

## NEW 4-H MEMBER CHECKLIST

In order to have a successful first year in 4-H, please follow this checklist:

- \_\_\_ Choose a 4-H club and call the leader
- \_\_\_ Fill out the online enrollment form and pay the fee by the deadline
- \_\_\_ Choose 4-H projects
- \_\_\_ Purchase 4-H manuals
- \_\_\_ ID animals by the deadline, if applicable
- \_\_\_ Attend 4-H meetings regularly
- \_\_\_ Parent involvement in the club
- \_\_\_ Work on 4-H projects and take advantage of county workshops and contests
- \_\_\_ Read the 4-H newsletter and visit the 4-H website frequently

**Know How  
Know Now**

DODGE.UNL.EDU

### Nebraska Extension - Dodge County

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# 4-H Welcome Packet

## HOW IS 4-H ORGANIZED?

Many people think of 4-H as an independent organization, but that isn't quite accurate. 4-H is the youth development program of the national Cooperative Extension System, through the United States Department of Agriculture.

This means that your 4-H extension staff members are supported with resources from Land Grant Universities across the nation. Just take a look at our research-based curriculum and you can feel complete confidence in 4-H as a sound, educational organization. And, we've been around for over 100 years!

Your 4-H staff members work for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and serve as faculty members for the University, the Land Grant University in Nebraska. The Nebraska Extension - Dodge County staff members who give primary leadership to the Dodge County 4-H Program are below.



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## WELCOME TO THE DODGE COUNTY 4-H PROGRAM

Dear Prospective 4-H Family,

Welcome to 4-H! You have just acquired about one of the biggest youth development programs in the nation. In fact, with 130,000 youth enrolled in Nebraska, 4-H is the largest out-of-school educational program in the country.

The purpose of this welcome packet is to give you an overview of the opportunities and resources available to help your family have an incredible experience in 4-H. Keep in mind that this is only an overview. Your best way to stay informed is to read the Dodge County 4-H Newsletter and Friday Blast. Your family will start receiving this free, bi-monthly publication once we receive your 4-H enrollment forms.

The 4-H program is so large and the opportunities so vast that it can sometimes seem a little overwhelming when you are new. Just keep in mind that your family's 4-H experience can be tailor made to fit your goals, schedule and interests. That is one reason 4-H is such a great program for Nebraska families. You can be involved as a whole family, learning and growing together.

When describing 4-H to someone new, we often use the analogy of a "super department store". 4-H is like a "store" full of wonderful, fun, positive educational programs. It has pretty much every type of workshop, project, contest, trip, conference, camp, or activity you could possibly want and things fit into your schedule and your budget. Your club leader and extension staff members are like the "greeters" at the front of the store to help you find what you need. We are here to answer your questions, so please don't hesitate to call.

Keep in mind that the leader in your club is a volunteer. Like all of us, your leader is more than willing to do his/her part. But, he/she also wants help. Ask your leader what you can do to support your child's club. If we all take a small piece of the pie, it makes everyone's involvement more manageable and fun!

The Nebraska Extension - Dodge County Office is where the 4-H program is administered. It is located at 1206 West 23rd Street in Fremont. Office hours are Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and 12:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.

Again, welcome to the wonderful world of 4-H!

Sincerely,

Lisa Poppe, Extension Educator

## ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR 4-H MEMBERS

Dodge County 4-H offers many different contests each year. Whenever possible our staff tries to conduct the county contest as similar to the state contest as possible, utilizing the same rules, time allowances and judge's sheets. You can find the complete details, entry forms and judging forms for each contest at the Dodge County website: <http://dodge.unl.edu>

