

# MEADOWLARK EXTENSION DISTRICT 4-H

**Welcome to the Meadowlark Extension District 4-H!** Whether you are new or returning we are glad that you decided to be a part of the 4-H program. This handout is to assist you and your family as you discover 4-H. It highlights policies and guidelines which the Kansas 4-H Program and our local District 4-H Program follow. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.



## Membership

4-H membership in Kansas is open to all youth who are residents of Kansas between the date of their 7<sup>th</sup> birthday through December 31, of the year in which they turn 19. Members live in cities, small towns, country and on farms. 4-H is open to all youth regardless of race, color, national origin, sex or disability. Youth ages 5-8 years old are eligible to participate in the Cloverbud program which is offered through the clubs in the district. Check with your local club leader for more information regarding the Cloverbud program.

## Choose the club that is right for you!

Meadowlark District has a variety of clubs available for youth to join. Some clubs focus on a specific project such as horse or dog while others follow the community club format. Refer to the Meadowlark District website for a listing of 4-H clubs in your area.

## 4-H Clubs

A 4-H club is a group of young people and adults who meet regularly throughout the year for fun and learning. Clubs are usually made up of families from a community or a special interest group and often formed around schools, churches or communities. View our website at [www.meadowlark.ksu.edu](http://www.meadowlark.ksu.edu) for a complete list of clubs.

Most clubs hold monthly meetings which are planned and led by youth officers with guidance of the club leaders. They offer activities which include demonstrations, project work, community service and social events for the youth members. Meetings are generally held the same time each month.

## What are 4-H Club Meetings?

4-H club meetings are typically held once a month at the same location and time. 4-H members are expected to attend their club meetings and parents are encouraged to attend as well. Meetings include business, educational programs, songs and recreation. 4-H members are given the opportunity to learn to talk in front of a group and practice decision making skills.

Each 4-H club normally elects officers at the beginning of the 4-H year (October). These club officers are responsible for leading meetings, making sure all 4-H members have the opportunity to speak and help plan and carry out club activities.

As a 4-H club member, you have the opportunity to meet new people, make new friends, learn about projects, participate in club trips, activities and more. Each club is unique, as you determine the focus of your own club.

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## MEADOWLARK DISTRICT 4-H

### **4-H Basics**

#### **The Motto**

*“To Make the Best Better!”*

#### **The Emblem**

*The 4-H emblem is a four-leaf clover; the letter “H” stands for Head, Heart, Hands and Health.*

#### **The Colors**

*Green symbolizes nature’s most common color and represents life, spring-time and youth. White symbolizes purity.*

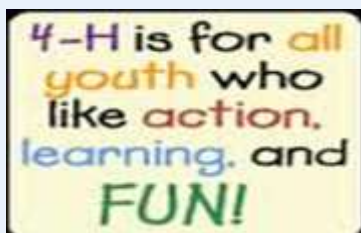
#### **The Pledge**

*I pledge:*

*My head to clearer thinking,  
My heart to greater loyalty,  
My hands to larger service, and  
My health to better living for my club,  
My community, My country  
and My world.*

**Kansas 4-H focuses on the development of these 5 life skills:**

- △ A positive self-concept
- △ An inquiring mind
- △ A concern for the community
- △ Healthy interpersonal relationships
- △ Sound decision making



### **The 4-H Year**

A new 4-H year starts October 1 each year and ends September 30 of the following year; however, we allow youth to join 4-H at any time of the year.

### **4-H Age for Events**

Some events do require age limits, in this instance 4-H age is determined by the age of the participant of January 1 of that current 4-H year.

### **Who brings 4-H to you?**

Kansas State University and Extension staff as well as adult volunteers help coordinate the 4-H program and ensure that programs are available to youth within the Meadowlark District. Extension staff, 4-H Club leaders, Project leaders and Volunteers help 4-H members learn and have fun. They volunteer because they want youth to grow up to be happy, caring and responsible community citizens.

### **Where is your 4-H Office?**

The 4-H program is coordinated through the Meadowlark District Extension Offices. We have offices in Holton, Oskaloosa & Seneca. Please visit [www.meadowlark.ksu.edu](http://www.meadowlark.ksu.edu) for your local office information.



**4-H News**

### **4-H Newsletter and Other Sources of Information**

The best way to stay current with events and information is to read your monthly 4-H newsletter. The newsletter is sent out from the Extension Office to 4-H members and leaders. It includes information about upcoming events, registrations, project news, important dates, etc.

