

Housing My Animal

Scott Nash, Regional Youth Development Educator

Goal (learning objective)

Youth will learn that animals are healthier and grow efficiently when they have enough pen space.

Supplies

- Closet or small room with a door containing a small table with snacks and water
- Paper and pencils or colored pencils
- Copies of example pen spaces for cattle, sheep, hogs, or goats
- Measuring tape to measure the dimension of the meeting space

Pre-lesson preparation

- Obtain a copy of the Ohio resource handbook for the species you lead (see references/resources below).
- Study the space requirements for the species.
- Make copies of the suggested pens in the handbook.
- Measure and record the dimensions of the meeting space.

Lesson directions and outline

- Share the following information with the youth:

Animals need shelter, food, water and enough pen space to be able to gain weight and grow.

To help make a correlation between the space needed for animals, our meeting room dimensions are ____ (share room measurement).

Beef cattle need a stall that is from 20 to 40 square feet per animal with 2 feet of feed bunk space per animal. They need a minimum of 200 square feet of outside or dry lot area.

Hogs need a minimum of 8 square feet per animal with at least 5 square feet under roof. When using a self feeder, provide a minimum of 1 space per four pigs. One space per two pigs would be optimum.

Sheep require 6 to 10 square feet per lamb in a barn with up to 1 foot of feed trough space.

Goats need 8 to 12 square feet per animal in the barn with about 1 foot of feed trough space and 20 to 25 square feet of space in an outside lot area.

Provide access to clean water for all animals. It's best if the animals travel to water. Do not put water near feeding or bedding areas. This will help keep the pen cleaner.

Conducting the activity (DO)

1. Designate a small room, bathroom, or closet with a door to represent a small pen.
2. Place three or more youth in the confined space. The room should be crowded. Have them perform regular daily activities: walk around the room, eat, drink, and lie down.
3. After no more than 5 minutes, have the youth come out one at a time. When they are all out, have them discuss with the group how it felt to have so many people in the small space.

Activity 2

1. With paper and pencils have the youth design a pen for the animal they are raising. Ask them to keep in mind that the animal will get bigger as it grows to make the weight requirements for the fair.

What did we learn? (REFLECT)

- Ask: How did you feel when you were in the room? Why did you feel that way?
- Ask: the last person to come out how it felt to be in the room alone.

Why is that important?

- Ask: Why is it important to provide adequate space for your animal? (Ability to exercise, room to lie down in a dry place, and enough room so the animals won't have to compete for food. When animals have to compete for space they expend energy, keeping them from gaining as much weight as possible. They may not gain enough weight to qualify for the fair and be eligible for the sale.)
- Ask: Where is having adequate space important in your own life? Why?

Resources

Ohio State University Extension. (2011). Management Practices. *Beef resource handbook* (pages 3-1 and 3-2).

Ohio State University Extension. (2008). Housing Facilities. *Goat resource handbook* (page 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 11-1 and 11-2).