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4-H Beef Heifer Record

NAME _____ BREED OF YOUR HEIFER _____

BREEDER'S NAME _____ ADDRESS _____

This is a one-year, supplemental record for 4-H'ers working with purebred and commercial beef heifers. When crossbred heifers are used, list the breeds involved beginning with the bull that sired your heifer. This supplemental record should be attached to a copy of *The North Carolina 4-H Plan and Record*.

You should be interested in beef cattle and willing to work hard to complete this project. You do not have to own the heifer that you work with, but you must be responsible for her daily care and training. Keep accurate records using the sample charts included in this publication.

Getting Started

Select a heifer from a healthy herd that is free of bangs and T. B. Ask if your heifer has been vaccinated for blackleg, malignant edema, and other diseases. Discuss the need for vaccinations with your parents, county agent, and veterinarian.

Select a heifer from a performance tested herd if possible. She should have a record in the top half of her group or calf crop. She should be among the oldest in her calf crop. Get her birth date if possible. If this is not available, get the month and year.

Select your heifer from a cow that has produced a good calf every year. She should have a straight top line, a lot of room in her body, legs that are set squarely under each corner, and a lean, clean neck and a head that looks like a heifer. Do not select a short, thick, fat heifer with crooked legs, or one that does not move well when she walks.

Select a heifer with a good disposition. Nervous, spooky heifers make nervous, spooky cows. Prepare a place for her before you bring her home. It is very important that she does not get away from you before you have a chance to get to know each other. Remember that she is in a strange place and is very excited. A small lot, pen, or stable with fresh water, hay, and gentle treatment will help. A pen mate will also help if you have the space and feed. You may want to consider a two-heifer project.

If you plan to show your heifer, start halter breaking her as soon as possible.

Weight Table

The following table from the U. S. Department of Agriculture gives estimates of the weight of your heifer by measuring her heart girth. This measure is the inches around your heifer's body just behind the front legs. You should weigh your heifer at least once a month and record this weight to be sure that she is gaining properly. If you do not have scales, use the following chart to estimate her weight.

<u>Heart Girth in Inches</u>	<u>Weight in Pounds</u>	<u>Heart Girth in Inches</u>	<u>Weight in Pounds</u>	<u>Heart Girth in Inches</u>	<u>Weight in Pounds</u>
46	294	55.5	496	64.5	738
46.5	303	56	508	65	753
47	313	56.5	520	65.5	768
47.5	322	57	533	66	783
48	332	57.5	545	66.5	798
48.5	342	58	558	67	814
49	352	58.5	571	67.5	829
49.5	362	59	585	68	845
50	372	59.5	598	68.5	861
50.5	382	60	611	69	877
51	393	60.5	624	69.5	893
51.5	404	61	637	70	910
52	415	61.5	651	70.5	926
52.5	426	62	665	71	942
53	437	62.5	679	71.5	959
53.5	449	63	693	72	977
54	461	63.5	708	72.5	994
54.5	472	64	723	73	1,011
55	484			73.5	1,029

Heifer Growth Record

Weight	Month											
	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May
800 lbs.												
750 lbs.												
700 lbs.												
650 lbs.												
600 lbs.												
550 lbs.												
500 lbs.												
450 lbs.												
400 lbs.												
350 lbs.												
300 lbs.												

Age of your heifer _____
in months

Make a small "x" on the month line opposite the weight of your heifer at the beginning of each month. For example, if your heifer weighs 325 pounds on June 1, make an "x" halfway between 300 pounds and 350 pounds on the line below June. After a few months, draw a line to connect the "x's." This is a growth chart.

Heifers should be bred when they are 14 months old and reach the proper weight. Angus, Hereford, and Shorthorn heifers should weigh at least 600 pounds. Charolais, Simmental, and other large framed heifers should weigh at least 700 pounds.

