

Cavy Project and Record Book



Name _____

Age (as of January 1 of the current year) _____

County _____

Club Name _____

Advisor _____



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES



Authors

Lucinda B. Miller, Ph.D., Extension Specialist, Companion and Small Animal Programs,
4-H Youth Development, Ohio State University Extension

Travis West, Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development, Ohio State University Extension

Reviewer

Jeff Dick, Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development, Ohio State University Extension

Production Team

Tim Bowman, Graphic Designer, Marketing and Communications, College of Food, Agricultural,
and Environmental Sciences, The Ohio State University

Heather Gates, Technical Editor, Marketing and Communications, College of Food, Agricultural,
and Environmental Sciences, The Ohio State University

Jane Wright, Curriculum Manager, 4-H Youth Development, Ohio State University Extension



This project book demonstrates adherence to the highest educational standards within 4-H.

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Notes to the Project Helper

Congratulations! A 4-H member has asked you to serve as a project helper. You may be a parent, relative, project leader, friend, club advisor, or another individual important in the 4-H member's life. Your duties begin with helping the youth create and carry out a project plan, as outlined in the Member Project Guide. This is followed by helping the youth focus on each activity, providing support and feedback, and determining what was done well, what could have been done differently, and where to go next.

As a project helper, it is up to you to encourage, guide, and assist the 4-H member. How you choose to be involved helps to shape the 4-H member's life skills and knowledge of caring for a pet guinea pig.

Your Role as Project Helper

- Review the *Cavy Resource Handbook* and this project and record book. The *Cavy Resource Handbook* has scientific and technical information that may be difficult for younger 4-H members to comprehend without your help.
- Guide the youth and provide support in setting goals and completing this project.
- Encourage the youth to apply knowledge from the *Cavy Resource Handbook* and this project book to the care of a pet guinea pig.
- Serve as a resource person.
- Encourage the youth to go beyond the scope of this 4-H project book to learn more about pet guinea pigs.

The Cavy Project and Record Book

The **Member Project Guide** provides ways to apply the skills and the knowledge presented in the *Cavy Resource Handbook*. Youth are required to complete activities that pertain specifically to their projects and are encouraged to study particular areas of cavy in-depth. Youth also are encouraged to develop leadership, citizenship, communication, and life skills through "learning experiences" and through "leadership and citizenship activities."

The **Animal Care and Welfare** section is designed to make youth aware of the issues surrounding animal care and responsible ownership of animals. The activities provide youth with hands-on experiences that teach the knowledge and skills necessary for owning and caring for cavy.

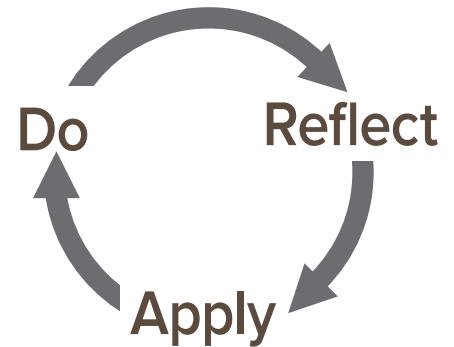
The **Animal Records** section gives youth the opportunity to develop their scientific and basic math skills. Skills such as record keeping, comparing and measuring, observing, questioning, and evaluating are examined in the context of caring for their cavy. Activities in this section also give youth the opportunity to develop life skills such as time and money management.



Some concepts in this book are difficult for young members to grasp. They may require your assistance. Be patient. Help them understand that although an activity may not seem useful, it is designed to help them learn something new and master important skills.

The Learning Process

First, allow youth to attempt to **do** the activity independently. Then help the 4-H member **reflect** on each activity by asking thought-provoking questions. Finally, encourage the 4-H member to **apply** what was learned to the care of their project animal.



Learning Science

The design of this project and record book uses the latest information on how youth best learn science. The 4-H member experiences, comprehends, and applies information about the project animal using a variety of science processing skills. The 4-H member:

- Keeps records
- Compares and measures
- Observes
- Communicates with others
- Uses scientific tools
- Evaluates
- Experiments
- Questions
- Conducts research

Experts agree that these skills, once mastered, are applied to other aspects of the 4-H member's life in a way that goes beyond just content recollection. As project helper, you can support the 4-H member by encouraging effort on activities and records throughout the project experience. Every activity helps the 4-H member learn something new and master important life and science skills.

