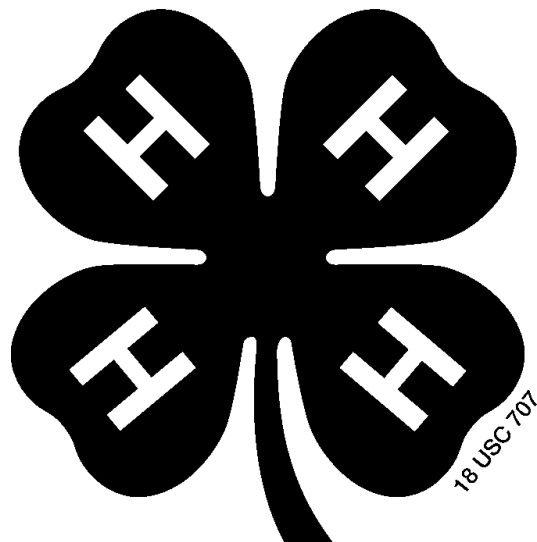


# McLean County



## New Family Handbook

University of Illinois Extension - McLean County  
1615 Commerce Parkway, Bloomington IL 61704  
(309) 663-8306

[go.illinois.edu/lmw](http://go.illinois.edu/lmw)

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# 4-H FAQ's

## What is 4-H?

The 4-H program is the largest, informal youth-serving organization in the country. The 4-H program is an organization with clubs in every county of every state in the United States, and in more than 80 countries around the world. The McLean County 4-H program is part of University of Illinois Extension.

The 4-H program is organized into clubs throughout the county, based on where members live, or specific interests. SPIN (SPecial INterest) Clubs, such as Shooting Sports and Robotics, offer you the opportunity to focus on a specific theme. Volunteer adult leaders help to lead the clubs, provide organization and adult supervision for the various club activities. They also help to advise the youth about educational opportunities, leadership and citizenship development.

## Who can be part of 4-H?

Youth who are eight years of age and have not reached their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday on or before September 1 of the current year may enroll in 4-H clubs and groups.

Youth five through seven years of age on or before September 1 of the current year may enroll in 4-H Cloverbud groups.

## Why should I join 4-H?

4-H offers many unique opportunities for youth. From Aerospace to Cooking and everything in between, 4-H has something for everyone. Join a club, attend a camp, become a 4-H Teen Teacher, participate in a summer academy, explore new interests, build leadership experiences, and make connections with new friends. Through 4-H, you can make an impact on your community and world and have a great time doing it!

## **Where are 4-H Club meetings and activities?**

There are 4-H Clubs located throughout the McLean County community. For information about each club, including meeting dates, location and leader information, contact the McLean County Extension Office at (309) 633-8306 or go online at [go.illinois.edu/lmw](http://go.illinois.edu/lmw).

You are also welcome to attend various workshops and events held throughout McLean, Livingston, and Woodford counties (unless specifically noted otherwise) during the year.

## **When can I join 4-H?**

Today! While the new 4-H year begins on September 1, new members are welcome anytime.

## **How can I get involved?**

Enroll in 4-H through <https://4h.zsuite.org/> website. You will set up a family profile and enroll each member, select a club and choose project areas

of interest. Projects can be added until May 1 to participate for premiums in the 4-H Show. A guide to walk you through the enrollment process can be found on the [McLean County 4-H website](#).

# 4-H Traditions...

## What you need to know:

### The 4-H Pledge

The 4-H Pledge summarizes what 4-H is all about. 4-H's goal is the four-fold development of youth: Head, Heart, Hands and Health. Most 4-H members learn and try to live according to the promises they make in the 4-H Pledge.

The pledge was adopted by the delegates to the 1927 National 4-H Club Camp in Washington, DC. State club leaders voted for and adopted the pledge for universal use. The phrase "and my world" was added to the pledge in 1973. The pledge has a prominent place in 4-H activities, at regular 4-H meetings, achievement days and other club events.

"I pledge my **HEAD** to clearer thinking,

*(Right hand points to forehead)*

my **HEART** to greater loyalty,

*(Right hand over heart)*

my **HANDS** to larger service, and

*(Arms slightly bent, palms up)*

my **HEALTH** to better living,

*(Arms at side)*

for my **CLUB**, my **COMMUNITY**

my **COUNTRY**, and my **WORLD**."

## 4-H Colors

Green represents life, youth, nature, and springtime.  
White symbolizes purity.

## 4-H Emblem



The green four-leaf clover has a white “H” on each leaf to represent the four H’s – Head, Heart, Hands and Health and proper code attached.

## 4-H Slogan

*“Learn By Doing”*

A phrase that represents the educational philosophy of the 4-H program. Derived from educational theory and philosophy of the times, the slogan exemplifies the experiential nature of the learning experiences in 4-H. Young people learn best when they are involved in their learning. The intent is to do, reflect and apply.

## 4-H Motto

*“To Make the Best Better”*

The motto was adopted at about the same time as the 4-H Club Pledge. Its intent is to inspire young people to continue to learn and grow and to make their best efforts better through participating in educational experiences. This motto challenges everyone involved in 4-H to do the very best job they can.

# Membership Policies

Returning Members - To be considered active in 4-H and participate in the 4-H Show, youth must be enrolled by October 31 in at least one project and have paid the \$20 program fee. Enrollment allows members to be covered by University of Illinois' insurance policy. Returning members may add additional projects until May 1.

New Members - must be enrolled in all of their projects and pay the \$20 program fee by May 1 in order to show for premiums at the local 4-H Show.

- In order for members to be marked active in ZSuite, the following original documents must be signed by both parent and member:
  - Assumption of Risk and Release from Liability Waiver
- **4-H Program Fee Policy for McLean County**  
Members must pay a 4-H Program Fee of \$20/year. This fee includes community club members, independent members, SPIN club members and Cloverbuds. \$7 is forwarded to the state and \$13 will stay in the county.

