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## **New 4-H Livestock Handling Program**

**Calgary, AB:** Reaching out to Alberta's rural youth, especially to those in 4-H, is the focus of a new livestock handling program launched by the Alberta Farm Animal Care Association (AFAC).

"The program includes two components," says Susan Church, Manager of AFAC, Alberta's livestock organization set up ten years ago to promote responsible animal care. "**4-H L.A.W. – Learning about Animal Welfare** is a package for 4-H Leaders to integrate an understanding of animal welfare issues into all livestock species projects. It includes an awareness of how to respond to animal right activists. The second part is a series of **Livestock Handling for Youth** workshops."

The workshops, targeting all livestock species, are available to ten 4-H clubs/districts per year for three years. AFAC's presenter, Jennifer Woods, a former 4-H Leader, emphasizes understanding animal behavior and the benefits of low stress handling. "Careful, humane handling of livestock helps prevent injuries," says Woods. "Knowing how animals react to stress and frightening situations is key. I also explain how good handling is linked to meat quality and economics." The workshops help instill a positive attitude towards responsible livestock welfare at an early age.

The ten workshops for 2004 are already booked. To book for next year, call Yvonne Yaremco at **403-742-8353** at the 4-H Branch or call the AFAC office at **403-932-8050** about other workshops on livestock handling.

This program receives funding support from the Alberta Livestock Industry Development Fund.

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