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MADISON COUNTY 4-H LEADER GUIDE

{Established 11/2013}

The following information is intended to supplement the current publication of *Idaho 4-H Policies and Procedures* in order to help volunteer leaders better understand and prepare for their role in the Madison County 4-H Program. The *Idaho 4-H Policies and Procedures* are set forth by the State 4-H Office and reviewed annually by the State 4-H Advisory Board. The State 4-H Office considers input and recommendations from these various statewide groups and the counties when making revisions. *Idaho 4-H Policies and Procedures* includes information on membership and age requirements, membership in another county, shooting sports requirements, project requirements, 4-H market animal policy, club finances, volunteer application and acceptance requirements, etc. Idaho Leaders are responsible for being familiar with these policies, which are also available on the Idaho 4-H website at <http://www.4h.uidaho.edu>.

Within Idaho, the 4-H/Youth Development program operates under the direction of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the University of Idaho Extension. As a volunteer leader, you have accepted specific responsibilities and play a key role in carrying out our educational mission – *to assist youth in developing life skills that will enable them to become productive, contributing members of their communities*. Leaders can never lose sight that the personal development of the member is first and foremost; projects are simply tools to help accomplish this goal and any competitive event should be designed to reinforce educational knowledge and skills being developed.

Organizational Structure

Enrollment Deadlines

To ensure that each 4-H member is enrolled in a timely manner, they are encouraged to enroll early. The 4-H year goes from October 1st-September 30. Members may enroll or re-enroll on October 1st of the current 4-H year. They must re-enroll each year. There are specific deadlines for enrollment for county fair and market animal participation. (*Note: clubs can establish deadlines for re-enrolling previous year members and taking new members prior to the dates listed below*):

October 1st—Enrollment and re-enrollment for the current year begins

Market Animal Participation Deadline—Members enrolling in a market animal project must be enrolled prior to the initial weigh-in of the species participating in.

June 1st Deadline—Deadline for all members (other than market animals) planning to participate at the county or Eastern Idaho State Fair level.

Youth and adults participating in school enrichment, camping or other special interest Extension youth programs are exempt from the deadlines listed above; but must complete all required paperwork and remit all applicable fees associated with their specific activity/event by the published deadline.

Enrollment Fees

An enrollment fee is collected annually from every 4-H member to help offset the cost of 4-H project curriculum, completion materials, and to provide members with accident insurance coverage whenever they are participating in approved 4-H activities/events. For members taking Horse projects, there is a slightly higher fee for insurance coverage and other project related costs.

General Enrollment Fee--\$8

Horse Project Enrollment Fee--\$14

Clover Bud Enrollment Fee--\$5

4-H Camp, day camps or other special interest Extension youth programs vary depending of the event. The cost of those events will be published on an individual basis.

Volunteers

To assist volunteer leaders in keeping current on program and/or project changes, there are educational workshops (trainings) offered annually. These workshops also provide an excellent opportunity to network with other volunteers who are working in similar areas of interest, to exchange ideas, provide feedback and to share concerns.

Leader Certification & Training

The requirements to become a certified leader are specified in the current *Idaho 4-H Policies and Procedures*. Leaders must go through a volunteer application process in which a back ground check is required. After a leader has been “officially” accepted to volunteer in the 4-H Program, there is additional training available and highly recommended. At the current time additional training is not required, but it is expected to become a requirement through the state in the near future. Each year there are leader’s meetings and trainings offered through the Extension Office. It is very beneficial as a leader, to attend these meetings. They will be listed on the county website, published in the quarterly newsletter and sent out via email.

There are annual leader’s trainings held on a state level that leaders are highly encouraged to attend. These trainings have costs associated with them, but there are several opportunities for scholarships to help offset this cost.

Individuals wishing to serve as a volunteer within the 4-H shooting sports program, after having completed the leader certification process, must complete at least 15 hours of State 4-H sanctioned instruction in each discipline they want to lead. Training sessions are offered throughout Idaho 2-3 times a year. A reciprocal agreement exists between Idaho and Washington to increase opportunities for training.

