

News Column  
by Greg McClure, KSU-Riley County Extension Agriculture Agent  
110 Courthouse Plaza  
Manhattan, KS 66502

For Release 07/17/17  
Phone: 785/537-6350  
Fax: 785/537-6353

## COUNTY FAIR PIGS FOR SALE

One of my neighbors asked me last week if I had any lamb for sale, prompting me to do the math to figure what it would be worth I had it in the freezer. I don't have any lamb in the freezer, but I like math, so I started calculating anyway.

I have a 140 pound lamb that's ready to go. He might sell for \$2 per pound of live weight, or \$280. Once harvested, the lamb carcass will weigh about 50% of the live weight. We call this the hanging weight. My 140 pound lamb will have about a 70 pound hanging weight (.50 x 140 pounds = 70 pounds).

The next step is to break that carcass down to the cuts of meat you might find in a grocery store – leg of lamb, lamb chops, rack roast, ground lamb, etc. We're going to lose another 25% in bone and other waste when breaking down the carcass, leaving us with about 52.5 pounds of meat to haul home from the processor.

Continuing my math mission, I figured \$100 to process the lamb. Now, I have \$380 invested and 52.5 pounds of meat. And the final answer is,.....\$7.23 per pound of lamb in my freezer.

Ouch! I think I'll eat pork!

So, let's do the math on the pig deal. To avoid a little pain for you math haters, I'm going to abbreviate this one for you. A 260 pound pig at 80 cents per pounds will cost \$208.

Processing will cost about \$195, for a total cost of \$403.

On a pig, we estimate that the meat yield will be about 57% of live weight – yes, I left out a few steps and went straight to the final math – so that’s 148 pounds of product that we’ll get from our 260 pound pig. The final cost then comes to about \$2.73 per pound of pork ( $\$403 \div 148$  pounds = \$2.73).

Now, have I got a deal for you?!

We need to peddle about 50 4-H pigs between now and county fair time, for delivery to either GTB Custom Meats in Riley or to Clay Center Locker – your choice – the day after the fair. The fair ends on July 31. We’ll get them to the processor for you and all you need to do is tell the processor what cuts you want, then pick up your meat when it is ready.

From the consumer’s standpoint, it doesn’t get much easier than this. You don’t have to make your own appointment with the processor. You don’t have to call around to find someone with a pig, then convince them to haul it for you on the day of your appointment. You don’t really even have to call the processor to tell them what cuts of meat you want. They will call you.

I’ll be up front with you though. While this is a good deal, it’s not a bargain basement price. The pigs are priced at the top of the market, and maybe a bit above it, to get the best price possible for the 4-Hers raising them.

In my mind, this is still a deal that can’t be beat. You get to support a local 4-Her, and you get a freezer full of high quality pork. All you have to do is make a phone call, then write a couple of checks.

If you’d like to get on the list to buy a county fair pig, you can call the Extension Office at 785/537-6350. Or call Josh Wendland at 785/770-2304. Josh is coordinating this project for us.

Please call early to be assured your name is high enough on the list to guarantee you

getting a pig. Supply is limited. We need to move them all, but when they are gone, they are gone.

If you have questions, you can reach me at the Riley County Extension Office at 785/537-6350. Or, you can send e-mail to [gmclure@ksu.edu](mailto:gmclure@ksu.edu).

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