- **4-H Public Speaking Contest**— Individual entry only. Youth research, write and present an original speech. The speech should relate directly to the participant's 4-H experience. Youth are not allowed to use visual aids for their speech.
- **4-H Presentations Contest**—Individual or a team of two, Youth research, write and present a presentation on any topic of interest to them. Generally the member will select a topic related to the project they are exploring. Since it is a presentation contest, members will use posters, power point and other visual aids to "show" the steps to their audience.
- **Fashion Revue Contest**—Individual entry only. Youth sew a garment or purchase a garment and model it for the judges. Judging includes clothing construction; modeling, fit, confidence and poise; and how well they respond in an interview process. All participants model their garments for the audience during the culminating 4-H Fashion Revue.
- **Table Setting Contest**—Individual or a team of two. Youth will design a menu and set a table according to their theme. They will provide one recipe from their menu, prepare it, and serve it to the judge.
- **Livestock Judging Contest**—Individual or a team. Youth learn to judge livestock (sheep, swine, and beef) and at the state contest give oral reasons for their placement.
- **Career Portfolios**—Youth prepare a portfolio summarizing their 4-H experiences, using the standardized 4-H Career Portfolio forms. The portfolio forms are available on-line or from a CD that is available from the Nebraska Extension - Dodge County Office. Competition is held for each curriculum area.
- **Shooting Sports Competition**—Individual entry only. Youth who have had instruction from a certified 4-H shooting sports leader can participate. Participants may compete in shooting activities and a written test. Youth provide their own equipment for the competition.
- **Camp Scholarships**—Deadlines vary so please read your Dodge County 4-H Newsletter.
- **College Scholarships**—Deadlines vary so please read your Dodge County 4-H Newsletter.

## THE COUNTY FAIR

One of the highlights of the year for 4-H members is being able to exhibit their completed projects in the Dodge County Fair, and then hopefully to have their exhibits selected for State Fair Competition!

**When is the fair?** The Dodge County Fair is held the first weekend in August. As part of the fair, members have an opportunity to compete in a variety of small animal shows, a variety of contests as well as enter completed projects for the static exhibits.

**Who can enter the fair?** Any enrolled 4-H member can participate in the fair. The Nebraska Extension - Dodge County Office will make available the fair book in June, which lists all the 4-H classes that can be entered. For the most part, the classes do not change a lot from year to year, so you can look at previous fair books to get ideas for projects to enter in the fair.

### How do we enter exhibits in the fair?

**Static Exhibits:** The process for entering a static exhibit in the fair is simple. You will need an entry card for each exhibit that you are entering. You can pick up entry cards from the Nebraska Extension - Dodge County Office or from your club leader. You will need to fill out the entry card according to the fair book and then properly attach it to your exhibit. All of the static exhibits you are taking to the fair will also be written on a Summary Card which is also available at the Nebraska Extension - Dodge County Office. It is your responsibility to bring your exhibits to the fairgrounds on entry day at the posted time.

**Livestock Exhibits:** The Nebraska Extension - Dodge County Office will announce the dates to have 4-H project animals tagged/identified. It is your responsibility to properly ID your animals by the deadline. Please watch for further information in the Dodge County 4-H Newsletter.

### How are exhibits judged?

**Static Exhibits:** All static exhibits are judged earning a purple, blue, red or white ribbon. In addition, each project area will select an overall winner and they will receive a medal. Clover bud entries are not judged; each entry receives a participation ribbon. Youth receive cash premiums based upon the color of ribbon earned. Premium checks will be sent out three to four weeks after the conclusion of the fair.

**Livestock Exhibits:** All livestock exhibits are judged earning a purple, blue, red or white ribbon. Additional trophies and premium money will also be presented.

**When are exhibits released?** Entries are not released until the fair closes. Early release is not allowed.

## PARENT & GUARDIAN ROLES

First and foremost, 4-H is a family program - a place where parents and their children can learn and grow together. In 4-H, you, as the parent or guardian, are very important. You are always invited and encouraged to participate in all 4-H club activities. We recognize every family's schedule is different and you may not be able to attend every club function, but there are many different ways that you can contribute to your child's 4-H group.

Your 4-H club leader will want to know about your interests and talents, and how you would like to support your child's 4-H group. Because 4-H has so many diverse experiences, we have discovered that every adult can find a parent volunteer role that matches their interests and the club's needs. Some possible helping roles include providing refreshments, supplies, or other resources for a club meeting; helping members with their projects, chaperoning a club field trip, organize the club's service project, or coordinating the club's end-of-the-year recognition program. Your club leader may have other suggestions.