When a leader has met all certification requirements they will be notified by their local Extension Office. Leader appointments are for one year (Oct. 1 – Sept. 30). The Extension Educator will review leader appointments annually and reserves the right not to re-certify a leader. *Volunteering is a privilege, not a right.*

County Level Leader Training & Planning

Volunteers are valued Extension partners and are an important part of local youth development programming. They are a tremendous resource and support in reaching the educational objectives, and in the planning & implementation of 4-H activities or events. Volunteer input that is constructive and positive is key to providing a quality youth development program. However, it is important to remember that all county 4-H volunteers are advisory in nature – only Extension personnel are authorized to make changes to 4-H policies and procedures.

Leaders are strongly encouraged to attend the county 4-H volunteer /leader meetings. If the youth are required to attend a majority of their club and project meetings then leaders should set an example by attending at least a majority of the county volunteer/leader meetings that pertain to the projects they are leading. Leaders may want to require teen leaders to attend the project related county meetings as well. All youth should be welcome to attend county meetings and to give input. If you cannot attend a meeting, your ideas and thoughts can be submitted in writing to the Extension Office

Project Completion Requirements

There are 5 requirements listed in the *Idaho 4-H Policies and Procedures* that must be met in order for any 4-H project to be considered completed. Youth taking market animal projects have additional project completion requirements as stated in the *Market Animal Project Policy*. Each year, the Idaho State 4-H Office publishes a *Project Requirements Handbook* for all state-supported projects that list

what is required for completing each project and there are guidelines on what to exhibit for that particular project [Note: counties may have additional project requirements – check with your local Extension Office]. Counties may also offer localized “county projects”, too; check with them to see what is offered, the supporting materials and project requirements. The Club Organizational Leader should request a copy of the *Project Requirement Handbook* each year; project leaders should receive a copy of those pages that pertain to the projects they are leading along with the list of youth enrolled thru their club in that project.

Project Exhibition & Competition

While within the 4-H Youth Development Program we recognize that many youth enjoy participating in competitive settings, it is equally important to understand that some youth prefer not to engage in these activities. For that reason, competition is not a requirement for 4-H members to complete a project; members can simply complete the required records and display their exhibit in some public setting. Youth choosing to exhibit at some event other than their respective County Fair must get approval from Extension personnel prior to exhibiting. All youth are encouraged to participate in a wide array of local, regional and/or national activities and events that incorporate educational and social interaction. All parents, members and leaders are responsible for abiding by the rules and helping to insure others respect and abide by these rules as well.

Market Animal Projects

The 4-H policy for market animal projects in Madison County (in compliance with the Idaho Project Requirements) is that project ownership and the length of feeding period is established at the initial weigh-in. Youth may weigh-in up to two animals per species for their County Fair in order to have a replacement animal available if needed. Records must be kept on all animals weighed in.

At the initial weigh-in, project animals can be designated in two ways: primary or family. Primary animals can only be exhibited by the designated member. One family animal can be shared by members within their immediate family. If you have questions on replacement animals, contact the Extension Office. Should the animal(s) a member brings to the initial weigh-in die or cannot be exhibited due to veterinary reasons, youth still have options to complete their project. If a child (4-H/FFA) has tagged only one market animal and that market animal dies before June 25 of the current year, the owner must notify their leader immediately, who will then verify the death and notify the Extension office within 7 days. The 4-H/FFA member shall write an essay prior to fair, not to exceed one page, explaining the cause of death, what they learned by the experience, etc. and present this to their club members prior to the fair. The replacement animal will be eligible to be sold and eligible for ribbons with the exception of the “ADG” contest.

If a 4-H/FFA member loses their animal (due to health or sickness) after June 25th of the current year, and prior to the showmanship contest, they may enter a showmanship contest with another member’s animal with approval of the Extension Agent, providing the lost animal was carried as a project for at least 60 days.

A specific market animal cannot be exhibited and sold at more than one event in a given project year. White ribbon market animals do not sell at Fair auctions.

Record Books / Involvement Reports/4-H Member Portfolios

Members are required to complete a project record book for each project they are enrolled in. They will utilize the *4-H Project Record Book* (#91940) for non-animal related projects or the *4-H Animal Project Record Book* (#91950) for most animal projects. Some non-market animal projects also require members to keep a *Permanent Individual Animal Record Book* (#72101) for each project animal, which is an on-going record that members update and include with their current year's project record book. Animal-related projects must include the records for all animals (primary, alternates, flock, herd, etc.) each member uses in conjunction with that given project.

