

WELCOME TO 4-H

NEW FAMILY GUIDE



UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN DOUGLAS-SARPY EXTENSION

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Created in 2022, Updated 2023,
Douglas-Sarpy 4-H



WELCOME TO 4-H

Welcome to the wonderful world of 4-H and the excitement of being a parent of a 4-H member (or 4-H'er, as we like to call them). We are pleased to have you and your child involved in 4-H. It doesn't matter where you live, what you want to be when you grow up, or your level of experience. 4-H is a club of kids and their families who take part in fun, practical projects from woodworking to rocketry, and everything in-between. When you join 4-H, you get to explore exciting ways to grow. You may have some questions about 4-H as your child progresses in the program. This guide is meant to act as a starting point as it answers some basic questions. Please feel free to visit with your child's club leader or a County Extension Assistant or Extension Educator for further information. For questions, contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Douglas-Sarpy Extension Office by emailing douglas-sarpy4h@unl.edu or calling 402-444-7804.



Material adapted from the "New 4-H Family Handbook" by the Montana 4-H Center for Youth Development, 4-H.org, and "Welcome to 4-H: A New Family's Guide" by the K-State Research and Extension.

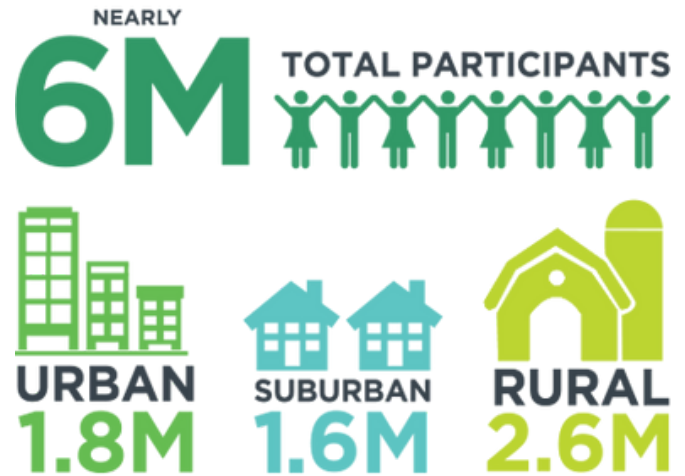
WHAT IS 4-H ALL ABOUT?

4-H is America's largest youth development organization—empowering nearly six million young people with the skills to lead for a lifetime.

What is 4-H?

4-H is delivered by Cooperative Extension—a community of more than 100 public universities across the nation that provides experiences where young people learn by doing. For more than 100 years, 4-H has welcomed young people and gave kids a voice to express who they are and how they make their lives and communities better.

In 4-H programs, kids and teens complete hands-on projects in areas like health, science, agriculture and civic engagement in a positive environment where they receive guidance from adult mentors and are encouraged to take on proactive leadership roles. Kids experience 4-H in every county and parish in the country through in-school and after-school programs, school and community clubs and 4-H camps.



4-H Mission

4-H empowers youth to reach their full potential, working and learning in partnership with caring adults.

How do participants benefit from 4-H?

Youth and adults alike will:

- have fun by learning in new, enjoyable ways
- make friends, belong to a group, and give and receive acceptance and recognition
- build self-confidence
- develop a desire to learn
- gain decision-making, problem solving, and leadership skills
- become more interested in their community and the people in it
- gain experience in relating to and working with their family, their peers, and people of all ages
- learn, make, and do things that are educational and meaningful



4-H is a Community for all Kids

In 4-H, we believe in the power of young people. We see that every child has valuable strengths and real influence to improve the world around us. 4-H membership is open to all youth without regard to ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, or place of residence.

WHAT IS 4-H ALL ABOUT?

4-H Programming

Based on their interests and guided by adult mentors, youth develop their own pathway in 4-H. They select from a broad menu of local 4-H programs. There are hands-on, learn-by-doing, opportunities for everyone.

Head—Managing, Thinking

Heart—Relating, Caring

Hands—Giving, Working

Health— Being, Living



Head, Heart, Hands, and Health are the four Hs in 4-H, and they are the four values members work on through fun and engaging programs.



