TIPS & GUIDELINES FOR WRITING BUYER LETTERS FOR 4-H/FFA
LIVESTOCK AUCTION

Introduction
You have worked very hard and spent countless hours working with your animal preparing for the Greene County Fair. You are almost ready but now you need to write your buyer’s letters. Like the other livestock exhibitors you want to get the best price possible for your animal and a big part of that is getting buyers to come to the fair and bid on your animal. Good buyer’s letters help not only you but all the entrants at the fair because the buyer you invite may not only bid on your animal, but they might bid on other exhibitor’s animals as well.

Questions and Answers about Buyer’s Letter

Q: What is a Buyer’s Letter?
A: A buyer’s letter is a letter that a 4-H member sends out to potential buyers before their County Fair to tell the buyer a little about themselves and their animal, and to invite them to the fair and livestock auctions.

Q: Why Should You Write Buyers Letters?
A: It is your responsibility to help get new and returning buyers to come to the livestock sale. Some people come to the fair every year and buy one or more animals but without new buyers a time may come where there aren’t enough buyers to purchase all the animals. Many people and businesses are not aware of the livestock auctions that take place at the fair. With an invitation from you (a buyer letter) they could become potential buyers. New buyers or returning buyers that are happy with the letters they have received are more likely to come to the fair and pay the premium prices we all enjoy receiving for our animals. Buyers pay far more than the market value of the animals we sell and it is up to the individual exhibitor to encourage as many potential buyers as possible to come to the fair and bid on their animals. Buyers like a personal letter from exhibitors. It lets them know that you have raised an animal, are exhibiting it at the county fair, and trying to sell it at the market sale. Most buyers at the auction take into consideration several factors when bidding: did you send them a letter to buy your animal, did you send a thank you to them if they bought your animal in the past, and does your family conduct business with them when possible.

Q: Who Should I Send Buyer Letters To?
A: Letters should be sent to anyone you identify as a potential buyer. This might include your family doctor, dentist, eye doctor, orthodontist, insurance agent, and banker. It could include places where your family does business like the grocery store, restaurants, hair stylists, mechanics, contractors, your animal’s veterinarian, feed store, equipment and/or car dealers. Don’t forget to send letters to people who have previously bought your project animals. Create a list of people you would like to contact. Your list should include past supporters of the livestock auctions as well as potential new buyers (you can find a list of past buyers in the back of the fair book). Your goal is to get as many buyers as possible to the fair during the livestock sale. The more buyers you have the higher the price you will receive for your animal.

Q: Who Should Send Buyer Letters?
A: Every person marketing an animal through the livestock auction at the fair should send letters to potential buyers inviting them to attend the auction and encouraging them bid on your animal.
**Q: What to Include in Buyers Letter?**

1. Know who you are writing to  
   a. Owner of a business, family members, friend, etc. Important when addressing the buyer’s letter.

2. Information about yourself  
   a. Tell them your name, age, and introduce yourself. This helps the buyer know whose letter they are reading. When they get to the fair it will help them make a connection with you. Some buyers are more likely to bid on animals raised by people they know.

3. Information about your project and club  
   a. Some buyers like to hear about your animal, how you raised it, and what 4-H club or FFA chapter you belong to. Also include what you learned through your project this year and if you have any future plans.

4. The Greene County Fair Dates  
   a. This helps the buyer because they will know when the fair is and that way they can attend the fair. If they cannot come to the fair they may still participate in our livestock auctions. If they have fun and enjoy themselves they would be more likely to come back. If they don’t know the dates of the fair then they won’t know when to come and look at your animals.

5. The Livestock Sale date, time AND location  
   a. In order for the buyer to bid on your animal they will need to know when the auction is and where it is. If they cannot come to the fair they may still participate in our livestock auctions. They must fill out the application for a bidders number, they will then receive a bidder number and are able to inform you how much they would like to put on your multiple buyer card and their number.

6. Inform them where they can get more information  
   a. Buyers can always contact the Greene County Fair Office to learn more information about the fair and the livestock sale or to go to [http://www.greenecountyfairgrounds.com/sales](http://www.greenecountyfairgrounds.com/sales).

7. Thank them for previous participation if they have purchased from you before  
   a. If you do this, it may motivate the buyer to come back and bid again. It lets them know you appreciated them purchasing your animal last year.

8. Personalize the letters  
   a. This is good because most buyers like letters that are signed by a real person and not photocopied letter, and also they like their names on the letter not just Dear Buyer. The more individualized a letter is, the more likely a person is to read it.

9. Consider adding a picture or yourself and/or your animal  
   a. This can help people see what your animal looks like. Some people think that pictures of animals are cute and this may help them decide to bid on your animal instead of somebody else’s or not bidding at all.

**Q: When Do You Send Buyer Letters?**

**A:** Letters can be sent any time prior to the fair. Sending your letters earlier gives buyers more time to prepare to the auction.

*Be sure to put a contact number and name so any potential buyers can get ahold of you. Putting the fair office as a contact number will be difficult for buyers to personally contact you about giving money to the exhibitor.*