If a member crosses county lines (joins 4-H in a county other than their county of residence), they pay the higher of the two fees if one of those counties charges more than \$20.

If a member belongs to more than one club in McLean County, they will only pay the fee once.

No child will be denied participation in 4-H due to the inability to pay. Contact the Extension office for fee waiver information. Some clubs choose to do fundraising or collect donations to offset 4-H Program Fees for their members. Families with more than three members will receive a fee waiver for each additional child.

If a member drops out of 4-H after enrolling, a refund will not be issued.

# The 4-H Club Meeting

## ***Why conduct club meetings?***

The purpose of 4-H meetings is to help members:

- Acquire new information
- Learn teamwork skills
- Develop social skills
- Acquire desirable leadership and citizenship traits
- Understand how to conduct a business meeting

4-H members are given the opportunity to learn and practice decision making in group situations by using the knowledge and skills acquired at these meetings. 4-H members are expected to attend the club meetings on a regular basis.

Parents are encouraged to attend 4-H Club meetings with their 4-H Members. The 4-H program is a family-friendly organization.

## ***How often do clubs meet?***

Clubs are required to meet at least six times each year; however, most clubs meet monthly for business meetings, educational programs or fun activities. Clubs are able to establish their own schedule based on what works best for the membership. Most clubs set a regular meeting night, such as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of each month.

## ***What is a club meeting like?***

The 4-H meeting is balanced between *business, educational programs* and *recreation*. Meetings normally do not last over one to one and a half hours, with time divided between the three parts.

## ***What is the Business Session like?***

The business portion of the meeting should be short and precise. It looks like a small democracy in action. Members have the opportunity to discuss and decide upon club activities. This is also an opportunity to find out what is happening on the county and state level.

## ***What is an Educational Program?***

This part of the club meeting is designed to help members learn more about the subjects of general interest in the 4-H program. The 4-H way of teaching is unique – it is “learning by doing”. Good 4-H teaching employs seeing, hearing and doing. Generally, the educational program will include talks and demonstrations by the 4-H Members. Outside speakers may present programs for 4-H meetings as well.



## ***Demonstrations***

Demonstrations are “show and tell” type presentations where the 4-H Members share some of what they have learned while completing their 4-H projects. Actual articles are used to show the steps necessary for a finished product. Most demonstrations consist of three parts:

1. Introduction – explains the purpose of the demonstration
2. Body – outlines the process step-by-step
3. Summary – reviews important points and gives opportunity for questions.

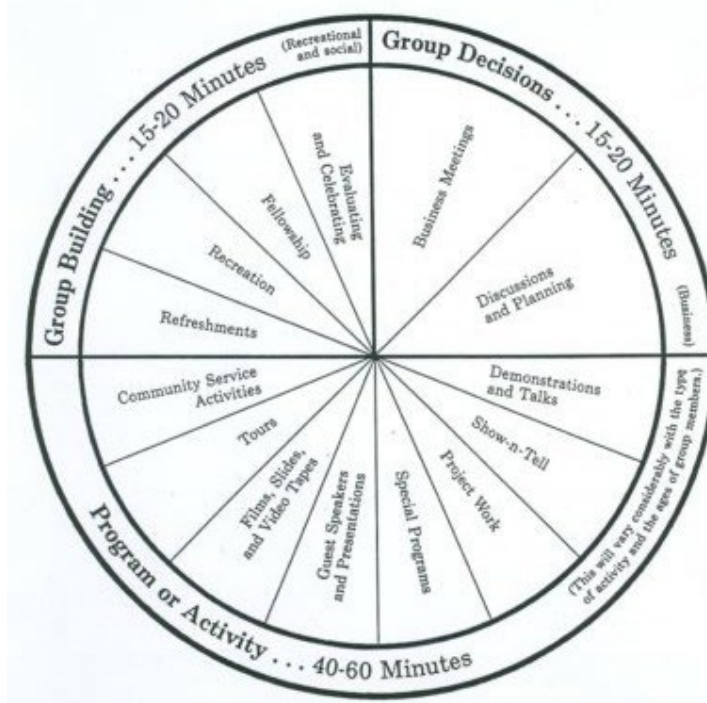
## ***Illustrated Talks***

Illustrated talks differ from demonstrations in that they tell how rather than show how. Charts, models and other visuals are important for illustrated talks.

## ***What about Recreation and Refreshments?***

The recreation portion of the meeting is a fun time involving all members. Recreation will vary from challenges, relays, guessing games, table games or other group activities.

Many clubs serve refreshments at meetings, although it is not essential. Most often, different members host each meeting. The learning experience for the members to select, prepare and serve refreshments is an important component. Club members should learn how to select simple, nutritious and inexpensive refreshments. Parents can and should help by giving suggestions and guidance.



# 4-H Project Selection

All 4-H members are required to enroll in at least one project each year. Often, 4-H members will select more than one project to work on throughout the 4-H year.

Project selection is very important to members, parents and leaders. Thought and consideration is needed during project selection. Various factors should be considered which could lead to a successfully completed 4-H project.

Young people vary in their individual capacities, interests, needs and environment. When a member selects a project that meets his interests and needs, he has a better chance to enjoy a satisfying, useful experience in 4-H.

## **Consider the following factors when assisting 4-H members in selecting projects:**

- What are their interests?
- Do they have or can they get the necessary equipment?
- Are their parents interested enough to help them fit the project into their family plans?
- What previous project experience have they had?
- Have they considered the costs involved in the project?
- Does the 4-H club have a project leader for this project? If not, is there another adult that can assist the member with this project?
- All livestock projects have specific dates in which the animal must be in the member's possession. Is the member able to meet the deadline?
- Project requirements, judging and exhibiting requirements differ with each project. Leaders, members and parents should review them.

The *Project Guide* is the complete listing of projects offered on the state level. In addition, a few projects are specific to McLean County and are referred to as "county projects."

The suggested ages in the *Project Guide* are just that – suggested. Choose the project level that best matches your knowledge and skill in that area. If a project has multiple levels (example: Photography I, II and III) you can be enrolled in the same project level for more than one year.

