

IMPACT



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Intermountain Livestock Judges' Training

The Situation

Livestock judges are hired to evaluate youth livestock projects at fairs. These judges influence the direction of agriculture and countless leaders and youth. Judges must be knowledgeable about current animal evaluation methods that support the mission of youth development. The circle of knowledgeable individuals qualified to evaluate in this manner is limited.

Extension personnel in Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming formed a team to develop an educational program to address these challenges. A judges training was needed to provide opportunities for volunteers, livestock producers, extension educators, vocational agricultural educators and livestock enthusiasts to learn to make the show ring experience an educational event for all stakeholders.

Our Response

The team developed a training to educate and certify potential judges on how to use current, innovative animal evaluation methods that support the mission of youth development. Planned outcomes are as follows:

- Participants will learn the mission, role and responsibility of being a judge at youth livestock shows.
- Participants will increase their knowledge regarding the terminology related to youth livestock programs.

- Participants will learn how to interact with youth and parents to make the show ring experience an educational and logical event.
- Participants will be educated about evaluating animals in all livestock programs.
- Participants will be able to inform citizens of the evaluation methods available thereby reducing the amount of conflict when innovative evaluations tools are used in local youth livestock programs.
- Participants will gain an understanding of how to use a variety of judging systems.

Topics covered in the training included, live animal and carcass evaluation, terminology, oral reasons, showmanship, market and breeding livestock judging, multiple judging systems, and ultrasound technology. The program informed participants about the components and systems of livestock judging. During the training course, participants gained "hands-on" experience evaluating a class of four animals of each species using traditional judging methods. Animals were harvested and carcasses were viewed. This allowed participants to compare live animals to carcass measurements. These animals were videotaped live and used for a more in-depth comparison after harvest. Participants evaluated three more classes of each species using traditional judging methods, the Systems Approach method, ultrasound evaluation and performance information.

Program Outcomes

The training educated 45 participants from Idaho, Utah, Wyoming, and Colorado on how to use current, innovative animal evaluation methods to support the mission of youth development. Training outcomes are as follows:

- 95% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they learned the mission, role and responsibility of being a judge at youth livestock shows.
- 70% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they increased their knowledge regarding the terminology related to youth livestock programs.
- 100% of participants attended an hour-long workshop on learning how to interact with youth and parents to make the show ring experience an educational and logical event.
- Participants will be qualified to evaluate animals in all livestock programs.
- 95% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that they would be able to inform citizens of the evaluation methods available thereby reducing the amount of conflict when innovative evaluations tools are used in local youth livestock programs.
- 100% of participants attended workshops on how to use a variety of judging systems.

Participants were asked to list one idea they learned at the training that they would implement. Following are some of their comments:

- I learned how to better communicate in the show ring.
- I learned terminology.
- I learned judging criteria.
- I learned what to look for in the selection of livestock.
- I learned about showmanship for lambs and steers for my 4-H kids as well as how to select and judge a project animal.

For More Information

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