Members are also required to complete one copy of the *4-H Involvement Report* (#91910) annually; as this document is a cumulative record of the member's participation, they may simply add the current year's information to their 4-H Involvement Report from the previous year. This report tracks a member's participation in leadership, citizenship and community involvement, which are all essential items in developing well-rounded 4-H members.

Record books and all supporting materials must be completed and submitted in the portfolio format by the deadline indicated for the current 4-H year. They must meet all portfolio criteria for participation at the county and Eastern Idaho State fair.

A completed record book should have accurate information entered in all sections (if not applicable, indicate "n/a"), clearly stated goals, a detailed description of meetings, presentations and activities. The member's, parent's and leader's signature on any record book indicates that each of these individuals are stating that all of the requirements for that project have been completed – ***you should never sign a record book for any member who has not met all the project requirements.*** While Extension personnel rely on the integrity of the member, parent and leader in verifying that all requirements are met, Extension does reserve the right to request any member to provide their completed project materials for examination.

4-H member Portfolios (which include project records) have the possibility of being judged three times. The initial portfolio judging will be done by the club (project) leader. It must meet the specific criteria laid out in the portfolio guidelines and judging sheet. If the criteria are not met, the leader should return the portfolio to the 4-H member so that it can be completed. If the member is not willing to complete the portfolio to the expected guidelines they will not be able to participate in the county fair, and project completion will be withheld. Once the portfolios are judged by the leader volunteer then they will submit them to the Extension office and the County Fair, depending on their judging level.

Youth who fail to meet all the project completion requirements (including submitting a completed record book, portfolio and any specified supplemental materials) will not be eligible for fair participation and project completion.

Copies of each 4-H project record book, supplement and/or Involvement Report are available at your local Extension Office or accessed online at the 4-H website <http://www.4h.uidaho.edu> in either a Word or PDF format. The on-line option enables members to choose whether to complete their record books electronically or by hand. Should a project have additional inserts required, these can be accessed through the 4-H website, as well.

Presentations

In accordance with State Project Requirements, members must give a presentation (demonstration, illustrated talk, or public speech) for *each* project in which that member is enrolled. Presentations must be on a topic that relates to their project. Leaders are responsible for making sure the youth understand what is expected when putting together a presentation. These guidelines should be followed for *all* presentations at club, county, district and state levels. The purpose of this presentation requirement is to develop self-confidence and ability to speak before others. The complexity and length of the presentation should be geared towards the member's age and level of experience within that given project.

There are many places a youth can give their presentation(s) other than at the club level to meet this state requirement, including their respective County Oral Presentation contest. Examples of other places to give presentations include: school, Kiwanis, Rotary, VFW, Senior Citizens, library, etc. Members planning to utilize one of these options should secure the approval of their project leader and/or Extension personnel in advance. If there are a lot of youth in a club who need to give presentations then plan a special day (such as a Saturday) where the youth can give their presentations.

Newsletter/News Releases

The Madison County Extension Office publishes a newsletter that is emailed or mailed to everyone enrolled in 4-H within the county; other Extension program participants, public officials, advisory board members, and community members may also be placed on the mailing list. Leaders need to read the newsletter in order to stay informed to remind and encourage members to participate in upcoming events and activities. Clubs are encouraged to submit news of their activities to the Extension Office for the newsletter and to consider inviting other clubs to participate in special activities. The newsletter is also available on our county websites); this website is updated regularly. If important information needs to be distributed between newsletters, a special notice will be sent via email or mail. All 4-H articles or news releases are to be reviewed by Extension personnel prior to submitting them to the various media outlets (newspaper, radio, etc.) to insure program continuity.

Conflict Resolution

Most conflict can be avoided by good, consistent communication. There are sections in the current *Idaho 4-H Policies and Procedures* dedicated to the process for resolving 4-H volunteer personnel issues; behavioral expectations are noted in the 4-H Code of Conduct. Leaders are encouraged to review expectations, commitment to excellence, completion requirements, club requirements, etc. with parents and members at the first meeting of the 4-H year. Leaders/committees are also encouraged to set a calendar of meetings/activities early in the year to avoid miscommunication and to provide enough time for participants to adjust their schedules. Keeping good club records, especially attendance and meeting minutes, will help keep things running smoothly and will be useful when assisting youth with their record books. Extension personnel are available to assist leaders in dealing with conflict situations.

