

A LOW COST 4-H ANIMAL PROJECT

NO. G-01

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How many times has a 4-H member been disappointed because he or she could not have an animal project? There could be many reasons for the decision not to have an animal project. Animal cost and expense to maintain the animal are usually at the top of the list. Also, there are space considerations for those that can afford the cost. Finally, there is the risk that the 4-H member may be hurt by a large animal. The ideal solution is a wether goat project. Wether goats are castrated male goats. Wether goats will not have the musky smell associated with buck goats. Wether goats are low cost, easily maintained, and safe 4-H projects.

A wether goat can be purchased for about \$5.00 - \$25.00 depending on age and size. If the wether is more than one month of age, he will not need to be fed milk. Feed for the goat can be obtained at a reasonable cost. Some 4-H members raise their goats on grass clippings. Wether goats may also graze in the back yard if it is large enough. Wether goats are easily maintained, because they only require a small draft-free house and 25 square feet of exercise space. Fencing can be in the form of cattle panels or an electric fence. Wether goats are usually docile and therefore need a good fence to protect them from neighborhood dogs, etc. Wether goats will not purposely or accidentally hurt the 4-H member. Even if the wether goat should accidentally step on the foot of the 4-H member it will not hurt. Properly cared for wether goats will not bunt or ram their handlers. You should not tease your wether goat however or he will fight back in self defense.

When considering a 4-H project, one should remember the wether goat because they are inexpensive, easy to house, and safe to handle.