As a parent or guardian, these are the following roles you need to fulfill:

- Provide transportation for your child to and from 4-H events.
- Help your child learn to recite the 4-H pledge.
- Attend 4-H club functions with your child whenever possible. Children 5-7 (Clover Bud members) should always have a parent or guardian attend meetings with them.
- Guide your child as they select a 4-H project and help them develop goals that are challenging, but also realistic. Encourage their project work by making it a family learning experience.
- If your child serves in a leadership role within the club, help him/her fulfill the duties of the office.
- Read the Dodge County 4-H Newsletter and Friday Blast so you will know the details of upcoming special events, dates and deadlines. You will automatically start receiving this publication when you or your child enroll in a 4-H club.
- If you have online access, visit the county 4-H website for the latest information and resources at: <http://dodge.unl.edu/web/dodge/county4h>
- The 4-H staff will provide countywide training on portfolios, presentations, project workshops and other core 4-H learning experiences. Try to participate in these classes and workshops. By understanding more about our various 4-H programs, you can help your child excel and take advantage of all that 4-H has to offer.
- Attend your club's end-of-the-year celebration with your child, and attend the county wide 4-H Achievement Celebration as a family. Recognition always means more to children when their family is there to share it with them.

## 4-H FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**What do the four “H’s” stand for on the 4-H clover emblem?** The “H’s” stand for: head, heart, hands, and health. Club members pledge their Head, Heart, Hands, and Health (the four H’s) as they recite the 4-H pledge at meetings.

### What is the 4-H 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.

**What is the 4-H motto?** “To Make the Best Better”

**What are the 4-H colors?** The 4-H colors are green and white.

**How did 4-H begin?** 4-H began in the early 1900’s as Corn Clubs for boys and Canning Clubs for girls. Although the program has changed a lot through the years, it has always been a program designed to help children become productive members of their communities. The national 4-H program celebrated its 100th birthday in 2002.

**Do I have to live on a farm to join 4-H?** No, although 4-H began as a program for rural children, today 4-H is available for ALL CHILDREN whether they live on a farm or in the city.

**Do boys and girls attend different clubs?** No, all 4-H clubs are open to both boys and girls.

**How old do you have to be to join a 4-H club?** Children can join a 4-H club as soon as they are five by January 1 of the current year and they can stay involved until their final year of eligibility - the year they are 18 on January 1. In addition, many colleges offer collegiate 4-H clubs, including the University of Nebraska-Lincoln!

**What is the 4-H year timeline?** The 4-H year begins in February with the Nebraska 4-H and Dodge County month and continues through the following November. The 4-H year kicks off with 4-H month and a kick off event in April. Youth work all year long to complete projects to enter in the County Fair. Then, the year ends with a county wide 4-H Achievement Celebration in November.

## 4-H PROJECTS & CAREER CLUSTERS

Throughout the Project Resource Central, each of the eight curriculum areas highlights careers that are related to those particular 4-H projects. These eight curriculum areas provide projects related to the Career Clusters that are linked to Nebraska School Standards.

1. **Animal Science**—Youth interested in these 4-H projects may be interested in the following careers: Agribusiness, animal nutrition, business financial management, farm/ranch management or travel and tourism.
2. **Communication & Expressive Arts** — Youth interested in these 4-H projects may be interested in the following careers: Account Planning and Management, Advertising, Marketing, Interactive Media, Performing Arts or Public Relations.
3. **Consumer & Family Science** — Youth interested in these 4-H projects may be interested in the following careers: Banking and Related Services, Business Financial Management, Family and Community Services, Foods Product Development, Professional Sales and Marketing or Training Coordinator.
4. **Environmental Education & Earth Sciences** — Youth interested in these 4-H projects may be interested in the following careers: Biologist, Natural Resources Systems, Plant Systems, Seed, Fertilizer or Chemical Sales, State and Federal Regulatory Agencies or Travel and Tourism.
5. **Healthy Lifestyles Education** — Youth interested in these 4-H projects may be interested in the following careers: Counseling and Mental Health Services, Family and Community Services, Food Chemist, Food Safety Inspector, Restaurant and Food/Beverage Services or Therapeutic Services.
6. **Leadership & Citizenship** — Youth interested in these 4-H projects may be interested in the following careers: Early Childhood Development, Family and Community Services, Foreign Service, Professional Support Services, Public Management and Administration or Teaching/Training.
7. **Plant Science** — Youth interested in these 4-H projects may be interested in the following careers: Crop Management Consultant, Elevator and Co-op Management, Governmental Service Agencies, Natural Resource Management, Plant and Soil Analysis, or Soil and Water Conservation.
8. **Science, Engineering & Technology** — Youth interested in these 4-H projects may be interested in the following careers: Environmental Consulting, Government Agencies, Information Support and Services, Printing Technology, Programming and Software Development, Security and Protective Services or Telecommunications.