# How to Enroll in 4-H

The 4-H year starts on September 1 and ends on August 31. Youth may enroll in 4-H at any time; however, in order to participate in the 4-H Show at the McLean County Fair, new members must be enrolled in 4-H and the specific project by May 1.

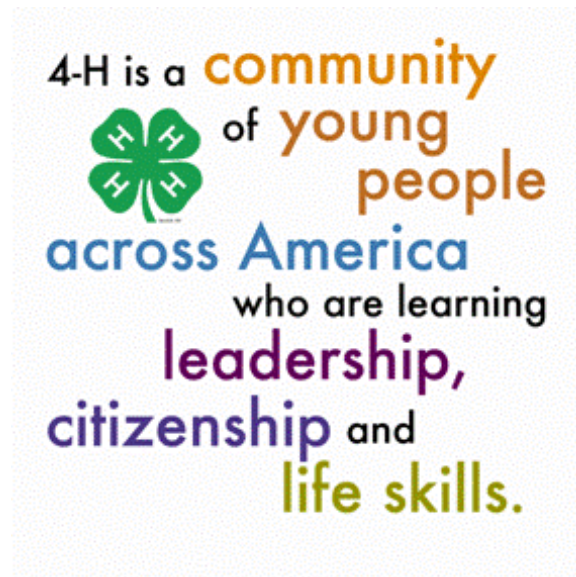
The sooner you enroll through ZSuite, the sooner you can order your project books, the 4-H weekly email and any correspondence relating to your project (ex: invitations to project workshops).

Once you have enrolled in ZSuite you may add or drop projects until the deadline by simply logging back into your profile, selecting "view", and then selecting projects.

## Enrollment Procedure

- ❑ At the beginning of the 4-H year, a new *Project Guide* will be available. Your club leader may pass them out, they are available at the Extension Office, and can be viewed online.
- ❑ All enrollment and enrollment changes MUST be made through ZSuite (<https://4h.zsuite.org/>)
- ❑ Members must enroll each year through ZSuite. Automatic enrollment will not happen, as it is unclear if the member plans to enroll for the current year and what projects that might be of interest to them.
- ❑ 4-H age eligible college students can be enrolled and excused from meetings when they live away from home.
- ❑ The newsletter is distributed by email, and posted to the county website. If a family does not have access to email, please request a printed copy in the mail by calling the office at (309) 663-8306.
- ❑ Use the current *Project Guide* and County Project List to select your projects. The previous year's copy of the McLean County Fair & 4-H Show book may help determine what the show exhibit requirements will be, but usually the fair book has many classes listed for each project. By the May 1 deadline, members only need to select the project area, not the specific show class. The specific show exhibit class will be selected during 4-H Fair Entry, which is completed online by the last Friday in June every year.

- Project books will be ordered by the family and shipped directly to you. There is a small fee associated with the project books so pay attention to the selection guide and only choose books that are mandatory for the project or that you are certain you want to purchase.
- Generally, if a member enrolls in the same project for more than one year, a new project book is not needed. An exception might be when new books are printed. Each time a 4-H member enrolls in a new project level (i.e. Electricity I to Electricity II), a new book is needed. Most project books are able to be used for 3 years (see *Project Guide*).



# How to Complete 4-H Show Entries

- The McLean County Fair & 4-H Show book will be posted on the University of Illinois Extension website in early April. One book per family will be distributed to club leaders in May.
- The show entries will be completed through [fairent.com](http://fairent.com) by the last Friday in June. Late entries will not be accepted.
- To see what projects you are enrolled in (by the May 1st deadline) simply go to ZSuite. Then, using the McLean County Fair & 4-H Show book, look up the project(s) and choose which ones you would like to show. You can only sign up for a show class if you are enrolled in the project.
- To enter an exhibit in the 4-H Show, visit [fairent.com](http://fairent.com). More information will be sent via email in the spring.
- All classes, except for some livestock, are limited to one entry per exhibitor. At the beginning of each section of the fair book, you will find instructions on the number of entries that are allowed.
- *Read the McLean County Fair & 4-H Show book! Pay special attention to the general rules and criteria for your projects.*
- *A 4-H member must attend at least three 4-H meetings or events, give a talk or demonstration and be enrolled at the required date in order to show at the 4-H Show.*

# Additional Requirements for Livestock Projects

- Ownership dates and policies are printed in the 4-H newsletter.
- QAEC: The Quality Assurance and Ethics (QAEC) training is required for 4-H members showing horses, rabbits, poultry, dogs and cats. You only need to take it once in your lifetime. The QAEC training can be accessed year round in the Clover Academy section of the ZSuite Enrollment System. ZSuite can be accessed at <https://4h.zsuite.org/>. Families can access directions for completing the course at <https://go.illinois.edu/TakeQAEC> by June 1.
- If you are exhibiting a horse, the lease or ownership paperwork, along with two pictures (both sides) of the horse must be turned into the Extension office by May 1.
- Livestock health requirements for the 4-H Show are listed in the McLean County Fair & 4-H Show book. Read carefully and plan appointments with your vet accordingly. Many species require a certificate of veterinary inspection for entry into the 4-H Show.

## *Livestock Ownership Dates*

To be eligible to participate in the 4-H Show at the McLean County Fair, animals must be owned and cared for by exhibitor by the dates listed in the McLean County Fair & 4-H Show book. Please note that State Fair ownership dates/birth dates may be different from county dates. Please check with the Extension office if you plan to exhibit at the State Fair.

## *Livestock Tattooing*

### McLean County Fair

Members planning to exhibit beef steers at the 4-H Show during the McLean County Fair will need to have their animals weighed and tattooed.

All Steers – Weighed and tattooed on the last Saturday of January at the Reel’s Livestock Center in Congerville. All beef animals must be castrated prior to tattooing.

