

What I have learned from raising an animal for the fair

The number one thing I've learned from raising a market animal for the fair is persistence. I raised a market goat for the 2019 Ventura County Fair and I had no idea just how much work a market animal would be. In my market goat project I learned to be persistent, dedicated, and how to work really, really hard. My goat taught me how to keep going even if it was hard and how to be determined to reach my goal even when it seemed impossible.

When I raised my market goat, I learned to never give up even in the hardest situations. I chose my goat because he was the friendliest one of the litter. My mom told me not to choose him, but I did anyway. He was the smallest one of the litter and I still chose him. He came home to our goat pen with two other goats that belonged to the other 4-H'ers in my project. My goat was very sensitive to grain, and became sick because of it. The other goats were less sensitive to the grain and were fine. When my goat got sick he nearly died! We called the vet and she helped him recover. She came twice and told us how to help him over the next few days. She then told us to keep my goat off grain for a week, but the other 4-H'ers wanted their goats to grow. They took their goats to another house to keep them on grain, leaving my goat alone at our house. He soon recovered from his illness but was lonely without the other goats, and would call for them throughout the day. He refused eat his food too, and after losing a lot of weight he needed to eat to gain it back. The only way to get him to eat was to go out in his pen with him and sit with him. For hours each day I would sit in his pen while he ate. Most of the time I would sit on top of his shelter and read a book as he ate. As I

stayed outside with him each day, he began to start gaining weight again. People told us to sell him, or get rid of him because he was so hard to care for and how small he was. My mom and I continued to care for him, and because of all of the extra time and attention we gave him he gained all his weight back and was able to enter the fair!

Before the fair we entered a livestock show. The novice class was huge with about 15 people in it of all ages. I took my goat and entered the novice showmanship class. I ended up winning the first place belt buckle and was overjoyed that my hard work payed off. After the livestock show we went to the 2019 Ventura county fair. My goat was 88 pounds when we entered the fair. He was still separate from the other goats in my project, but was happy to see other goats. Each morning of the fair, I woke up at 6AM and cared for the animals we had at home, then drove to the fair to feed and clean my goat before the fair started. We decided to try and win the small herdsman ship award. Each day of the fair I was in my goat's pen talking to the herdsman ship judges with the other 4-H'ers and walking my goat in between the pens to exercise him. At the end of the week I entered into the goat showmanship. I was confident in what I had learned in the past few months and did my absolute best in the class. I won reserve champion and was featured in the Acorn newspaper! I was thrilled to have won the reserve and after being notified our 4-H project won the small herdsman ship award, I was amazed. I feel that I learned so much from raising my goat. After he got sick I was worried he would die, or he would be too hard to care for. With help from my mom and dad I persisted through and cared for my goat even though it was hard. I didn't give up and succeeded in the end!

By: Kaylee