## 4-H PROJECTS

**How do we select a project?** In most cases, club members and leaders choose one club project they want to complete during the year. Members will work on that project together at club meetings. A club leader, parent volunteer, community resource person, or perhaps an older 4-H member will teach the club's project lesson.

Additional projects can be selected by 4-H members and they will be able to work on those outside of their club meetings. They may seek guidance from their parents, leaders, community organizations, or other experts in the field to assist them in acquiring these new skills.

**What is a 4-H project manual?** To help guide your learning experience, 4-H offers project manuals. These written manuals provide age-appropriate, hands-on lessons to help youth acquire new skills and knowledge. There are youth manuals and adult helper manuals. Typically there the manuals are developed in a series with three or four levels. These manuals are researched based through Universities nation wide.

Please keep in mind that you are not required to utilize a project manual to guide your child's 4-H project, but you will find it very helpful. Also, do not feel like you have to complete every learning activity listed in the project manual. Think of the project manual as a very useful resource for you, rather than a "to do" list of activities that must be completed.

**How do we find out what 4-H project manuals are available?** A current list of the 4-H project manuals called "Project Resource Central" is available at:  
<https://unl.app.box.com/s/fx6dx2yikoosq8ppgk6i8edd6ob3ljn>

Though the price varies, the average fee for most manuals is about \$5. To help in selecting a project, you are welcome to view our project manuals at the Nebraska Extension - Dodge County Office .

## 4-H FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**Can we join 4-H at any time during the year?** Yes, each club will establish their own "cut off" date for accepting new members for the year. However, all youth must be enrolled with the UNL Extension 4-H Office by June 15 to be eligible to exhibit in the Fremont 4-H Fair, Dodge County Fair or any competitive 4-H events.

**Are clubs organized by age divisions?** 4-H clubs operate best when the members are in a similar age group, preferably within a couple of years of each other. However, some clubs operate with children from a wide variety of ages. It is a little more challenging to keep everyone's interest when there is a wide age span, but there are also the benefits of younger youth learning from the knowledge and example of older youth, and the leadership opportunities for older youth.

**What are the age divisions for competitive events?** A child must be at least eight years old as of January 1 of the current program year to compete in any 4-H event. Most competition is held in the following age divisions: Juniors (8-11), Intermediate (12-14) and Seniors (15-18). However, age divisions do vary from program to program. Always carefully review the registration information for 4-H events.

**What is a Clover Kid?** Children ages five to seven are known in 4-H as "Clover Kids". These children are full 4-H members and can participate in a wide range of programs and activities, including the fair. However, because research has shown that competition at this age is detrimental, Clover Kid members are not allowed to participate in competitive events. These members do participate in many contest and receive participation ribbons. Their work just isn't "judged" and compared to other children's work.

**What does it cost to join a 4-H club?** There is a \$10.00 county membership fee that is paid by the June 15 enrollment deadline. Some clubs will assess "dues" for each member to cover the cost of the project supplies. Dues vary from club to club depending on the projects selected. Each 4-Her is also required to pay for their own 4-H manuals at the UNL Extension Office, cost varies however, the average is approximately \$5.00 per manual. If you are planning to exhibit livestock there is an additional fee for ear tags (\$1.00 a piece) and DNA samples (\$6.00 a piece). Depending on your 4-H project, the cost will vary according to your supply needs.