Heifer Performance Record

	1	2	3	4
1. Date project began				
2. Heifer number (tattoo, ear tag, etc.)				
3. Birth date				
4. Beginning weight(s) (lbs.)				
5. Shoulder height at beginning (inches)				
6. Date project ended				
7. Final weight(s) (lbs.)				
8. Final shoulder height (inches)				
9. Increase in shoulder height (line 8 - 5)				
10. Total number of days project lasted				
11. Total weight gain (line 7 - line 4)				
12. Average daily gain (line 11 - line 10)				
13. Breeding date				
14. Breed of bull used				
15. Age of heifer in months at breeding				
16. Weight of heifer when bred				
17. Date calves born (if any)				
18. Sex of calves born				
19. Calf number				

Feeding

Feeding is a most important part of your heifer project. If you do not feed your heifer enough of the right kind and quality of feed, she will not grow properly. If you feed her too much grain, she may get too fat to make a good brood cow. Your heifer should gain a maximum of $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds per day. She should get most of her feed from grass-legume pasture or hay.

If your heifer is not gaining 1 - $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds per day, you will have to feed her a 12% protein concentrate. Feeding This at the rate of 1 pound for each 100 pounds of body weight is usually about right. However, the amount of concentrate may need to be adjusted up or down depending on the condition of your heifer. You should consult with your county agent, leader, or parents for advice on feeding rates for your heifer based on her frame size and condition.

The following examples of concentrate are approximately 12% protein:

90 pounds of cracked shelled corn	85 pounds of cracked corn
10 pounds of 44% soybean oil meal	15 pounds of 36% protein supplement
88 pounds of cracked shelled corn	80 pounds of cracked corn
12 pounds of 41% cottonseed oil meal	20 pounds of 32% protein supplement

Monthly Feed Record

On a separate sheet of paper, make a chart similar to the one shown below. List as accurately as possible what you fed your heifer each month and the cost or value of this feed. Salt and minerals should be listed in the month that you bought and started feeding them.

	Acres of Pasture	lbs. Hay	lbs. Silage	lbs. Protein Supplement	lbs. Grain	Salt & Minerals	Vet & Medical	Total
June								
Amount								
Cost								
July								
Amount								
Cost								

Management

Management includes all the things that you did for your heifer. On a separate peice of paper, tell in a few words what you did concerning the following management practices:

1. Identification (tatoo, ear tag, etc.)
2. Disease control (vaccinations and treatments)
3. External parasite control (fly, lice, and grub control)
4. Internal parasite control (worming)
5. Facilities provided (pasture, lot, headgate, chute, shade)
6. Waste disposal (handling manure and bedding)
7. Performance (weights and measures of growth)

Management Calendar

On a separate sheet of paper, list the management practices that you used each month in a few words.

Showing

Showing your heifer can be a lot of fun. You may also win prizes, money, ribbons, and trophies. The most important thing that you get from showing is a chance to compare your heifer with others of the same age and breed. The opportunity to visit and compare experiences with other junior showmen and make new friends is a great part of showing.

More local shows are developing at county fairs and junior livestock shows. Most of these follow the general rules of the North Carolina State Fair Junior Beef Heifer Show held in October of each year. Your county agent has a state fair catalog which will give you information on health requirements, show classifications and premium lists.

Show Record

Date	Show	Placing	Premium

Financial Summary

Financial records are important. Growing and showing a heifer is a lot of fun, but we also hope to make a profit on this project. If you fill out this summary, you will see how well you are doing financially.

Cost

(Number of animals included in the project at the beginning ____)

Value of heifers	\$ _____
Pasture cost (15¢ per head/per day)	_____
Hay	_____
Silage	_____
Grain	_____
Protein supplement	_____
Minerals, vitamins, and salt	_____
Veterinary and medical cost	_____
Transportation	_____
Other _____	_____
Total cost	\$ _____

Income

(Number of animals remaining in the project at the end _____)

Value of heifers \$ _____

Show winnings _____

Other _____

Total income \$ _____

Profit

(Total income - total cost =) \$ _____



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