

# NOTCH, NOTCH

What Notch does your Pig have?

**NOTCH NOTCH**  
What "NOTCH"  
Does Your **PIG** Have?

**WHY IDENTIFY SWINE?**

- Permanent ID System
- Individual Animal Identity
- Inexpensive means of Identification

**FORMS OF IDENTIFICATION:**

- Ear Notching
- Tagging
- Tattooing

Some large farms only choose to Tag or Tattoo

**The key to Successful Notching is placing Notches in correct location**

**Be Sure to use the Correct Ear Notching System and Notchmark in the Ears!**

**Notching is the 1st Step in SWINE IDENTIFICATION, especially in Purebred Breeds**

**EAR NOTCHING**

- Typical Notch - 3/16" - 1/4" deep (Avoid making notches too shallow)
- Leave 1/4" between notches
- Right Ear = Litter Number, 5 locations
- Left Ear = Pig Number in Litter, 3 locations
- Reference to Right or Left Ear is viewed from rear of the pig

**PIG PROCESSING**  
At 1-3 days old:

- Ear Notch
- Dock Tails
- Document Pigs in Book

Administer Shots:

- Iron
- Penicillin
- Antibiotic-Dexam

**EQUIPMENT NEEDED:**

- Ear Notcher
- Side Cutters
- Syringe
- Iodine
- Disinfectant

**Each Pig Gets Notched Differently!**

Cooper Nosbush  
WRIGHT COUNTY P.I.G.  
4-H CLUB

# 4-H EXHIBIT GOAL SHEET

**Name:** Cooper Nosbush  
**Club:** Wright County P.I.G.  
**Grade:** 5th  
2019-2020 School Year

**Project:** Animal Science  
**Class #** 10110  
**Years in Project:** 2nd

**Circle One:** Junior Intermediate Senior

## **NOTCH, NOTCH** – What Notch does your Pig have?

### **What was your exhibit goals?**

My goal was to learn how to give our pigs a permanent ID System and how to notch pigs and be able to help process baby pigs. It is important to be able to read ear notches so I can bring the correct pigs to my grandpa and uncles, especially if customers come to look at our families show pigs. To avoid making the notches too shallow & in correct location. To know importance of identifying your animals and litters.

### **What steps did you take to go about your goal?**

I was slowly learning how to read ear notches, but just hadn't quite gotten it yet. Then on Christmas, I received a deck of Next Level Livestock Camp cards on ear notching! I started studying that night and drawing pictures of a pig head and ears and doing different litter number and pig number combinations. Finally, the light bulb went off and I was well on my way to knowing how to read ear notches!

I practice daily in the barn reading ear notches with my grandpa! I had watched my grandpa process pigs many times. Now I help with the processing, which includes: ear notching, docking tails, figuring out litter numbers, and writing down information on the sow sheets.

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## What steps did you take to go about your goal? (cont'd)

Then once the pigs are weaned, I spend time sitting with each pen of piglets reading the notches and taming them. I have learned that it is a must to double check yourself before you notch. As you cannot put the ear back together after it has been notched. It is very important to keep equipment clean and handy. We use a tote that hangs on the feed cart, that contains all my equipment needed while we process pigs.

Cost to make my presentation board:

Black Presentation Board	\$10.07
Black Board Topper	2.97
Copies (8 @ \$1.79)	14.32
Elmer's Rubber Cement	<u>4.97</u>
	\$32.33
7% tax	<u>2.26</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$34.59</b>

## What were the most important things you learned as you worked towards your goal?

The ear notching system was established to standardize the breeds. I have enjoyed learning daily from my grandpa, along with my Next Level cards. Ear notching is a very hands-on activity. I learned how to properly hold my pigs while processing them. It is important to leave a 1/4" between notches and not to go too shallow or too deep with the notches. The reference to the right and left ear is viewed from rear of the pig. The Right Ear is your Litter Number and can have up to 5 locations. Whereas the Left Ear is the Pig Number in the litter, and only has 3 locations. Every single pig gets their own identity and are notched differently.

