



## Introduction to the NH 4-H Working Steer Project Fact Sheet

The 4-H Working Steer Project allows youth the opportunity to train a pair of steers (castrated males) to work together as a team. Oxen are not a special breed of animal, but simply a working bovine (neutered bull). Technically, an “ox” is a mature individual age four years or more. Prior to reaching maturity they are called “working steers”. A single animal is an ox and the plural is oxen. This project is growing in popularity due to the numerous classes that a youth and their team can participate in.

Some of the classes offered at some NH Fairs include:

*\*Fitting and Showmanship \*Cart Class \*Best Matched \*Best Trained Pair \*Pulling Class*

The working steer project requires a long term commitment, dedication and a strong desire to work consistently and frequently to effectively train teams of steers. Up to eight 4-H members, 12 and older, are selected with their teams to attend the New England Youth Working Steer Competition at the Eastern States Exposition (with one alternate serving as a team assistant). This competition brings together the best young teamsters from throughout the New England area. The selection process is based on the performance by the youth and their team at two out of three qualifying shows: New Hampshire 4-H Working Steer Show, New Boston, NH, Stratham Fair and Cheshire Fair.

Youth must participate in a minimum of two qualifying shows to be eligible for ESE, but may participate in all three if desired. An individual’s two highest scores of the three shows will be combined and averaged to determine their final score.

**Required Participant Age:** 8-18 as of January 1 of the current year (12 and older for ESE)

**Required Animal Age:** 4 - 6 months of age or older

**Recommended Animal Vaccinations:** Steers must be inoculated for rabies at least 30 days and not more than one year prior to the date of the show. New Hampshire steers must originate from non-quarantined tuberculosis negative herds. Steers housed out-of-state require a permit prior to entry and must conform to regulations established by NH for out of state animals entering the state. Shipping fever vaccine also recommended.

**Animal Identification:** Permanent ID – Ear tag (preferred) or legible tattoo

## Forms

**4-H Online Animal Registration or Intent to Show Form:** Must be complete with animal information and all signatures. **Due Date:** May 1<sup>st</sup>

**Lease Form (if applicable):** Lease form must be complete with animal information and all signatures. **Due Date:** May 1<sup>st</sup>

## Policies

**NH 4-H Policy on Replacement Working Steer:** If a 4-H member loses one part of the team or both animals in the team due to death, critical illness, or being deemed unsafe after the approval form deadline of May 1<sup>st</sup> it needs to be verified by a County 4-H staff member and a new Approval Form needs to be submitted for the replacement animal/pair. The member has the choice to do one of the following: the member may replace the unusable half of the team with another animal or the member may choose a new team.

All replacement animals/teams must be approved by the 4-H Working Steer Curriculum Committee. All members are encouraged to list possible alternate teams on their approval forms prior to May 1<sup>st</sup>.

If a 4-H member's animals are unable to be exhibited for any reason (illness, death, etc.) and they have other project animals listed on their approval form that are eligible, then there is never any substitution allowed. They may show the remaining animals on their approval form only.

**Rabies Requirements for NH 4-H Animals:** Upon the recommendation of the New Hampshire State Veterinarian, all mammals shown or exhibited at New Hampshire 4-H events ***including fairs, shows, clinics, 4-H club meetings, county activities day or any other event sponsored by 4-H***, must have a current inoculation for rabies given at least 30 days prior to the event. A licensed veterinarian administered rabies vaccination is recommended. Rabies vaccinations cannot be given to 4-H animals under three months of age AND we require the vaccination be given at least 30 days prior to exhibiting an animal. All 4-H project animals must be at least four months of age by show day to be shown, exhibited or brought to any 4-H event.

Other health requirements vary by species and show. Individual shows and fairs may have additional vaccination and health requirements as recommended by the New Hampshire State Veterinarian's office. Always check the fair book for additional health requirements.

## Resources

- UNH CE 4-H Working Steer Manual:  
[http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource002680\\_Rep3965.pdf](http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource002680_Rep3965.pdf)
- Rural Heritage Ox Paddock: [http://ruralheritage.com/ox\\_paddock/index.htm](http://ruralheritage.com/ox_paddock/index.htm)
- Selecting Oxen: [http://ruralheritage.com/ox\\_paddock/oxselect.htm](http://ruralheritage.com/ox_paddock/oxselect.htm)
- Tiller's International Tools and TechGuides:  
<http://www.tillersinternational.org/farming/tools.html>
- What is an Ox?: [http://ruralheritage.com/ox\\_paddock/ox\\_whatish.htm](http://ruralheritage.com/ox_paddock/ox_whatish.htm)

For more information contact Mary Davis, State 4-H Animal and Agricultural Science Program Coordinator (603)862-2188 or [Mary.Davis@unh.edu](mailto:Mary.Davis@unh.edu)

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