What You Can Do

- Become familiar with the contents of *Cavy Resource Handbook* and this project and record book.
- Begin the project by helping the learner establish a plan for the project. This is accomplished by reviewing and completing the Member Project Guide.
- Conduct occasional debriefing sessions that allow the learner to share and reflect on his or her experiences. This important step improves understanding from an experiential learning perspective.
- Help the learner celebrate what was done well and to see what could be done differently. Allow the learner to become better at assessing his or her own work.
- In the Member Project Guide, date and initial the activities that have been completed.



For the 4-H Member: Getting Started

Are you ready to begin your cavy project? The activities in the *Cavy Project and Record Book*, which is appropriate for all age levels, challenge you to explore knowledge of your guinea pig. These activities also reinforce the concepts in the *Cavy Resource Handbook*. This project can easily be completed in one year and may be repeated.

For each year of the project, you should complete a new project and record book, including the required learning activities and experiences for your age level, the animal care and welfare activities, and the animal records section. If you have more than one cavy, copy the record-keeping pages as needed before you begin.

Check your county's project guidelines (if any) for completion requirements in addition to the ones below, especially if you plan to prepare an exhibit for the fair.

Your Project Helper

Before you begin your project, select a project helper. Your project helper can be a parent, project leader, club advisor, or an older friend who knows about cavies. Your project helper is someone who can help you if you have difficulty understanding or completing an activity and who can help you find more information about a topic in which you are interested. As you complete the activities in your project and record book, review them with your project helper. Discuss what you did and what you learned.

Write the name and contact information of your project helper here:

Name: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____



Project Guidelines

Each year, complete these project components:

1. Obtain your project animal by the required possession date for your county. Contact your county Extension office for this date.

The required date for my county is _____.

2. Identify your project goals and objectives.
3. Complete the Member Project Guide section of this book, including the following:
 - Study one or more topics of interest from your *Cavy Resource Handbook*. Topics can be simple or more complex depending on your age and skill level in the project. Write a summary of the topic(s) you studied and what you learned.
 - Complete **five or more** learning activities.
 - Participate in **two or more** learning experiences.
 - Take part in **two or more** leadership/citizenship activities.
 - Write a brief summary of your project and take part in a project review.
4. Complete the “Animal Care and Welfare” section of this book.
5. Complete the “Animal Records” section of this book.
6. Take part in county project judging. (This step may be optional. Check your county’s guidelines.) There are generally two kinds of county project judging: skillathons and interview judging. For skillathons, you visit a series of hands-on learning stations and demonstrate your knowledge of your animal. For interview judging, a judge asks you to share and apply your project knowledge, skills, and records in a one-on-one interview. In both cases, you receive a project grade or score based on your performance. Your achievements may be compared to others to determine the best performance within your age division or the best performance overall. Special project awards may be given for achieving a set standard for your age or for achieving personal goals.



Project Goals and Objectives

Identifying goals and objectives at the beginning of your 4-H project helps you determine what you want to accomplish while taking this project. You should set goals for learning more about pet guinea pigs. Goals and objectives provide guidelines for accomplishing new tasks.

A **goal** is a statement of what you want to learn or a task you want to complete. Goals help you focus on these tasks. A goal needs to be realistic and specific. Goals should challenge you in what you want to accomplish, yet be reasonably attainable within the current project year. Do not write a goal so broadly that it becomes a chore to complete. For example, the goal *Learn about guinea pigs* is too broad. A better goal is *Learn about grooming needs for long-haired cavies*. It has guidelines—specific animal, specific purpose—that keep you focused.

Once you decide on a goal, determine the objective you must do to work toward reaching that goal. **Objectives** are individual steps used to accomplish your goals. Each goal you write should have one or more objective statements. Each objective statement tells one action to do while working towards your goal. Objectives are best when written with action verbs and few details.

For example, for the goal *Learn about grooming needs for long-haired cavies*, objectives to accomplish that goal might be:

Objective 1: Locate and read the breed standards for Coronet, Peruvian, Peruvian Satin, Silkie, Silkie Satin, and Texel.

Objective 2: Prepare interview questions and talk to someone who raises and shows long-haired cavies.

Objective 3: Assemble a list of special equipment and supplies necessary for grooming long-haired cavies. Include the costs.

Objectives can be measured. In the above example, you would have a copy of the standards, information from an expert, and your written list. Those items are good evidence of your accomplishment.

Write a rough draft of your goals and objectives. Ask your project helper or another adult to review them with you. Discuss whether the goals and objectives are reasonable for your age and experience. Older members may have goals and objectives that are more involved than younger members. You may wish to adjust your goals before writing the final draft for your project book. Periodically review your goals to see if you are on track to completing them. Make any adjustments necessary.

