# **Tips & Tricks for Bacon Buddies® Show Organizers**

**Keys for a successful event:**

* **Be flexible!** It is ok if things don’t go 100% as planned, be prepared to make changes on the fly
* **Be patient** with participants and pigs!
* **Be supportive**of reactions of the participants (many of them this might be their first time around a pig).
* **Be cognizant** of sensory sensitivity (noises, space, lighting, crowds, cameras, pigs, water, shavings).
* This is an experience; everyone is a winner! All Buddies should receive the same prize for their participation.

**Logistics**

*Checklist:*

* Space: make-up ring, show ring, area for participants to collect ribbons after they exit the showring
  + Allows for parent/guardian to reunite with Buddies, and pig owner to locate and put away pig.
* Show equipment
  + Show sticks, brushes, spray bottles, sorting board, etc.
  + Who provides these? Are they borrowed from pig owner or the mentor?
* T-shirts (if provided)
  + Consider making t-shirts different based on involvement (buddy, youth mentor, volunteer)

*Things to consider:*

* Have audience (i.e. “fan zone”) located where participants exit the show ring
  + Provides encouragement, high-fives, congratulations, etc.
  + As participants make their way to the designated space where parents/guardians reunite with Buddy
* Creating name tags for those involved
* Photo backdrop availability and location approximate to showring

**Analyze your event** (Location, facilities, parking, audience, and support)

*Checklist and things to consider:*

* Event location
  + Is it handicap accessible? Are there bathrooms nearby? Consider comfort for participants and audience
* Timeframe of event
  + Consider time of day, temperature, traffic to venue, audience support
* Parking
  + Is it close to the location of the event for participants not familiar with area? Consider handicap parking accessibility
* Admission
  + Is there admission to the event or fair? Who covers the cost for participants?

**Identifying Buddies** (Special Olympic Iowa Athletes)

*Checklist and things to consider:*

* Highly suggest working with an organized group (ex.: Special Olympics, local school district, etc.) to identify “Buddies”
  + Recommend contacting Dawn Criss (Special Olympics Iowa Director of Regional Field Services)
    - Email: dcriss@soiowa.org
* Parental or guardian consent is required

**Identifying Youth Mentors** (4-H and/or FFA)

*Checklist and things to consider:*

* Select Mentors with high moral regard, appropriate maturity level and/or age
* Mentors are not required to have swine exhibits
  + Swine exhibits can be used from another showman
* Mentor should be calm, patient, encouraging, and can adapt to different situations

**Identifying Volunteers**

*Checklist and things to consider:*

* Volunteer Tasks
  + Distributing t-shirts
  + Help moving pigs from pens to the make-up area/showring
  + One to two in the make-up ring to assist exhibitors (a sorting board may be helpful)
  + Two to three volunteers in the showring to assist if necessary (a sorting board may be helpful)
  + Two volunteers should be present on the exiting side of the show ring to help participants make their way out
  + Two volunteers to assist with photos after the participants exit the show ring (with awards, Buddies, and Mentors)
* Volunteer Selection
  + Kind and patient
  + Passionate about kids and pigs
  + Flexibility and willingness to help wherever the need arises during event
  + Must be available through entire event
  + Volunteers should be identified and notified of their role prior to the event

**Selection of Judge/Emcee**

*Things to consider*

* + Kind, compassionate, patient, sensitive to situations
  + Ability to read people and situations (participants that are nervous, shy or don’t want to talk on the mic, etc.)
  + Ability to think/adjust on the fly
  + Charismatic on microphone
  + Aware of the importance of the event

**Pigs**

*Checklist and things to consider:*

* Will the pigs be used in other shows throughout the event?
  + either the day(s) prior or after)
* Pigs should be calm and have adequate level of training
* Whose pigs will be used for the event? Are 4-H or FFA pigs already on site?

**Class Size and Duration**

*Checklist and things to consider:*

* No matter the show ring size, we suggest no more than 4 or 5 “Teams” in a class
  + This allows the participants to stay engaged
* We suggest the entire “show” should last no longer than an hour

**Public Relations**

*Checklist and things to consider:*

* Photography and/or videography
* Advertising
  + Use hashtag **#BaconBuddiesIowa** to showcase your event on social media
  + Consider social media, print, radio, television
* Media requests
  + ****Before, day of, during and after event

**Sponsorship**

*Checklist and things to consider:*

* Participant awards (ribbons for all Buddies)
* T-shirts
* Photo backdrop
* Meal/Refreshments/Snacks