You will also find current information at our website:

[www.meadowlark.ksu.edu](http://www.meadowlark.ksu.edu)

Like us on Facebook as well! Meadowlark District 4-H

## 4-H PROJECTS

Other than age, the only 4-H requirement for membership is that youth enroll in at least one project (learning opportunity). Each member should select at least one project each year and keep records for that project. All project selection (add/drop changes) must take place by May 1 to be eligible to exhibit in the county fair. You must be enrolled in the appropriate project to exhibit in any division of the county fair. Projects help youth explore an interest area. Projects also help them explore potential career fields. Projects provide the basis of the 4-H program by offering a variety of educational experiences. A project will help the member learn by doing and learn why things happen. Members will also have opportunities to share what they have learned by participating in 4-H presentations, exhibiting in local fairs and other competitions.

### How do I select projects?

In choosing a project, the 4-H'er will consult with their parents and 4-H leaders. The 4-H'er should base their project selection on:

- Their own personal interests, needs and capabilities. Be sure the project is within the age and ability of the member.
- Suitability of the area in which they live.
- The amount of time needed to complete the project. The member and parents should be aware of the amount of time a member has to work on the project, and how much time the project requires.
- The cost and needs of a project. The member and parents must consider how much a project will cost. Is there enough space for the project or is additional equipment required?
- Are project leaders available to help with the project in the club or are the parents willing to help the member with the project?

Projects are selected in the early fall when enrollment cards are filled out or as soon as a new member joins. 4-H'er's must be enrolled in their appropriate projects by May 1 to be eligible to exhibit the project at the county fair.

The Meadowlark Extension project selection guide has further detail. You can obtain a copy of this guide from your local Extension Office or on the Meadowlark Extension Website.

### How is project work conducted?

Project work is conducted through various events such as:

- Project meetings – in the local club or county wide
- Regular club meetings – by giving demonstrations, project talks
- Tours – visit projects of members or experts
- Field Trips
- Family activities at home
- Exhibiting projects – Each member is eligible to exhibit a completed project from their 4-H project at the county fair.
- Record Keeping

**Selecting a project is an exciting part of 4-H! Below is a partial list of the projects 4-H has to offer:**

Beef  
Citizenship  
Clothing and Textiles  
Communications  
Dog Care & Training  
Electric  
Entomology  
Fiber Arts  
Food & Nutrition  
Forestry  
Geology  
Goats  
Home Environment  
Horse  
Leadership  
Performing Arts  
Photography  
Plant Science  
Poultry  
Rabbits  
Reading  
Self-Determined  
Sheep  
Shooting Sports  
Small Engines  
Space Tech  
Swine  
Visual Arts  
Woodworking

## RECORD KEEPING

One of the true 4-H learning experiences is record keeping. Records are the way 4-H members keep track of what they did in their 4-H projects during the year. This does take time, but the 4-H'er actually learns important skills that will benefit them in the future. For those 4-H members' ages 7-13, 4-H age as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, this is the tool used to evaluate project recognition for the purpose of selection of project champions.

When the 4-H'er joins, they will receive a 4-H record book with a personal page and a permanent record sheet. This will be kept as long as the 4-H member remains a 4-H'er. Specific project material can be requested from your local Extension Office or you may visit our website at [www.meadowlark.ksu.edu](http://www.meadowlark.ksu.edu) and print off the forms yourself.

### Parts of the Record Book

1 – Personal Page: This is completed yearly by the 4-H'er. The 4-H member will write basic information about themselves for the current year (i.e. project enrollment for the year). There is also space for a current picture of the 4-H member.

2 – Permanent Record: This is a multi-page document which consists of four sections. Members can list project experiences, offices held, committee work, school activities, community activities, church involvement, recognitions and other information about their year. The member adds on information to this document each year.

3 – Project Records: Each 4-H'er is encouraged to keep records of their projects and to record the learning activities they have participated in. These records are for the 4-H member's personal use in recording skills gained and may include learning to keep financial records such as profit or losses.

4 – 4-H Story: The 4-H story is an important part of their records. It conveys how their total 4-H year impacted them and their family. This story should include an introduction, the major project information, project leadership and citizenship and information about the 4-Hers personal satisfaction and future goals.

### Record Keeping Tips

Keeping records throughout the year helps to ease the pressure of deadlines some feel when record books are due (September). Parents are advised to oversee the child's work, but the records should be completed by the child as part of their 4-H learning experiences.

