



## SHOW SOLUTIONS

### The final push: 120 days out from state fair

April 2021

Where should my project be when I'm 120 days away from the state fair? What should I have accomplished? What do I need to be thinking about accomplishing? We asked the experts to answer all of these questions below. Enjoy!

#### Goats — Kelsey Pfeiffer from Pfeiffer Farms

The last 90 to 120 days pre-show with your wether goat project are extremely critical for your potential success or failure in the ring. What separates many winners from their competition is the consistency of their routines, including:

- **Feeding:** Feed Show-Rite Advancer Plus three times per day at the proper amounts and at the same times every day. Normally, a good range is between 2 to 2.5 pounds per day, provided over three feedings. Feed more if your project is behind in terms of its weight or condition and less if you're holding.
- **Daily supplementation:** We like to use 1 ounce of Gut Candy from Stock Show Secrets for improved gastrointestinal performance; 3 ounces of Show-Rite Rite Factor for improved muscle shape and blood flow; and 2 to 3 ounces of Gold Dust from Stock Show Secrets for improved muscle shape and smoothness. Your supplementation needs will vary based on your wether's weaknesses and what flaws you need to hide. Contact a Show-Rite representative to help you determine what your project needs or for recommendations.
- **Exercise:** You will need to exercise your goat appropriately according to your desired flesh, muscle tone and body weight. A general rule of thumb is to exercise two times per week. If your project is chubby, then you may want to exercise four times per week, and if he's skinny, maybe don't exercise him at all. Forward exercise works the full body and helps reduce the size of goats' midsection to give them a more athletic look. Backwards treadmilling works best to shape the loin and the legs.
- **Practice:** It is imperative that you fine-tune each animal to walk and brace correctly in order to exemplify each goat's positive traits — and to hide the negatives. If they don't show well in the ring, you won't have much of a chance of making it to the backdrop.
- **Skin and hair:** Work your goat's hair multiple times per week. I recommend washing and conditioning its body once a week and doing the same with its legs three to four times a week. I like using Weaver Pro-Charge, blowing it dry and leaving it in.
- **General health:** Keep a close eye on your goat's health and well-being, and make sure that you have a program in place for parasite management. Personally, we recommend de-worming and de-licing every three weeks. We also treat for coccidia every six weeks. It's best to work with a veterinarian to get recommendations and directions on these treatments.

These are some of the major factors that will affect your success as your target show approaches. Good luck to each exhibitor from all of us here at Pfeiffer Farms.

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### Sheep — Ty Allen from Allen Show Lambs

- Here's the basic rundown: At 120 days out from a show, we hope to have all of our lambs parasite-free with a worming protocol given to us by our veterinarian so that they are healthy and digesting their feed to the full extent. Showmen should have their lambs halter-broken by this point, and they should also have them standing still and setting legs. It will be much easier on both the lamb and the showman down the road if they are at least at this point in their training at 120 days out. At this age, the lamb is not yet old and stubborn and, therefore, is much more eager to learn. Let's break things down further:
- When you think about where you should be right now from a feeding standpoint, you've first got to make sure that your lamb is on a complete base feed specifically designed to maximize muscle development. We recommend Show-Rite Newco Lamb Feed D22.7. You then need to ask yourself what kind of maturity curve your lamb is projecting. If your lamb is an early-maturing project, then you need to be on a protein supplement — like Show-Rite Star Shine — to keep your show lamb growing without getting too fat. If you realize that your lamb is already too fat, then feed an even higher-protein supplement, such as Show-Rite Sculpt. At 120 days out, the goal should be to burn the fat off of your lamb with Sculpt. Then, once your animal is at an acceptable fat range, move to a lower-protein product like Show-Rite Star Shine, which will be easier on your lamb's gut and will give it another shot at lean growth. More than likely, you will find yourself switching between these two high-protein products all year.
- At this stage of the game, I would generally not be afraid to start a high-protein top-dress designed to add lean muscle shape and intensify definition. For us, that's Show-Rite Rite Tyme. Use it in small amounts, like 1 ounce per head per day. This will help you get a jump on that added mass — and it also helps keep your lamb in tip-top shape from a health and immunity standpoint.
- Now, on the later-maturing lambs that are not getting enough cover over their ribs, we utilize Show-Rite Muscle-In-Motion. When you tear open the bag, it looks like just another protein pellet, but it is significantly higher in fat than others are, so we get the extra bloom that we need. Developing bloom and adequate fat cover is important because this allows us to get an early start on an exercise program and get the added cover that we need to compete at a higher level in the show ring. The goal here is to get these lambs bloomed up with Muscle-In-Motion and then to move the show lambs over to Star Shine and Rite Tyme, where we add more muscle and expression.
- Additionally — and, arguably, most importantly — your show lambs should be provided with fresh water at all times, and give them a handful of good-quality roughage once a day to promote gut health. These factors, as well as a clean and weather-friendly environment, will have your lambs soaring into show season.
- The last thing we evaluate at this stage of the game is exercise. Most show lambs will just be in the starting phase of exercise 120 days out from a show, but we certainly want each lamb to go through the training stage, as it is critical for your exercise program all year long. It does not matter if you use a treadmill or a track; you want to take the time to train the lamb on whatever device you have. If you do have a treadmill, at 120 days out, most lambs are going to just be running backwards on it to increase blood flow and to begin adding that muscle mass that is so hard to deny.
- If you are reading this and thinking, "Well, I don't have a treadmill or track," first, I would encourage you to get one, and secondly, if you can't use either of those options, use what we call reward-based exercise. This is where we take the lamb down the drive or into the pasture and allow them to run back to their pen. Do not forget to supply a reward, like a handful of hay in their pen, so they will run hard and come back every time. A short-duration workout at a high intensity will yield the desired result of exercise, which is muscle!