**How do I stay informed about 4-H opportunities?** Read the Dodge County 4-H Newsletter and Friday Blast as it will give you all the details about upcoming programs. You can have your email address added to our Dodge County 4-H Listserv Email to receive weekly updates. You can visit the Dodge County 4-H website at: <http://dodge.unl.edu>. We are also on Facebook under Nebraska Extension in Dodge County.

## YOUR FIRST STEP TO 4-H?

You need to begin by selecting a 4-H club in your area. We have provided a list below of the Dodge County 4-H Clubs and contact leaders. Please call one of these clubs to start your 4-H experience. If you need further assistance please call the Dodge County Extension office at 402-727-2775.

Bluffs Friendly Stockman	Rural Fremont	Jay Bang Nick Petersen	402-721-0275 402-720-7476
City Slickers	Fremont, Hooper, Nickerson	Carin Sandman	402-484-8511
Clover Clan	Dodge	Joan Ruskamp	402-603-2347
Clover Kids	North Bend	Stacey McConnell	402-652-3564
4-H All Stars	Fremont	Jay Schroeder	402-721-6730
DC Clovers	Fremont	Mandy Broeker	402-727-7663
Fur & Feathers	Scribner/Dodge	Dan Beerbohm	402-568-2561
Hearts and Hooves	Any Area	Jeff Hartman	402-721-6514
Hooper Hoppers	Hooper	Faith Hemme Lois Palmer	402-720-3308 402.654.3457
Logan Creek Leaders	Hooper	Sara Ness Amy Moeller	402-654-2351 402-654-2474
Lucky Clovers	Scribner/Snyder	Annette Ebel	402-568-2603
Platte River Kids	North Bend	Bonnie Nebuda	402-652-8788
Rawhide Riders	Fremont	Jill Gossett	402-816.4378
Shooting Sports	Any Area	Leo Blaha	402-693-2417
Sugar and Spice	Fremont	Crystal Sixta	402-525-4615
T.E.A.M. 4-H	Scribner/Hooper	Lisa Poppe	402-380-8463

We are always welcoming new clubs. If you would like to start your own 4-H club please contact the Nebraska Extension—Dodge County office at 402-727-2775!

## 4-H PROJECTS

**What is a project?** Each 4-H member will have an opportunity to select one or more projects to learn about during the year. A project is simply a topic, or subject, the member wants to explore. The member will focus on increasing his knowledge and skills on this topic during the year. Projects are completely self-paced. A member may focus on a project over the whole year, or only spend a few months on a specific project. Similarly, a member may choose to explore the same topic for many years, gaining a real, in-depth knowledge of the project. Another member may prefer to explore a wide variety of projects during his/her years in 4-H. In most cases, the member will end up with one or more finished exhibits to enter in the fair from each project he/she selects. With nearly 150 projects available, there is something to interest every child.

There is not a limit to the number of projects a member can select; however parents and leaders should help guide members in setting realistic, but challenging goals. It is always better to complete fewer projects that reflect quality workmanship than to do a “rush job” and complete a lot of poorer quality projects.

Project work is at the heart of 4-H. As youth work to complete a 4-H project, a lot more is happening than “just” learning new skills. In fact, project work encompasses all four “H’s” - head, heart, hands and health. Take for instance a young person working on a sewing project. Their project-related activities may involve...

**HEAD** *Mental development:* gaining deeper knowledge and reasoning abilities

- Learning how to select a pattern that is properly sized
- Utilizing smart consumer skills when shopping for fabric, equipment, and sewing notions
- Calculating the correct amount of fabric to purchases for various fabric widths

**HEART** *Emotional development:* developing interests, appreciation and wholesome attitudes

- Working as a team with fellow club members to select a sewing project to complete
- Caring for others by sewing baby blankets for the hospital

**HANDS** *Skills development:* ability to do, skill in doing, and the habit of doing

- Demonstrating the ability to properly thread a sewing machine bobbin
- Becoming skilled in sewing straight and curved seams that follow the correct seam allowance
- Completing sewing project utilizing correct techniques

**HEALTH** *Physical development:* understanding and appreciation of growing and changing body

- Learning to select garments that are flattering for body shape
- Developing poise and demonstrating good body posture when modeling the garment in 4-H Fashion Revue