Youth Protection

Idaho law requires youth program volunteers to report any case of suspected child abuse. If the suspected abuser is a person outside the child's home the appropriate agency to report to is the County Sheriff's Office. If the suspected abuser is a person who lives in the home, then volunteers should contact the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare or call the Child Abuse and Neglect 24 Emergency Services at 1-888-769-1405. If a report involves a child or leader within the 4-H program, the local Extension Educator should be notified. If you need assistance in making a report, the Extension Educator can provide assistance and confidential support.

While not required, the use of a buddy system is strongly encouraged; insuring that at least 2 or more responsible adults are present whenever meetings or activities are being held. This can help to protect leaders from false allegations of inappropriate behavior and also provides an additional layer of safety for youth within the 4-H program. Remember, the 4-H Youth Development Program's first and foremost priority is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for youth (and adults) to learn and grow.

Club Operations & Management

To ensure effective communication and consistent expectations for all 4-H clubs within Madison County, the following procedures have been implemented related to club management. While this section does not address the daily operation of each individual club, these basic principles should be kept in mind:

- Remember, the goal is youth development – enable youth to be actively engaged in running the club. Avoid doing it all by yourself.
- Encourage all youth – point out successes, even when all they see is failure.
- Develop a regular meeting schedule – *and stick to it*. Most parents and youth like this structure, plus it tends to increase their level of participation.

Club Structure

Each community/organizational 4-H club is under the leadership of one or more Organizational 4-H Leaders. These volunteers are responsible for coordinating overall club meetings, project leader recruitment, processing member & leader enrollments, submission of required paperwork & reports (i.e. annual financial reports, club inventory forms, etc.) and maintaining communications between members, parents, leaders within the club and with their local Extension personnel. Organizational leaders work with the club's officer team to plan and conduct meetings, plus helping the members develop an annual plan of meetings & events. Each member needs to be enrolled through one organizational club.

The organizational club normally serves as the hub for any group. Its primary focus is on leadership, citizenship, community outreach and social development. From this center, specific project groups emerge like spokes on a wheel. They enable youth, under the guidance of adult project leaders, to develop more in-depth knowledge and skills within given subject-matter areas. Normally, project groups do not elect officers and conduct business meetings; however, older and more experienced youth within the group are often asked to assist newer members learning new information and skills at these project meetings. This provides additional opportunities to develop leadership and communication skills.

Organizational Club – likely will have business to address at every meeting and youth officers should be developing the agenda and running the meetings with limited adult involvement/input. Youth wishing to run for an office should be asked to give a brief campaign speech and elections should be done by secret ballot (not a show of hands) to minimize peer pressure while mirroring the procedures use in most “real world” elections. The organizational club’s purpose is to enable youth to develop their skills in speaking, leadership and citizenship. In addition, the organizational club provides an excellent opportunity for social interaction in a non-competitive setting.

Project Group - Project groups may not need to conduct business at all or only occasionally. Leaders need to encourage and remind youth to attend applicable project-related workshops/events when available at the county, state or regional level. Leaders are expected to stay current in their subject area, take initiative and be creative in finding ways to teach the subject matter. Hands-on learning activities are most effective. Curriculum and related requirements provided by Extension is considered the minimum, but does not preclude other supplemental materials from being used. There are many resources available, the Extension Library, the Internet, etc. The project group is focused on specific subject-matter education and activities.

Organizational and project leaders usually find that the first meeting of each new program year is an excellent time to review and establish club/group policies and expectations, establish an annual calendar of meetings and answer questions that members and parents might have. Many clubs have found that using a club/project agreement form that provides clearly written expectations, which members & parents sign at the beginning of the year, help to eliminate the potential for miscommunication. Leaders may establish other project completion requirements in addition to those set forth in the county’s Project Requirement Handbook, provided these are clearly communicated at the beginning of the project.

Service learning (also known as community pride or community outreach) is an essential component within the total 4-H experience. Conducting and participating in activities/events that provide a benefit back to their local community demonstrates a willingness to put others ahead of themselves. While it should not be the underlying purpose for doing service learning projects, these efforts often helps build local support for local 4-H club efforts. Each club should conduct at least one service learning project annually, and each member should be encouraged to provide at least 4 hours of involvement.