It is easier to write something down as it occurs, rather than recall all the activity dates and information later.

Records should include all activities regarding the member that occur during the 4-H year (October 1 to September 30). The record is a tool to be used when applying for awards. Remember to write in details that are important to the member. Up to date records are beneficial when members apply for awards, scholarship and jobs.



## AWARDS – 4-H Rewards For A Job Well Done!!!!

The object of awards in 4-H is to recognize 4-H'ers for their accomplishments and to help them learn the process of goal setting and evaluation. The greatest and most lasting rewards a 4-H member can receive are:



Satisfaction from a job well done



Recognition from leaders, parents and other 4-H'ers



Pride in their accomplishments



Knowledge and skills gained through the projects

### Other Forms of Recognition



Achievement Pins – Membership, Bronze, Clover, Emerald, Silver, Silver Guard, Leadership, Gold and Gold Guard are honors 4-H members can earn.

Only one pin is awarded per year. Members complete an application form for these awards and turn in to their club leader with their record book. These forms can be found on the Meadowlark District website.

### Kansas Award Portfolio (KAP)

This award tool is to be used by those 4-H Members ages 14-18 as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, who wish to be nominated for project champions and receive project recognition.

Each KAP form completed by the member will include goals for that project, a summary of project learning experiences, leadership and citizenship experiences, awards and recognition for the project area, non-4-H experiences related to the project and photographs of the project area.

The KAP, Personal Page and Story will be submitted in a report cover to the Extension Office in September.

Pin winners will be recognized and receive their project pin, at the 4-H Achievement Celebrations held within your local county.

### Scholarships

Kansas 4-H Scholarships are available to current or past 4-H members who are seeking to further their education after high school. General criteria include high academic standing, 4-H achievement and leadership and financial need. Kansas may also nominate members for several national 4-H scholarships. Most applications are due March 1. Information on available scholarships can be obtained from your local Extension office.

Scholarships are also available for 4-H members to attend various camps, trips and leaderships activities.



“4-H is a **community** of **young people** across America who are learning **leadership, citizenship and life skills.**”

## LOCAL 4-H EVENTS

### County 4-H Club Day

A county event that provides 4-H members the opportunity to develop public appearance skills. The presentation is evaluated by a judge and presented a purple, blue, red or white ribbon. The top contestants in each category will advance to Regional 4-H Days.

### Regional 4-H Club Day

Top entries from County 4-H Day gather nearby counties to present and evaluate their 4-H Day entries. 4-H'ers earning Top Purple awards in each division at County Club Day will represent their county at the Regional Club Day.

### Achievement Celebration

An event to honor 4-H members and leaders. The county champions, achievement awards and key award winners are named. Everyone involved in 4-H is encouraged to attend.

### County Fair

The annual event where 4-H'ers exhibit an end product of their current 4-H projects for evaluation. Judging is done by a variety of evaluation methods. Exhibitors are awarded purple, blue, red or white ribbons based upon a judge's decision. Purple winners are eligible for State Fair if age requirements are met. A fair book explaining rules and classes is available from your local extension office.

### National 4-H Week

The first full week in October is set aside each year to recognize and promote 4-H.

Each year a theme highlights the week and is used throughout the year. 4-H clubs may have window displays, booths or special promotions of 4-H in their communities.

### Judging Schools and Contests

Classes of various projects can be judged by 4-H members. These schools and contests may be held on a local, county, area, state or national level. Judging teams are selected for Dairy, Family and Consumer Sciences, Horticulture, Livestock, Horse, Photography and Poultry.

*There are numerous State, Multi-State & National opportunities happening throughout the year. Be sure to check out the monthly 4-H newsletter & website for specific information!*

## 4-H PRESENTATIONS

**Presentations may be given by the 4-H member at a project meeting, club meeting or some county or state level events.**

**Project Talk** – This is a talk that tells. The member tells what he/she is doing in a project, where he/she went, what was seen, what activities were conducted, etc.

**Demonstration** – Showing and telling how to do something and there is a finished product.

**Illustrated Talk** – Uses visuals such as slides, pictures, charts or models to explain what is being said.

**Public Speaking** – This is a presentation about a topic delivered without the use of visuals or demonstration. The presentation is typically given by older members.

