

Thank You Letters

Steve Harrison, Extension Educator

Goal (learning objective)

Youth will learn how to construct a thank you letter to show appreciation to project supporters.

Supplies

- Small thank you cards (enough for group)
- Blue or black pens
- Copies of Handout 1 - *Thank You Samples* (enough for group)
- Copies of Handout 2 - *Guide to writing thank you notes for 4-H awards and animals sold at auction* (enough for group)
- Meeting space with table and chairs

Pre-lesson preparation

- Review Handout 1 and Handout 2
- Make photocopies of Handout 1 and Handout 2 - enough for group

Lesson directions and outline

Introduction

Each contribution, from the smallest donation to the largest, are gifts that donors (individuals or companies) feel they are able to give.

Receiving a sincere thank-you will go a long way towards making sure the donor includes the 4-H program in their plans for next year's donations. Sponsorship does not just "happen," it is something that donors budget and plan for all year long.

Conducting the activity (DO)

1. Explain to youth the elements of a thank-you letter:
 - Greet the donor
 - Express your gratitude
 - Discuss the use of the donation; say something nice about it and how you will use it
 - Thank the donor again
 - Closing salutation/regards
2. Distribute copies of Handout 1, allow enough time for members to read/review the two samples
3. Ask: Which note would you prefer receiving?
4. Ask: Which individual (Jason or Jeffrey) would be more likely to receive support in the future? Why?
5. Distribute copies of Handout 2, recap the elements of a thank-you letter while going through the handout
6. Have youth write a practice thank-you note

What did we learn? (REFLECT)

- Ask: How do you feel when you receive thanks for something you have given or done?
- Ask: What other ways can you think of to thank others?

Why is that important? (APPLY)

- Ask: Why is it important to write thank-you letters?
- Ask: Where else is giving thanks important in your life? Why?

Resources

- Anderson, E. (n.d.). *Guide to writing thank-you notes for 4-H awards and animals sold at auction*. Oregon State University Extension. Retrieved from: http://oregonstate.edu/dept/kbrec/sites/default/files/documents/4h/How_to_Write_TY.pdf
- Ohio State University Extension. (2011). Marketing. *Beef resource handbook* (pages 10-10 through 10-11).
- Ohio State University Extension. (2008). Preparing Your Animal for Show. *Goat resource handbook* (pages 177-178).
- Ohio State University Extension. (2011). Showing and Selling. *Sheep resource handbook for market and breeding projects* (page 101).
- Ohio State University Extension. (2000). Selling the Project Animal. *Swine resource handbook for market and breeding projects* (pages 13-1 through 13-2)
- Ohio State University Extension. (1999). *Quality Assurance and Animal Care: Youth Education Program Curriculum Guide*. Unit 3, Level 1.
- Wilson, J. (2013). *Writing Stock Sale Buyer Thank you Notes*. University of Idaho Extension. Retrieved from <https://www.uidaho.edu/~media/UIIdaho-Responsive/Files/Extension/county/Kootenai/Writing-Buyer-Thank-You-Notes.ashx>

Marketing: Thank you Letters – Handout 1

Thank You Note Samples

Below are two examples of buyer thank you notes. Carefully compare the content and place yourself in the buyer's position.

August 28, 2013

Dear Mr. Jones,

Thank you for buying my animal. While I didn't get as much as some of the other members, I appreciate your support. I plan to take a market hog again next year.

Jason Clover

August 28, 2013

Dear Mr. Jones,

Thank you very much for buying my market hog at the 4-H Stock Sale. I know that economic times are difficult and appreciate you generously bidding \$1.30/pound which was well above the floor price.

As a result, I have been able to reimburse my parents for the animal purchase and feed costs. I placed the remaining money into savings to help with purchasing next year's project animal, and to help towards my college education.

This year I learned a great deal about responsibility from the daily care and management of my project animal. I really enjoyed learning more about the different amino acids related to swine nutrition.

Thanks again for your wonderful support. I hope to see you again at the 2014 North Idaho Fair. Your ongoing support of our local 4-H members and programs is truly appreciated.

*Sincerely
Jeffrey Clover*

Marketing: Thank you Letters – Handout 2

Guide to writing thank-you notes for 4-H awards and animals sold at auction

- Use stationery or plain note cards and proper postage. Avoid the pre-inscribed 'Thank you!' cards, there are more appropriate choices for this time. Stay away from full-size sheets - note cards are best, as your message will be brief, and would look silly swimming around on a full-size page.
- When you are writing a thank you note, always plan ahead. Be sure the message is clear and that all the information needed is in a logical sequence--you don't want to confuse the reader.
- Use blue or black ink. Colored ink or markers are not the best choices.
- Hand-write the notes, even if your handwriting is not so good. Thank-you notes are traditionally written in cursive, unless the sender is a young writer in which case printing may be a better choice.
- Take the time to write as neatly as possible.
- Keep it short and sweet yet vivid and complete.
- *Think of how you would feel to receive a thank-you note like the one you are sending.*

1. Greet the Giver

- ✓ Dear Mr. Smith,

2. Express Your Gratitude

- ✓ Thank you so much for purchasing my 4-H market hog at the auction.
OR
- ✓ Thank you so much for sponsoring the embroidered jacket for the Best Female Beef.
ETC.

From the smallest donation to the largest, each individual and company gives what they feel they are able to and receiving a sincere thank-you will go a long way towards making sure they include the 4-H program in their plans for next year's donations. Sponsorship does not just "happen," it is something that donors budget and plan for all year long.

3. Discuss Use

- ✓ I plan to start a savings account for college.
OR
- ✓ I will be proud to wear this jacket; I have worked very hard on my beef project.
ETC.

Say something nice about the item and how you will use it. Let's say it's something you actually love and will use a lot - then say so.

Be a little personal. Is this your first year of 4-H or first year in this project? Write something about that. Is this your last year of 4-H and you are heading to college? Write something about that, perhaps telling the donor where you are going to college and what you plan to study, maybe even how 4-H has helped prepare you for your college endeavors.

5. Thanks again

- ✓ Thanks again for attending the auction.
- OR
- ✓ Thanks again for your generous donation.

It's not overkill to say thanks again. So say it.

6. Regards

Simply wrap it up. Use whatever works for you: *Yours Truly, With Thanks, Sincerely, Regards*. Then sign your name and you're done.

Now get it in the mail! Make sure the envelope is properly and neatly addressed to ensure it will be delivered to the recipient.

Adapted from "How to Write a Thank-You Note" by Leslie Harpold and "How to Write a Thank-You Note" on e-How.com.