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### Swine — Doug Albright from Albright Swine Farms and swine specialist with Hubbard Feeds

You have bought your pigs, and you've got them home. The excitement of getting your project has worn off, and thoughts of winning the fair are already in your head. The families that have the most success in the show ring are the ones who have a plan in place to make everything run smoothly. They have a plan for health, daily care and feed already laid out. They have worked with their vet to have antibiotics on hand in case any cough or stool changes occur. A plan for pen cleaning and brushing has been created as well.

Most importantly, successful families have made a feed plan. That plan revolves around keeping development right on track, while not letting the pigs to grow too slow or too fast. One of the most beneficial pieces of advice I can offer is to start recording weekly weights so that a growth pattern can be determined. Are they tracking heavy or light? Do we need to adjust their consumption amounts accordingly? Tracking weights will help you answer those questions.

Understanding whether your pig might need a "hotter" or more "charged up" feed to continue developing muscle will likely be determined by the breeder of the animal. Knowing when to "tone down" a pig will start to become clear at this 120-day mark from show. Having both types of feed on hand will be beneficial so that you can tailor the daily intake of your pig to keep their skeleton in check and their development on course for the next four months.

The basic supplements Fat N' Fluffy and Muscle-In-Motion are always great to have in the feed room. If you decide to go jackpot or your pig needs to increase its energy content or its shape and expression, you can do so with these two products without adjusting the entire diet. These products allow for tweaks to be made much more quickly and effectively. Additional supplements that I think are must-haves as showtime gets closer are Swell and Exhale. These products allow for quick and rapid adjustments to muscle shape and bulk, as well as endurance.

In the end, if you think that preparation is not a big deal 120 days away from the show, you may already be beat. Make sure you have a plan in place to get your project off to a successful start.

### Cattle — Hirschell LeClair from LeClair Cattle Company

The 120-day mark from many of our state fairs is nearly here. As the days get longer and it starts to warm up, it is easy to get sidetracked with sports or fun summer plans — but I cannot stress how important it is to finish strong with your project. While keeping your goals in mind, it is crucial to have a plan for your project going into the final 120 days. Here are some practices and habits that we have developed over the years to help people finish the race strong.

First and foremost, you must be critical of your animal and assess their strengths and weaknesses. This is also a good time to be honest with yourself as an exhibitor and acknowledge the things that you may have let slide or need to improve on. If you have not weighed your calf in a while, now is the time to do so. As a rule of thumb, we try to feed at a rate of 2–3% of the calf's body weight. This initial weight will be your starting point for the summer. If possible, try and continue to weigh your project at least once a month so you can see how they are doing and adjust their ration as needed.

One of the reasons we start heavy-duty show prep 120 days out is so that we can make the necessary adjustments with our calves ahead of time. For example, if the calf is too fat, maybe we need to think about starting to transition him from Throttled Up to Accelerator or Cruiser. If he's tracking way overweight, he may even need to be put on HF. Maybe he's reading really plain down his top and we need to build up some shape with Muscle-In-Motion. Need more depth in its rear rib and flank? Try Rite Fiber. Is your calf too flat in its forerib and middle rib? Get more outward spring and shape with Stretch. I could go on for days about the countless scenarios you could be faced with 120 days away from show, but you won't know these things without weighing him and assessing his strengths and weaknesses — and you dang sure won't be able to correct some of these situations if they aren't discovered soon enough.

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Next, consider your project's skin and hair condition. With the days starting to warm up, you will notice that your calf is beginning to shuck its hair and rub on things. Go ahead and help them get rid of their old hair with a grill brick or shuck comb, avoiding the legs, flank and tailhead areas. For a premium hair coat at state fair time, the animal needs at least 90 days of new growth. To ensure that the calf has plenty of time for regrowth, we like to start the shucking process at around the 120-day mark. We also make sure that every calf has a fresh Relaxlyx tub going into the hair regrowth/finishing process. At our barn, the calves have had more consistent consumption when offered this lick tub, in addition to the added benefit of increased hair growth due to its ability to drop core body temperatures.

Lastly, 120 days out is also when you should start getting into a daily barn routine. Washing, rinsing and working hair are the main focus when barning your calf. Here is an example of our weekly wash/rinse schedule:

- Monday: Soap, condition, blow completely dry, sheen, work sheen in.
- Tuesday: Rinse, blow completely dry, sheen, work sheen in.
- Wednesday: Rinse, blow completely dry, sheen, work sheen in.
- Thursday: Rinse, blow completely dry, sheen, work sheen in.
- Friday: Soap, condition, blow completely dry, sheen, work sheen in.
- Saturday: Rinse, blow completely dry, sheen, work sheen in.
- Sunday: Rinse, blow completely dry, sheen, work sheen in.

Training your calf to stand with ease for 3 to 4 hours each day while doing these tasks will make dressing and showing your calf so much easier in the end, because you have already helped them build up the stamina they need. This is also a good time to incorporate setting your project up every night without a show stick before turning them loose. You will be amazed at how easy it will come on show day if you start doing these two little things now.

This is just a drop in the bucket of everything it takes to make a champion. However, these building blocks are crucial to finishing strong in the final stage of your project. Hopefully, with some T-R-Y and a little luck, we will see you at the backdrop! Best of luck!

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