- For additional livestock requirements and rules, please consult the McLean County Fair and 4-H Show Book available online at <http://go.illinois.edu/McLean4HShow> or contact 4-H Staff with questions.

### *FYI: If a 4-H member is interested in showing in the Illinois State Fair Junior Shows*

Members planning to exhibit steers, barrows and wethers at the Illinois State Fair will need to have their animals weighed and tattooed. The dates that these animals must be weighed include the following:

Steers – Weighed and tattooed on the last Saturday in January. All beef animals must be castrated prior to tattooing.

Premiere Wethers – All lambs must be taken to one of the designated locations around the state to be tagged with electronic ID tag, tattooed and weighed.

# Project Judging at the 4-H Show

The 4-H Show is the highlight of the year for many members. The McLean County Fair & 4-H Show is usually held on the first weekend in August at the McLean County Fairgrounds in Bloomington. This is the opportunity for members to have their 4-H projects judged and put on display for the public to view.

## What do I bring to the 4-H Show?

The McLean County Fair & 4-H Show book contains all the policies and procedures for the 4-H Show. It is very important to read and follow the rules. Read the General Rules and Livestock Health Requirements carefully. Then read the specific requirements for your project area. Some projects require a written report in addition to the display. **READ CAREFULLY!** If you have questions, contact your leader or the Extension office for help.

## How is my project judged?

Judging is a learning experience to see what you did well and how you could improve in the future. An exhibit does not measure all that you have learned, but it is an example of what you have done. During conference judging, the judge will encourage you to talk about your project exhibit. You will be asked some questions by the judge, so you should be prepared to answer more your project and what you did to make the exhibit. The interview will last approximately five to ten minutes.

## What Are The Judges Looking For?

- The exhibitor's goals: What was your goal for the project? How did you work toward your goal? What important things did you learn?
- Requirements for project are met to the best of the exhibitor's abilities.
- Evidence of learning, workmanship and techniques, appearance and design.

## What Do Ribbon Colors Mean?

Illinois 4-H uses the Danish system of judging—rather than competing against someone else, youth challenge themselves to create exhibits that represent their best.

Blue: Exhibit meets all requirements well.

Red: Exhibit meets some requirements well, but could use improvement on other requirements.

White: Exhibit needs improvement on many requirements or is missing information critical to evaluation of the exhibit.



## **What do I do if I receive Special Honors at the 4-H Show?**

You will receive an A, B or C ribbon after judging is complete. Once all projects are judged, a champion and/or a State Fair delegate may be awarded. If you receive a note on your project with a notation of State Fair delegate, you must then decide if you want to go to State Fair with that project. You will need to go to the 4-H staff information desk in the Cloverleaf Hall for instructions.

## **What are Premiums?**

Members receive premiums (monetary awards) as an incentive to do well on their 4-H projects. Premiums are based on the color of ribbon awarded to the project.

Premiums in Illinois are paid through the Agricultural Premium Fund, which is authorized under the Agricultural Fair Act and administered by the Bureau of County Fairs, State of Illinois Department of Agriculture. The Illinois legislature must approve the Ag Premium Fund each year. The amount of funds provided to the county to pay premiums is based on the previous year's 4-H club enrollment. Only one show or exhibition of a class or type of project work be eligible for awards. "County Projects" are not eligible for premiums through the Agricultural Premium Funds, and are therefore paid with local funds. Premium checks are mailed to members after the funds have been received by the Extension office from the State of Illinois. Premium checks must be cashed in a timely manner - as they will not be reissued.

The Department of Agriculture shall use its best efforts to secure sufficient appropriations to fund premiums. In any year for which the General Assembly of the State of Illinois fails to make an appropriation sufficient to pay such premiums, premium amounts may not be funded as in previous years.

## **Tax Implications for Prizes, Gifts, or Awards**

Program Participants (including minors) will be required to provide their social security number or foreign national tax ID number prior to receiving a prize, gift or award in excess of \$100 to ensure proper IRS reporting as required by law. This sensitive information is kept confidential and handled through security protected software (PEAR). Participants will not be eligible for prize, gift or award if social security or foreign national tax ID information is not provided.

## **Tips for 4-H Judging**

- ✓ Be well groomed, which includes clean hands, hair and fingernails.
- ✓ Do not chew gum.
- ✓ Use good posture. Sit/stand straight and tall.
- ✓ Be polite and use your best manners.
- ✓ Be prepared to talk about your project. Know what you did, how you did it, what you learned and what you might do differently the next time.
- ✓ When answering the judge's questions, speak clearly and loud enough for the judge to hear your answers.
- ✓ During the interview, look at the judge and give them your full attention. Do not be distracted by other people or noises around you.
- ✓ Thank the judge when the interview is finished. Remember, the real purpose of judging is sharing and learning.
- ✓ Be pleasant and confident. Smile! Be enthusiastic!

## **What happens if I cannot come to project judging?**

Remember, exhibiting at the 4-H Show is just a part of completing your project. Hopefully, you have been working on activities throughout the year to learn about the subject you selected. You can still "complete" your project by showing your exhibit (what you were planning to bring to the fair) to club members at a meeting or club tour. Not being able to exhibit at the 4-H Show does not mean that you did a lot of work for nothing – you should have learned a great deal along the way and hopefully had fun while doing it. You may also have a new rocket to play with, a new piece of art for your room or new fishing lures to use. Non-livestock projects may be non-conference judged, but must include the 4-H exhibit form that explains how the project was made. Contact the Extension office for this form.

# Recordkeeping and Recognition

From the early days of 4-H, we have known that the wise use of recognition has the potential of inspiring a person to action. For some 4-H members, regularly attending meetings or participating in an educational experience is an accomplishment and worthy of recognition. Some young people are challenged by setting their own personal goals and then working to achieve them. Working to achieve pre-established standards of excellence challenges others. Some are motivated by a highly structured experience that leads to champions or other single awards. Because people participate in the same activity for different reasons, recognition may have a different meaning to each participant.