# YOUR JOB AS A 4-H MEMBER

*4-H Activities are fun, hands-on, rewarding and will make you want to get involved more!*

To ensure the best possible experience through 4-H, you will need to put a little effort into it. Here are some things you can do to make sure you are getting the most out of your experience:

- Attend all of your club meetings if possible. Arrive on time and plan to stay until the meeting ends.
  - An active club member volunteers for jobs without being coaxed.
- GET INVOLVED!!!!**
- Go to meetings with your ideas and share them with others. Listen to what others have to say. Even if you don't agree with other's opinions, it lets you hear other points of view.
  - Be a friend. Get to know other club members. Help out when needed.
  - Make suggestions and present ideas. This is your 4-H club so plan activities that you will have fun with as well as learn from.
  - Stay updated about important dates and opportunities. It is your responsibility to make sure you turn in registration paperwork and make deadlines. You won't want to miss out on any fun!

**Helpful Information  
from 4-H Members**

“If I had only known.....”

- \* I can go to ANY county activity that is listed in the District 4-H Newsletter.
- \* I should have read the newsletter EVERY month.
- \* Keeping records throughout the whole year makes it easier when it comes time to apply for trips and awards.
- \* Any of my friends can join 4-H! You do not need to own an animal to be a part of 4-H.

## Checklist for 4-H Members

In order to have a successful 4-H experience, members should plan to achieve the following:

### Club Responsibilities

Am Doing Now	Plan To Do	
		Attend monthly meetings regularly
		Know the roll call topic
		Be prepared when on the program
		Support and work for club and county events
		Be a dependable committee member
		Participate in Club Day and other county events

### Project Responsibilities

Am Doing Now	Plan To Do	
		Attend project meetings
		Begin project work early in the year
		Keep Permanent Record up-to-date
		Attend judging schools and contests
		Take an exhibit to the county fair
		Encouraged to complete record book or KAP

## PARENTS – PARTNERS on the 4-H TEAM!

4-H parents are the most important people in a 4-H member’s life. By making 4-H a family activity, you will be able to take an active role in your child’s activities. Few other programs allow children and their parents and other adults – to work side by side, play together and watch each other develop skills and talents.

Here are three key points about parental 4-H involvement:

- Know what is expected of your children in 4-H
- Know what is expected of you as a parent of 4-H members
- Know that you as a parent play an active part in the 4-H club’s leadership team.

### SHARE

- \*Take an interest in your child’s 4-H projects and activities.
- \*Learn what 4-H is about, its purpose and objectives.
- \*Assist your child in selecting projects they enjoy and have the ability to do.
- \*Show interest and enthusiasm in 4-H and your child.
- \*Listen, look and offer suggestions but avoid the temptation to “take over” and do things yourself.

### PREPARE

- \*Parents can assist by helping a child understand the value of having projects, duties and presentations done on time and in a proper way.
- \*Provide encouragement and guidance in your child’s project work. Help them understand what to do – but give them the responsibility to do the actual work.
- \*Encourage your child to make a note of 4-H experiences in the Permanent Record. Familiarize yourself with project materials so you can help as needed.
- \*Help your child make plans for what they want to learn and how they would like to expand their project experience.

### BE THERE

- \*Your child will gain more from 4-H by attending club meetings regularly and getting involved in 4-H activities.
- \*Parents can be a part of 4-H too!
- \*Encourage your children to participate in club activities.
- \*Provide transportation for your child to and from club meetings and activities.
- \*Attend club meetings with your child.
- \*Get to know the club leader and project leaders.
- \*Be willing to volunteer for club activities and tasks.

### CHECKLIST FOR 4-H PARENTS

Am Doing Now	Plan To Do	
		Take my child to club & project meeting & attend meetings with them.
		Know meeting dates and mark on a calendar.
		Willing to take short-time responsibilities such as: furnish transportation for activities, help at club parties, share refreshments responsibilities, help with club community service projects.
		Encourage and guide my child in project work, but do not do the work for them.
		Encourage my child to participate in demonstrations, judging, exhibits and tours.
		Encourage my child to keep an up-to-date Permanent Record.
		Give some time to learning project requirements and seeing that members of my family have them.
		Support and cooperate with club and project leaders.

### Helpful Information from 4-H Parents

“If I had only know.....”

- \* To keep a folder for ALL 4-H newsletters, mailings and record books for easy access.
- \* Parents and grandparents are encouraged to attend and participate in 4-H events with their youth.  
**4-H is a FAMILY organization.**
- \* **READ MY NEWSLETTER and ask questions!**

### CARE

- \*Arrange to attend programs and events
- \*Your presence shows that you consider what he/she is doing, to be very important.