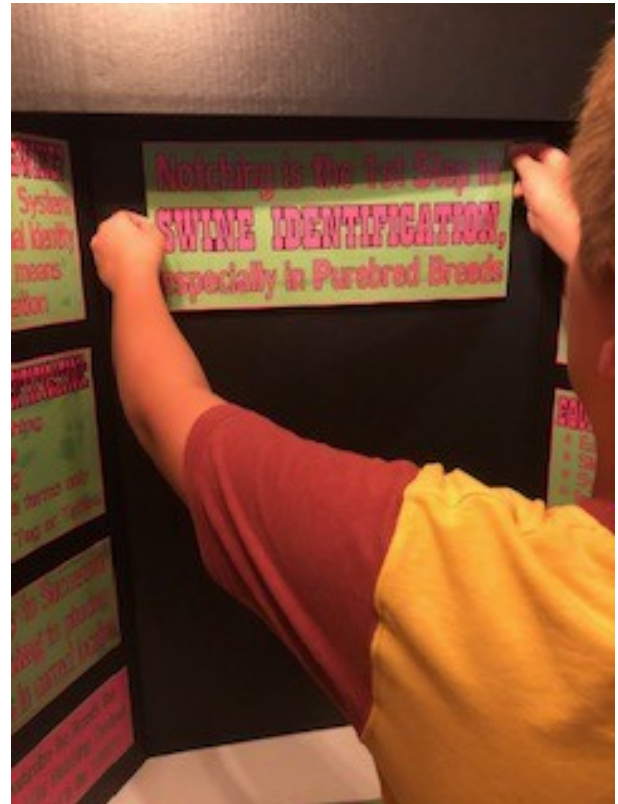
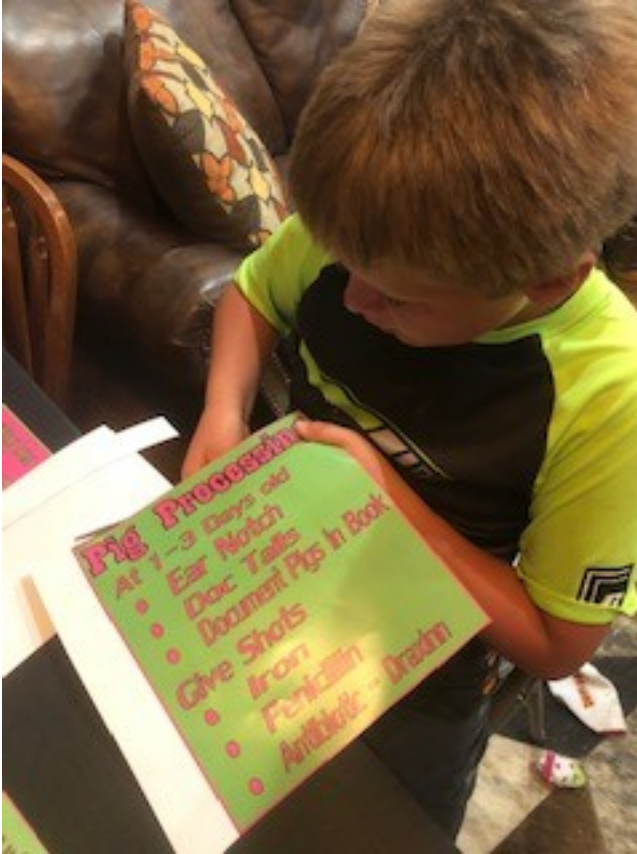
## **NOTCH, NOTCH – What Notch does your Pig have?**

**What were the most important things you learned as you worked towards your goal? (cont'd)**

I plan to share my poster during a 4-H presentation for my club and anyone else trying to learn how to read notches. It has amazed me how many people show and or raise pigs and do not know how to read ear notches! I really enjoy raising pigs and plan to continue to help my family raise and show pigs.

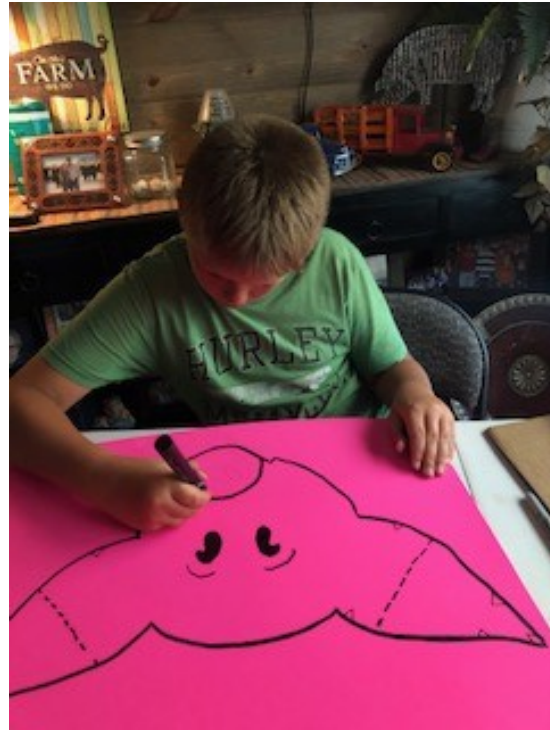
# NOTCH, NOTCH – What Notch does your Pig have?

Cutting out the pieces to put on the board



# NOTCH, NOTCH – What Notch does your Pig have?

Drawing the pig head to put on my poster



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## **Resources:**

Swine Identification 101: Understanding Swine Ear Tag Requirements. Certified Pedigreed Swine. March 1, 2015.  
<https://cpsswine.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Official-Swine-Ear-Tags-3-1-15.pdf>

Litter Number and Pig Number photo. Wright County Fair Junior & Open Class Fair Book. 2018. Page 13.

Universal Ear-Notching System. National Swine Registry.  
<https://nationalswine.com/resources/docs/Ear-Notch-Chart.pdf>