## Recognition of Progress

All 4-H members may be recognized for the progress they have made toward their individual 4-H project goals. Each person's goals may be different. Goals should help the 4-H member explore their interests and provide a challenge.

My 4-H Project Record Sheets are designed to assist members in setting project goals. Each member will receive project-planning forms for the 4-H projects in which they are enrolled. Forms are available at the Extension office or online at [go.illinois.edu/lmw](http://go.illinois.edu/lmw).

- 4-H members complete My 4-H Project Record Sheets for each of their project areas (example: Animal Science; Food, Nutrition, & Health; Personal Development).
- Each 4-H member will receive one copy of *My 4-H Activities* each year. This form will assist in recording leadership, citizenship and other aspects of their 4-H involvement.

## Judging Standards

Standards for judging 4-H projects are outlined in project manuals and the McLean County Fair & 4-H Show Book. Evaluation for achievement compares each member's work against a set standard for that project only, not against each other. The Danish system of ribbon group rating is used at the county fair. Exhibits are individually evaluated against a set of criteria and are awarded a ribbon.

Blue – Project meets standards

Red – Project needs improvement

White – Project needs much improvement

## **Performance Standards**

4-H members who complete a variety of different experiences can apply for County Level Recognition Awards (Bronze, Silver, Gold) or State Level Recognition Awards (Diamond, Emerald). Applications are available in the fall from your 4-H leader or online. Applications for these awards are due by mid-September. Exact due dates will be emailed out by the office. Awards are presented at the end of the 4-H year at the Recognition of Excellence night.

A First Year Outstanding Member Award is available to those first-year members completing specific experiences. See your leader for more information.

## **Recognition of Competition**

Even though all 4-H members cannot have a champion exhibit or are not named winners, they all gain skills and knowledge. With competition comes strict rules and criteria for eligibility, which will be enforced. Participants need to know the rules. Perhaps most important, they need to realize that they might not win and be prepared for that. In competition, judges or officials determine the winners. Their opinions must be respected by all involved – youth, parents and volunteers.

There are many 4-H Awards presented at the annual Recognition of Excellence Program (Awards Night) held in the fall. Members must apply for these awards.

# A Sampling of 4-H Activities

## McLean County Activities

**New Member Workshop** – Typically held in February, this is a workshop for new members and parents to learn about 4-H.

**Learn and Fun Day** – Held in February and sponsored by Livingston, McLean and Woodford counties, Learn and Fun Day is a fun-filled day of workshops related to 4-H projects. Participants select four workshops to attend during the day and lunch.

**Project Workshops** – Workshops are held throughout the year to help youth learn skills related to their projects.

**Public Presentation and Food Demonstrations** – Members enrolled in Public Presentations and Food Demonstrations present their work for the public at this event held in May.

**4-H Show** – Members have the opportunity to exhibit their projects at a local fair. Knowledgeable judges who rate projects and award a blue, red, or white ribbon evaluate projects. By using conference judging, members have the chance to learn more about their project.

**4-H Teen Teachers** – A group of youth (ages 13-18) who develop their own leadership and teaching skills as they plan and implement hands-on learning for younger youth. Teens complete a training program prior to leading workshops and events. To become a 4-H Teen Teacher, contact the Extension office and complete an application.

**4-H Federation** – A group of older 4-H members (8<sup>th</sup> grade and up) who hold meetings on a monthly basis to plan programs and offer suggestions for the county 4-H program. This is a good way of building leadership skills and gives 4-H Members a chance to meet others their own age from around the county.

## Activities Outside McLean County

**4-H Camp** – A five-day living experience that is offered to 4-H (and non-4-H) youth each summer. Camp is an excellent opportunity for youth to learn more about the environment and themselves. McLean County 4-H members can go to camp at 4-H Memorial Camp near Monticello.

**Citizenship Washington Focus** – A bi-annual trip to Washington D.C. for teen 4-H members. Participants have a chance to learn more about our government and their role in it.

**Illini Summer Academies** – This opportunity offers teens the opportunity to explore the University of Illinois campus and potential degree programs and/or careers. University faculty and staff plan interactive learning sessions to provide delegates an overview of actual college classes required in various majors.

**Illinois State Fair** – 4-H members from around the state exhibit their projects at the State Fair held in Springfield during August. Non-livestock members are selected at the local 4-H Show while livestock exhibitors may participate without being selected at the local fair.

**International Traveling & Hosting** – International 4-H Exchange Programs provide 4-H youth an opportunity to connect with the global world around them by hosting international visitors or by allowing them to travel to another country. Exchange programs are available with Australia, Finland, Japan, Mexico and more.

**National 4-H Congress** – More than 1,100 4-H delegates from across the nation gather in Atlanta, Georgia for National 4-H Congress each November. Illinois is represented by teens who have won state 4-H awards in one of the curriculum areas. National 4-H Congress offers 4-H teens an expanded educational experience through seminars, community service projects, and tours.

**National 4-H Conference** – A select group of eight Illinois teens and two adults travel to Washington, D.C. each spring to participate. Delegates from throughout the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico spend time attending workshops and working on action plans for the national, state, and local levels. Some limited sightseeing is included. The first opportunity to attend this trip is provided to the teens serving on the State 4-H Youth Leadership Team. Open spaces are filled by application to provide a diverse Illinois delegation.

**Speaking for Illinois 4-H** – This training offers teens ages 14 to 18 an opportunity to advance their public presentation skills by providing training to connect with potential donors, tell their 4-H story to elected officials and promote 4-H to civic groups.