Goals can be identified from the learning activities you list in the Member Project Guide or from additional interests that you have. Decide on at least three goals and your plan to accomplish them in this project year. Write them in the space on the next page. At the end of the project, ask yourself, “Did I reach my goals?” Write what you accomplished in the space provided.



Goal 1: _____

Objective 1: _____

Objective 2: _____

Objective 3: _____

What I accomplished and how I did it: _____

_____ Project helper initials: _____

Goal 2: _____

Objective 1: _____

Objective 2: _____

Objective 3: _____

What I accomplished and how I did it: _____

_____ Project helper initials: _____

Goal 3: _____

Objective 1: _____

Objective 2: _____

Objective 3: _____

What I accomplished and how I did it: _____

_____ Project helper initials: _____



Member Project Guide

Introduction

Successful 4-H members learn about their project cavies and are familiar with their care, management, and handling. As you look over the various activities in this Member Project Guide, keep in mind you can choose activities that are truly interesting to you. What is it about cavies you really like? Keep your interests in mind as you plan your project. Choosing what you want means you will learn and have fun.

Topic of Interest

Select and study one or more topics from the *Cavy Resource Handbook*. What topic is especially interesting to you? Select one that is covered in the handbook and write a short statement that describes it. Depending on your age and skill level, your topic can be simple or complex. Use the following page to write a summary that explains in more detail what you learned about it.

You can complete as many topics of interest as you want, but you must do **at least one** new one each year. Remember to record the dates each interest area is started and completed.

Your topic of interest can be from any of these chapters in the *Cavy Resource Handbook*. To keep learning more about cavies, choose topics from different chapters each year you complete a cavy project or, if taking the same cavy, learn more about that particular species.

- History
- Anatomy
- Selection
- Housing and Equipment
- Records
- Nutrition
- Health
- Reproduction
- Grooming and Showing
- Marketing

Topic of Interest	Date Started	Date Completed
Complete at least one. If necessary, attach additional pages.		
<i>Example: Certain types of cages are more appropriate for cavies than others.</i>	4/21/YR	5/1/YR



Learning Activities

Learning activities are your opportunity to explore the things that interest you. When you complete a learning activity, you are demonstrating and applying what you have learned. Here's what to do: Browse through your *Cavy Resource Handbook* to get ideas for activities. What are five activities you could do to show the interesting things you are learning by caring for your cavy? Here are some examples:

Beginner Level. Beginning activities are for members with little or no experience in a project area or for those who are 8 to 10 years old.

- Identify four breeds of cavies and describe their main differences.
- Identify ten body parts of a cavy.
- Define the following terms: pup, sow, boar, mane, Roman nose, rosette.

Intermediate Level. Intermediate activities are for members with some experience in a project area or for those who are 11 to 13 years old.

- Using pictures or actual animals, compare and contrast the Texel and Silkie breeds.
- Help a new member learn how to correctly identify 15 external parts of a cavy.
- Describe how to set up housing for your cavy.

Advanced Level. Advanced activities are for members with experience in a project area or for those who are 14 or older.

- Help a new 4-H member select a breed of cavy for his or her project.
- Discuss treating your cavy for various types of illnesses with your veterinarian, and learn what types of medicines are toxic to your specific project animal.
- Make a written plan for your cavy breeding project, including matings, dates, marketing, etc.

Would you like more examples of learning activities?
More ideas are available online at ohio4h.org/publications.
Look for Learning Activity Ideas.



Ready to get started? Follow these guidelines:

1. Select activities that are new for you, **not** ones that you completed during previous years in the cavy project.
2. Using the examples as a guide, be sure the activities you select are appropriate for your level (beginner, intermediate, or advanced).
3. Write the activities you plan to do in the table below. Remember, you are being asked to complete **at least five** new learning activities each year.
4. Ask your project helper to date and initial the activities as you complete each one.
5. Advance to the next level after completing 15 or more activities or after reaching the appropriate project level.

Learning Activities	Date Completed	Project Helper Initials
<i>Example: Identify 10 body parts of a cavy.</i>	<i>4/21/YR</i>	<i>L.M.</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
Do as many additional learning activities as you want.		



