

# Environment: Caring For My Animal

Scott Nash, Regional Youth Development Educator

## Goal (learning objective)

Youth will learn how bedding material used in the pen can affect animal comfort. Animal comfort affects performance and growth, ultimately influencing meat quality.

## Supplies

- Bowl (metal or plastic) - one for each type of bedding material
- Two quarts of each bedding material: straw, sawdust, woodchips, sand
- One gallon of water
- Colander
- Small fan
- Garbage bag
- Paper towels

## Pre-lesson preparation

- Chill the bowls so they are cold before the activity.

## Lesson directions and outline

Livestock need a place to lie down that is warm and dry during cold weather. When it is hot they need a place that is clean and cool. Have youth discuss ideas on how to keep animals comfortable.

## Conducting the activity (DO)

1. Have youth measure 2 quarts of each bedding item into a chilled bowl. Ask: Which bedding will be the warmest?
2. Have youth hold their hands in each type of bedding for at least one minute. Ask: Which bedding is the warmest?
3. Add 1 quart of water to each bowl of bedding material. Ask: Which bedding will hold the most water?
4. After 5 minutes strain the bedding through a colander. Measure the amount of water drained from each of the bedding materials.
5. Have youth hold the wet bedding material with the fan blowing on their hands for a couple minutes.

## What did we learn? (REFLECT)

- Ask: Which bedding material absorbed (soaked up) the most water? Which would be better to use at the county fair?
- Ask: How did the fan blowing, while holding the cold bedding make you feel? What if it was in the winter?
- Ask: If an animal is cold and shivering, how does that affect growth? What if the animal gets too hot?

## Why is that important? (APPLY)

- Ask: Which bedding would you use? Why?
- Ask: How does this principle of animal bedding apply to how you live?
- Ask: How does this principle apply to how you take care of yourself?
- What can we do to take care of others in the community especially in the winter?

## Resources

- Ohio State University Extension. (2011). Management Practices. *Beef resource handbook* (page 3-1).
- Ohio State University Extension. (2008). Housing Facilities. *Goat resource handbook* (pages 147-149).
- Ohio State University Extension. (1999). *Quality assurance and animal care: youth education program curriculum guide* (Unit 3, level 1).
- Ohio State University Extension. (2011). Management Practices. *Sheep resource handbook for market and breeding projects* (page 21).
- Ohio State University Extension. (2000). Space Requirements for My Market Hog. *Swine resource handbook for market and breeding projects* (pages 11-4, 11-6, and 11-7).