# What is Expected of 4-H Members?

It is the responsibility of the 4-H member to get involved and to take advantage of the opportunities provided in 4-H. Members should:

- ❑ Enroll in 4-H through ZSuite at the beginning of each 4-H year and provide the following:
  - ✓ \$20 program fee
  - ✓ Assumption of Risk and Release From Liability Waiver
- ❑ Select a 4-H project with the help of parents or leaders, read the 4-H project book and do the activities in the book if needed.
- ❑ Attend and take an active part in 4-H club meetings and activities.
- ❑ Attend and participate in county, district, and state activities, workshops, and programs when possible.
- ❑ Help plan and support 4-H club activities – community service, fundraising, etc.
- ❑ Read 4-H mail and email that comes to your home. Share this information with parents/guardian.
- ❑ Keep a current and up-to-date 4-H calendar of meetings and activities.
- ❑ Ask parent, relative or other adult to serve as a 4-H project helper.
- ❑ Serve as an officer of the club or on a committee.
- ❑ Share a hobby, skill or interest with other 4-H club members during a meeting or workshop.
- ❑ Keep parents/guardian informed about 4-H club meetings, projects, and activities.
- ❑ Since most groups or clubs are judged by the behavior of individual members, it is the responsibility of the 4-H member to act in a manner that would be a credit to the individual, the family, the 4-H club, the county, and the state during 4-H meetings and activities.

# What Can Parents Do to Help?

- ❑ Please update/review your home address and email address in ZSuite to ensure that you receive the most accurate information from the McLean County Extension Office. Check your junk email folders to make sure you aren't missing any correspondence. If so, please mark @illinois.edu email addresses as safe senders.
- ❑ Take time to learn about 4-H, what it stands for and how it operates.
- ❑ Advise youth in selecting their 4-H projects. Help them select a project they are interested in, a project they have the ability to accomplish and one for which you can furnish facilities, financing, needed materials and guidance.
- ❑ Show your interest and enthusiasm for the 4-H projects selected. Find out what is suggested for the members to do and learn.
- ❑ Encourage your child to get started and then complete the work.
- ❑ Resist doing your child's project for them even though you may be able to do it faster, better, simpler and with much less mess.
- ❑ Keep the purpose of the 4-H program in perspective. Realize that the project is a teaching tool and a method for involving youth in a worthwhile activity. Above all, remember that your child is more important than the 4-H project. This is great bonding time.
- ❑ Remember that the 4-H experience should be an educational one. Do not let the desire to win overpower your child's ability to learn.
- ❑ Encourage your 4-H member when they succeed and even more when they fail.
- ❑ Offer to help the 4-H club leader.
- ❑ Encourage your child to keep track of work done in 4-H. This information will be helpful if the member seeks awards in 4-H or outside of 4-H (college applications, scholarships).
- ❑ Avoid scheduling other activities that conflict with your child's 4-H schedule when possible.
- ❑ Remember that the 4-H member is more important than the 4-H project.
- ❑ Be tactful with 4-H leaders, staff, judges and your child.
- ❑ ASK QUESTIONS!



# History of 4-H

The 4-H program did not start at any one time or place. It is the result of the work of many people in different parts of the United States who were concerned about young people. From its inception, 4-H tied both public and private resources together for the purpose of helping young people.

Two forces generated the idea of 4-H work. One was the concern for education in rural areas. The seed of the 4-H idea of practical or applied educational principles resulted from concern for the relevance of public schools to country life. The second was a need for advancing the new agricultural technologies produced by research at experiment stations of the land-grant college system. The farming community did not readily accept these new ideas and techniques.

When Congress created the Cooperative Extension Service at USDA in 1914, it included boys and girls' club work. This soon became known as 4-H clubs - Head, Heart, Hands, and Health.

As 4-H neared its 50th anniversary, it began to experience several trends. In 1948, a group of American young people went to Europe and a group of Europeans came to the United States on the first International Farm Youth Exchange. Out-of-state trips and international exchanges have been highly educational for hundreds of young people in 4-H. In the 1950's, 4-H began to extend into urban areas. Later, the basic 4-H focus became the personal growth of the member. Life skills development is built into 4-H projects, activities and events, to help participants become contributing, productive, self-directed members of society. The organizational coordination changed in the 1960's, combining 4-H groups divided by gender or race into a single integrated program.

Today, after 100 years, 4-H is the largest out-of-school youth program in the US - both in rural and urban areas throughout the country. It offers youth opportunities in communications, leadership, career development, animal and plant science, home improvement, technology, and much more to nearly seven million American youth. The program promotes life skills development through an expanding number of delivery modes: 4-H community clubs, special interest groups, EFNEP (Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program), nutrition programs, school enrichment, camping, and more. The 4-H program will continue to grow and develop with the head, heart, hands, and health of youth.

## 4-H History Timeline

1902

A.B. Graham, a school principal in Ohio, formed a club of boys and girls with officers, projects, meetings and record requirements. He sought the assistance of Ohio Agricultural Experiment Station and Ohio State University.

The club concept was adopted in Iowa by O.H. Benson in Wright County and Jessie Field Shambaugh in Page County. Benson and Field designed a 3-leaf clover symbol.

Wallaces' Farmer magazine sponsored contests for raising corn from high-grade seed corn.

1905

E.C. Bishop in Nebraska was encouraging work with corn growing, sewing and baking projects in York County. He organized the work into Nebraska Boys Agricultural Association (exhibited corn and garden products and held livestock judging contests) and Nebraska Girls Domestic Science Association (exhibited sewing and cooking and held contests in which they judged "articles of sewing, handwork and cooking"). A purpose of the Nebraska Associations was "...to educate the youth of the county, town, and city to a knowledge of their dependence on nature's resources, and to the value of the fullest development of hand, head and heart..."

From 1905 to 1914, clubs were started in nearly all states.

1909

A report of the Country Life Commission strongly urged Congress to authorize Agricultural Extension Service through the land grant university system. Although Congress ignored the recommendation, the movement started on its own.

Professor P.G. Holden, superintendent of Iowa Extension, gave A.U. Storins the job of organizing 4-H in schools.

In 1909, USDA outlined a proposal for establishing girls' tomato canning clubs. In 1910, Marie S. Cromer of Aiken County, SC, organized a club using material supplied by the USDA. At the same time, Ella G. Agnew was establishing girls' canning clubs in Virginia. She was the first woman agent appointed by USDA for farmers' cooperative demonstration work. By 1912, 23,000 canning clubs had been organized. Girls' clubs, confined to canning, sewing, baking, and the like, had no such technological goals. Teaching safe and efficient methods of preserving food was a sufficient goal in itself. However, Girls' clubs soon looked at the entire role of women in the home and community.