Learning Experiences

Learning experiences are meant to complement learning activities, providing the opportunity for you to explore and apply your knowledge even more. Participate in **at least two** learning experiences each program year. Follow these guidelines:

1. Learning experiences should be different from the project activities you complete, and they should be different from year to year. The idea is for you to continue to expand your experiences with your cavy and your knowledge of the species.
2. After reviewing the list of learning experiences, place a checkmark next to the ones you plan to do this year. You may add or change your plan at any time.
3. You can repeat an experience if each instance is sufficiently different. For example, showing at a county fair is different from showing at the state fair, visiting a pet store is different from visiting a breeder, etc. If you do repeat, use one of the extra rows to describe your learning experience.
4. With the approval of your project helper, you may also develop your own learning experience. If you develop your own, use one of the extra rows.
5. Ask your project helper to initial and date the learning experiences you complete.

Be sure to record awards or recognition you receive for participating in an activity in your 4-H exhibit record.

Learning Experience	Plan to Do	Date Completed	Project Helper Initials
<i>Example: Exhibit at the state fair.</i>	✓	8/5/YR	T.W.
Join a local/state/national/international cavy or cavy breed organization.			
Visit a college or university that has a companion animal program.			
Interview someone who works in a companion-animal related field involving cavies.			
Visit a cavy breeder or pet store that sells cavies.			
Exhibit your cavy at your county fair.			
Make a first-aid kit for your cavy.			
Subscribe to a magazine that provides information about cavies.			
Visit a small animal veterinary practice.			



Attend an event that showcases cavies.			
Develop activities for a cavy skillathon.			
Prepare questions for a cavy knowledge bowl activity.			
Modify or add your own experiences here.			

Leadership/Citizenship Activities

Choose **at least two** leadership/citizenship activities from the list below (or create your own) and write them in the table below. Record your progress by asking your project helper to initial next to the date each one is completed. You may add to or change these activities at any time. Here are some examples of leadership/citizenship activities:

- Teach someone about caring for a cavy.
- Help another member prepare for his or her project judging.
- Help organize a club field trip to a pet store, cavy show, or humane society.
- Encourage someone to take a cavy project.
- Arrange for someone knowledgeable about cavies to speak to your club. Sources for speakers include the local humane society, pet associations and clubs, and pet stores.
- Plan your own leadership/citizenship activity.

Leadership/Citizenship Activity	Date Completed	Project Helper Initials
<i>Organized a club field trip to a pet store.</i>	<i>3/3/YR</i>	<i>T.W.</i>



Summary and Project Review

Arrange for a project review. You can do this with your project helper, club leader, or another knowledgeable adult. Completing a project review helps you evaluate what you have learned and assess your personal growth. Your review can be part of a club evaluation or it can be part of your county's project judging.

Before your project review, use this space to write a brief summary of your project experience. Be sure to include a statement about the skills you have learned and how they may be valuable to you in the future.

Sample Pages



Animal Care and Welfare

Planning for the Care of Your Cavy

Taking a cavy project is a commitment that includes providing your pet with suitable shelter, food, and water, as well as regular interaction. It is a big responsibility that often requires the involvement and help of your family, advisor, or friends. Before you begin, think about the scope of your project and who will be involved with your animal's care. Be sure you can answer these questions, and talk to everyone you are counting on for help.

- As the 4-H member, what am I responsible for on a daily, weekly, monthly, and project year basis?
- Who, if anyone, is helping me in the direct care of my project animal?
- How are the supplies for this project being provided?

Discuss the answers to these questions with everyone involved and ask them to sign in the spaces below.

Signature of 4-H member _____ Date _____

Signature of parent/guardian _____ Date _____

Signature of parent/guardian _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____



The Care You Give Your Cavy

As the owner of a cavy, you are responsible for its health and welfare. The list below can help determine your level of responsibility. Check the ways in which you already care for your cavy, then check the ones you want to improve. Complete this activity every year you take the project.

At the Beginning of Your Project

Care	What I am doing already	What I want to improve
Prepare for my cavy before acquiring		
Provide adequate housing and bedding		
Provide access to clean, fresh water at all times		
Feed a balanced diet specific to my cavy		
Feed my cavy daily		
Feed my cavy only foods that are meant for cavies		
Properly store all cavy food and treats		
Keep food crocks and water bottles clean		
Keep the cage and bedding clean		
Be aware of the health and comfort of my cavy at all times		
Properly observe my cavy for signs of internal and external parasites		
Observe my cavy daily		
Use my cavy for breeding only as a responsible pet owner		
Do not allow my cavy to roam free unsupervised		
Exercise and play with my cavy daily		
Socialize my cavy around people		
Clean up after my cavy		



After deciding which areas you want to improve, describe *how* you are going to make these improvements.

At the End of Your Project

Did you improve the care you provide your cavy? _____

What worked well? _____

What would you change? _____

