achievement Days and shows.

Livestock Insurance

4-H Insurance does not cover project animals. Insurance coverage for animal liability, injury or death is the animal owner's responsibility.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Activity Involving Animals</th></tr>
<tr><td>Involving Animals refers to activities in which members are working directly with animals or in a location with animals.

(Examples: Livestock members training, fitting and showing, clubs hosting livestock shows or petting farms, groups visiting fairs, farm tours.)</td><td>High-risk Activity
The nature of the activity or the presence of hazards pose a foreseeable risk of harm, illness, or injury to participants.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Risk Management Strategies
Safety information and recommendations contained in this safety checklist are believed to reflect best practice to reduce risk. The suggested risk management strategies are considered minimum standards for livestock handling.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Training and Preparation
☐ All youth members and their parents/guardians are informed of potential risks involved in the activity, as well as the safety rules and procedures.
☐ Instruction on safety precautions is received from a trained leader or an experienced instructor who is capable of demonstrating the skills and safety precautions.</td></tr>
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- ☐ Animal behavior and handling techniques are reviewed by a trained leader or an experienced instructor who is capable of explaining animal behavior and handling techniques.
- ☐ All sessions are conducted in a safe environment.
- ☐ Safety rules and procedures are learned prior to participation.
- ☐ Skills/movements are learned in proper progression.
- ☐ All youth members and their parents/guardians are informed of the equipment/clothing required for the activity.
- ☐ Emergency contact and medical information for all participants will be on hand throughout the event, as well as dedicated phones for emergencies.
- ☐ A first aid kit will be available.

Supervision

- ☐ Adheres to Youth Safety Supervision Policy, Rule of Two and Supervision Ratios.
- ☐ Safety rules and procedures are enforced throughout the activity.
- ☐ Emergency action plan is in place to deal with accidents/injuries.

Facility

- ☐ Respect biosecurity protocols of the facility.
- ☐ Ensure activity area is free of hazards/debris.
- ☐ Proper lighting and ventilation, when applicable.
- ☐ Safety rules/regulations are posted/reviewed prior to the activity.
- ☐ Indoor facility has a clearly marked emergency exit.
- ☐ Animals should be worked with in an enclosed space, with proper safety exits, such as an arena or pen to prevent animals from getting loose.
- ☐ When in a public venue, use gates and signage to separate the public traffic flow from animal movement.
- ☐ When in a public venue have signage regarding handwashing and touching animals.
- ☐ Animals should be safely and securely tied or caged when not being handled according to animal welfare standards to keep animals and people safe.
- ☐ Animals should have access to food and water according to animal welfare standards.
- ☐ Handwashing stations to be available for members and the public after handling animals.

Animals

- ❑ Ensure animals are healthy and suitable for use in the activity.
- ❑ Where applicable, follow all animal transportation regulations.
- ❑ Where applicable, ensure animals are tagged properly.
- ❑ Where applicable follow quarantine recommendations after an event.
- ❑ Ensure animal owners are aware of their responsibility to have insurance coverage for their animals, 4-H Canada holds no insurance coverage for animals.

Equipment

- ☐ Equipment to be used is suitable and in good condition.
- ☐ Equipment should be cleaned and sanitized following best practices.
- ☐ Equipment is checked by a qualified person before every session.
- ☐ Halters and collars to be properly fitted to ensure good control and animal comfort.
- ☐ Instructions are given regarding the proper use and maintenance of equipment.
- ☐ Leaders check to ensure that each youth has the required materials prior to participation.
- ☐ Leaders ensure that there is a First aid kit and a designated emergency phone are available

Clothing/Footwear

- ☐ Appropriate and properly fitted footwear is worn. For example, steel toed boots are recommended for large livestock.
- ☐ Appropriate clothing is worn. For example: Helmets are recommended for horseback riding.

Inclusion

- ☐ The activity is suitable to all participating youth member's age, ability, mental condition, and physical condition.