1914 - 1917

Passage of the Smith-Lever Act created the Cooperative Extension System. County agents and local leaders began to organize 4-H clubs. Club meetings and projects were made major requirements.

1919

One of the most important meetings in the history of the 4-H movement was held in Kansas City. The general structure of local clubs was firmly established, an expansion of projects was encouraged, relations between club work and vocational education in the schools were defined, and the general principle of local initiative was ratified.

1921 - 1922

The National Committee on Boys' and Girls' Club Work was formed for the purpose of obtaining private support for club work. Private support provided trips, awards and events outside the scope of public funding.

1940's - 1950's

In 1948 a group of American young people went to Europe and a group of Europeans came to the United States on the first International Farm Youth Exchange. Out-of-state trips and international exchanges have been highly educational for hundreds of young people in 4-H.

4-H celebrates 50th anniversary in 1952. A US commemorative stamp is issued.

4-H extends into urban areas.

1960's - Now

In recent years, the 4-H program has been experiencing two significant trends. One is that the basic purpose of 4-H is the personal growth of the member. By using 4-H projects as important means for achievement and growth, members build skills they can use the rest of their lives. Educational experiences within the 4-H program are built around life skills that center on positive self-esteem, communication and decision making. Citizenship and leadership skills, learning how to learn and the ability to cope with change also are an important part of 4-H educational programs. Life skills are built into 4-H projects, activities and events that help participants become contributing, productive, self-directed members of a forward-moving society.

The second trend was toward program and organizational coordination, combining 4-H organizations divided by gender and race into a single integrated program. The program also incorporates life skills development into an expanding number of delivery modes. In addition to the core 4-H community club model, youth may participate through urban groups,

community resource development, special interest groups, EFNEP nutrition programs, school enrichment, camping and interagency learning experiences.

Today, after 100 years, 4-H offers youth opportunities in communications, leadership, career development, livestock, home improvement, and computer technology to nearly seven million American youth. Programs are found in rural and urban areas throughout the country and similar programs around the world. The 4-H program will continue to grow and develop with the head, heart, hands, and health of youth.

## **The 4-H Family Tree**

Partners at each level:

Federal – United States Department of Agriculture

State – Land Grant University (University of Illinois) and the state legislature

Local – County government, local donors, supporters, and boards/councils

Adult and Youth Volunteers:

4-H Club Leaders

Committee Members

4-H Members and Families

# The 4-H Clover and the Four H's

Originally, the symbol of the Boys and Girls Clubs was a three-leaf clover with the words Head, Heart and Hand. The words Head, Heart and Hand were used in Nebraska as part of the statement of purpose. That statement read, in part "to educate the youth of the county, town and city to a knowledge of their dependence upon nature's resources, and to the value of the fullest development of hand, head and heart..." The words were possibly taken from a poem by Rudyard Kipling. The phrase "hand, heart and head" became a popular way for educators and others to express a commitment to learning and the development to young citizens.



At left are prints from cuts of two types of the 3-leaf clover H pins designed by O.H. Benson, Superintendent of Schools, Wright County, Iowa. This design was first used by Benson on placards, posters and badges in 1907 or 1908. On September 16, 1909, he placed the first order on record for actual pins with the Union Emblem Company for pins of this design. From the beginning, the 3 H's represented Head, Heart and Hand. Benson and others are said to have had a 4-clover leaf H design around 1908, which was also used on posters, labels and otherwise, but no record has been found of a pin order being made at that time.

Early in 1911, a meeting of club leaders in Washington adopted a committee recommendation approving the present 4-H design. O.B. Martin, who was directing club work in the South, is credited with suggesting that the 4-H's stand for Head, Heart, Hands and Health, used universally since then. (Benson often referred to the fourth H as meaning Hustle.)

Today, the 4-H Emblem is protected under Section 18 US Code 707 and belongs to the Congress of the United States - the term "18 USC 707" appears to the right of the 4-H clover stem. The official clover is Kelly green with white H's. The 4-H colors are the same green and white. The white symbolizes purity. The green represents nature's most common color and is emblematic of youth, life and growth. The use of the name and emblem gives individual members a sense of belonging to an organization that reaches beyond their immediate area.

# Glossary of Common 4-H Terms

**4-H** – an informal education program offered to all youth between the ages of 8 and 18. The Illinois 4-H program is conducted by University of Illinois, the United States Department of Agriculture, and Unit Extension offices.

**4-H Age** – calculated as of September 1 of the current 4-H year. 4-H age is used for all 4-H information that requests age unless stated otherwise. For example, a child turning 10 on October 15 would use age 9 as their 4-H age.

**4-H Club** – a group of five or more youth, with at least one volunteer leader. Clubs meet at least six times during a year, have a planned program and elect officers.

**4-H Federation** – a group of older 4-H members (8<sup>th</sup> grade and up) who hold regular meetings to plan programs and offer suggestions for the county 4-H program. This is a good way of building leadership skills, and gives 4-H Members a chance to meet others their own age from around the county.

**4-H Member** – any youth between the ages of 8 and 18 who takes part in a University of Illinois Extension youth program and is active in 4HOnline.

**4-H Projects** – a practical, challenging planned course of activity centered around a specific subject. Projects include setting goals and evaluating progress that lead to increased skills and knowledge. Members can select from over 200 projects.

**4-H Show** – each year, members have the opportunity to exhibit their projects at a 4-H show during the county fair. Projects are evaluated by knowledgeable judges who rate projects and award a blue, red, or white ribbon. By using conference judging, members have the chance to learn more about their project.

**Award Application** – a form that 4-H Members complete at the end of the year to compete for awards. These applications reflect the work that the 4-H member has done. Applications are evaluated against others on the county level, with winners in some categories advancing to state competition.