Club Meetings

The 4-H program year runs from October 1st – September 30th. Organizational clubs and specific project groups should conduct a minimum of 6 meetings each during the program year. It is recommended that meetings not last more than 1 ½ hours, especially organizational club meetings. Approximately 15 – 20 minutes should be designated for conducting business, about 30 minutes for educational activities, guest speakers, youth presentations, etc. The remaining time should always center on some fun activity.

If feasible, leaders are encouraged to have each member do one of their presentations at an organizational meeting, so other members can learn more about the different types of projects being offered within the club. It usually works best to begin with older members, so new/younger members can observe and learn how to do a presentation. County oral presentation contests are also a great resource for youth to test their level of expertise and receive valuable suggestions on how they can continue to improve.

As some clubs meet throughout the year and may take in new members after several meetings have been held, leaders and clubs need to discuss how to welcome these new members and what provisions will be offered in relationship to meeting attendance and other related club issues. These procedures should also be set forth and communicated with all families at the beginning of the club year, or as they join.

It is the member's responsibility to notify the appropriate leader in advance should they not be able to attend any club or project meeting, and follow up with that leader shortly after the meeting to learn what they need to have prepared for the next meeting. As extenuating circumstances can arise, leaders do have the option of providing means for youth to make-up for missed meetings – however, these provisions should be set forth at the beginning of the program year and must be applied consistently for all youth within the respective club/project area.

Club Audits/Annual Treasurer Report

Each 4-H Organizational and Project Club is required to submit a completed/signed *Annual Summary Financial Report* to the Extension Office by November 1st; this form will be required before that club will be permitted to enroll members and leaders for the following year. If a club does not have funds, the financial report form still needs to be filled out indicating “0” funds. Procedures for completing a club audit and the *Annual Summary Financial Report* can be found in the *Idaho 4-H Treasurer's Book*.

Leaders are responsible for all funds raised by clubs using the 4-H name and emblem. All 4-H clubs/committees which have or plan to open a bank account need to obtain an employee identification number (EIN); the Extension Office can assist you with procedures and forms (SS-4) to be submitted to the IRS to obtain an EIN – personal social security numbers should never be used in conjunction with a 4-H bank account. All money generated using the 4-H name should be placed in a 4-H club bank account; personal bank accounts should never be used as a depository for 4-H funds. Individuals, clubs and committees should not keep funds in the form of cash.

Club Inventory

To insure accountability and clearly define what equipment and/or materials have been purchased by or donated to the respective club, an annual *4-H Inventory Form* should be completed and kept in the club records or submitted to the Extension Office. This form is essential in tracking what equipment/materials clubs own in order to prevent ownership disputes in future years as leaders and members come and go within the club.

If any assets of the club are sold and/or disposed of, the *4-H Inventory Form* also enables the club to effectively track these decisions, where the item(s) went and what compensation was received, if any. All income from the sale of assets must be included on the club's *Annual Summary Financial Report* and in the club's *Treasurer's Book*. Should a club dissolve for any reason, all assets become the property of the UI Extension Office within the county where that club was enrolled; the disposition of equipment and funds will be made by Extension personnel in the manner deemed most appropriate and beneficial to the overall county 4-H program. Disbursement among members and/or leaders of the dissolved club is not acceptable, nor is the transfer of funds to any non-4-H group.

Fund Raising

At various times clubs/groups may wish to raise funds for a specific goal that they have identified and wish to accomplish. It is important to remember that fund raising should always have a specific purpose in mind – not just for the sake of raising money.

The name and use of the 4-H emblem is protected under Federal statutes. Therefore, all 4-H fund raising activities should include the submittal of the *4-H Fund Raising Request* form to the Extension Office for approval prior to conducting any activities in the county using the 4-H name and emblem. This approval process keeps the Extension Office informed of the various fund raising activities being conducted by clubs/groups within that county. It also enables Extension personnel to substantiate the validity of fund raising activities when answering inquiries by individuals and/or businesses being contacted and ensures liability coverage should an accident occur during such an activity.

Health Releases

While all due diligence is taken in designing and conducting 4-H activities/events, accidents can happen. Being prepared to respond promptly is very important and having a signed health release is a critical step in this process. A release is included as a part of the member enrollment form for general use throughout the year; special events may require a more detailed release to be completed.