**4-H Camp** – A five-day living experience that is offered to 4-H (and non-4-H) youth each summer. Camp is an excellent opportunity for youth to learn more about the environment and themselves. McLean County 4-H members can go to camp at 4-H Memorial Camp near Monticello.

**CANTS** – stands for Child Abuse Neglect Tracking System, and is one step in the volunteer application and screening process, conducted through the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

**Citizenship Washington Focus (CWF)** – a bi-annual trip to Washington D.C. for teen 4-H members. Participants have a chance to learn more about our government and their role in it.

**Cloverbuds** – youth ages 5-7 are involved with 4-H through this program. Cloverbud groups are involved in a number of activities led by an adult volunteer.

**Conference Judging** – a style of judging used in 4-H where a 4-H member meets with a judge to discuss their project. Using this method, the judge can find out what the member has done in their project and what they have learned.

**County Director** – a unit-based staff member of University of Illinois Extension, with administrative responsibility for that Unit.

**Demonstration** – a way for 4-H Members to gain public speaking skills and to show others what they have learned in their project.

**Extension Council** – a group of individuals who work with the Unit Extension Staff to determine the needs of local citizens. Council members help determine how Extension will respond to these needs.

**Extension Educator** – an Extension staff member with a specific subject matter responsibility.

**Extension Unit** – three or more counties that work together to provide Extension programming to local citizens. There are 27 Extension Units located throughout Illinois' 102 counties. Livingston, McLean and McLean Counties make up Extension Unit 12.

**Illinois Leadership Convention** – a statewide conference for teens held in Champaign each June. Teens participate in workshops and have fun meeting other 4-H members from around the state.

**Illinois State Fair Junior Show** – a part of the Illinois State Fair, where 4-H members from around the state exhibit their projects. Non-livestock

members are selected at the local 4-H Show while livestock exhibitors may participate without being selected at the local fair.

**International 4-H Youth Exchange (IFYE)** – two-way exchanges between U.S. 4-H members and alumni ages 15-30 and rural youth in countries around the world. Families with 4-H members serve as hosts for international exchangees.

**Judging Contests** – members evaluate a number of classes, ranking four animals, carcasses, trees, etc. Sometimes participants are required to give reasons for tier rankings. Many counties sponsor judging contests in different areas, like horse judging, livestock judging, dairy judging, etc. These contests then can lead to the statewide judging contest held during the summer.

**Junior Leader** – older 4-H members take on leadership roles for their club and at the county level. Junior Leaders might work with a specific project or may share their talent by helping younger members.

**Learn and Fun Day** – Sponsored by Livingston, McLean and McLean counties, Learn and Fun Day is a fun-filled day of workshops related to 4-H projects. Participants select four workshops to attend during the day and also enjoy entertainment at lunch time. Learn and Fun Day is usually held in February.

**National 4-H Week** – usually the first full week in October. National 4-H Week recognizes 4-H members, leaders and promotes 4-H to the community.

**Officers** – traditionally, 4-H club officers include: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, reporter, and recreation leader.

**Organizational Leader** – a screened volunteer who is responsible for a 4-H club. They are generally accountable for administrative duties and making sure that the meetings go smoothly. Some clubs have several leaders, while others have only one.

**Parliamentary Procedure** – standard rules for running a meeting. When used, a meeting usually goes much smoother, is fair for all members and takes less time.

**Pick Your Project Guide** – a booklet that lists all of the projects available in the Illinois 4-H program. It includes a brief description of projects that members can complete, which project books are available, and age



recommendations. Pick Your Project Guide also has articles of interest about 4-H.

**Premium** – the money awarded to 4-H Members in recognition of the project they brought to the 4-H Show or specified exhibit event.

**Project Book** – the printed material provided to a 4-H member when they enroll in a specific 4-H project.

**Project Leaders** – volunteers who are knowledgeable about a certain project area and assist members of the club with that particular project.

**Public Speaking Contest** – a countywide event for 4-H members. Members can deliver demonstrations or speeches at this contest.

**Quality Assurance & Ethics Training** – 4-H members exhibiting beef, dairy, goats, horses, sheep, swine, poultry, rabbits and companion animals at the 4-H Show during the McLean County Fair or the Illinois State Fair are required to complete a Quality Assurance and Ethics training. Participants are required to only take the training once in their 4-H career. Training is done via the Quality Assurance & Ethics website.

**Recognition Of Excellence** – an event held each year (usually in November) where members are recognized on the county level. Awards are given to individuals and clubs for their work during the 4-H year, based on their completed records.

**University of Illinois Extension** – an informal education program which is a part of the land grant university system. Extension is responsible for reaching out to the citizens of the state. The 4-H program is a part of the University of Illinois Extension.

# Where to Go For Help

## *University of Illinois Extension - McLean County*

1615 Commerce Parkway Bloomington, IL 61704

Phone: (309) 663-8306

E-mail: [uie-lmw@illinois.edu](mailto:uie-lmw@illinois.edu)

Hours of operation:

Monday – Friday from 8 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Other sources of information:

**Your 4-H Club Leader(s) and other parents**

**McLean County Fair & 4-H Show Book\***

**Pick Your Project Guide\***

\*These resources are also available on the University of Illinois Extension website.

## **Helpful 4-H Websites:**

University of Illinois Extension - Livingston, McLean, Woodford

[go.illinois.edu/lmw](http://go.illinois.edu/lmw)

zSuite

<https://4h.zsuite.org/>

Fair Entry

<https://faireentry.com/>

University of Illinois Extension

<http://web.extension.illinois.edu>

Illinois State Fair

<https://state.il.us/fair>

Illinois 4-H

<https://4h.extension.illinois.edu/>

National 4-H Council

<https://4-h.org/>

4-H Memorial Camp

<https://4h.extension.illinois.edu/event/4-h-memorial-camp>

4-H Supply Catalog

<https://shop4-h.org/>