We Believe In:

- all young people's potential
- developing young people who are empowered, confident, hard-working, determined, responsible and compassionate—seeing a world beyond themselves so that they have the life-long skills to succeed in college and career
- ensuring access and equity for all
- the power of America's leading public universities
- the practice of positive youth development (PYD) by creating positive learning experiences
- caring and trusted adult mentors who cultivate positive relationships with youth
- creating safe, diverse and inclusive environments
- meeting young people wherever they are

4-H Colors

Green represents nature's most common color and is emblematic of youth, life, and growth. White symbolizes purity.

The Name and Emblem

The 4-H clover represents the program's focus on head, heart, hands, and health. It is a well-known symbol of more than a century of 4-H achievement.

4-H Slogan

Learn by doing

4-H Motto

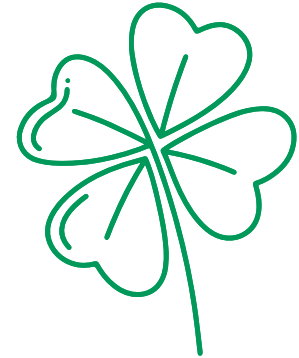
To make the best better.

WHAT IS 4-H ALL ABOUT?



4-H Vision

A world in which youth and adults learn, grow, and work together as catalysts for positive change.



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.

**IGNITE YOUR
SPARK WITH
4-H!**



WHAT DO YOU DO IN 4-H?

4-H'ers learn by taking part in:

- **Project Work.** Project work helps members gain knowledge and skills and learn to take responsibility. By doing project work at home, members can develop a feeling of partnership with their parents.
- **Demonstration.** 4-H members show and tell others how to do things they learn. This is called giving a demonstration, and it is a youth's first step to helping others and developing leadership as well as public speaking skills.
- **Recreation.** 4-H'ers learn to enjoy life, themselves, and their association with others in social activities. Recreation is a wonderful way to teach leadership skills as well.
- **County and State Contests.** 4-H members taking part in contests may receive an award for their efforts, but they learn cooperative and competitive skills as well as the standards of excellence.
- **Exhibits.** Members may exhibit their project results at county fairs. Exhibiting 4-H projects shows others what 4-H'ers are doing, helps members find where they can improve their work, and gives members a sense of pride and accomplishment.
- **4-H Camp.** Many 4-H members attend camp. They participate in educational and recreational experiences and they learn more about nature and living with people.
- **4-H Teen Ambassadors.** For older 4-H'ers, the Teen Ambassador Program is available to promote 4-H work to others and to help members be resources to other youth.
- **4-H Exchanges.** Exchanges can be arranged with clubs from different counties and other states. Exchanges help 4-H'ers develop a broader knowledge of people and living situations and provide the chance for creating lasting friendships.
- **Recognition and Awards.** 4-H'ers are recognized and rewarded for work they do. Rewards range from acceptance by peers and leaders to trips and scholarships. Cooperative and competitive skills are recognized.
- **4-H Club.** 4-H members learn how to use parliamentary procedure by conducting meetings, the value of committees to accomplish work, and cooperative skills through social interaction with club members.



COUNTY FAIR

4-H'ers in our program can participate in the Sarpy County Fair. The fair is held at the fairground in Springfield. The fair is one of the major highlights of the year and it allows 4-H'ers to showcase their projects and talents. The projects will be judged while at the fair and some are selected for the opportunity to exhibit at the Nebraska State Fair in Grand Island. You can find additional information about the fair at sarpyfair.com.

ENROLLMENT



4-H enrollment is broken down into two categories for youth:

- Clover Kid (age 5-7)
- 4-H (age 8-18)

Club vs. Independent: There are two ways to get involved in 4-H.

- Club Member Participation
 - One of the oldest and most traditional parts of 4-H is getting involved with a club. We encourage new members to join a club the first few years to better understand 4-H and help make it a fun and memorable experience for the youth and their family.
- Independent Member Participation
 - Interested in venturing out on your own? Not a problem! You can enroll as an Independent member and participate that way, too.

June 15 is the enrollment deadline to be able to participate in the county fair!

CLUB MEMBER'S RESPONSIBILITIES

- Attend as many club meetings as possible
- If you miss a meeting, reach out to a leader or a friend in the club who can tell you the important information that you missed
- Don't be afraid to ask questions
- Go to meetings with your ideas, and don't be afraid to share them with others
- Be respectful of others when they are speaking
- Listen to what others have to say. Even if you don't agree with their opinions, it lets you hear other points of views
- Be a friend. Get to know other members. Help when needed. Not all members are the same, but no one is more important than another
- Tell your parents about important dates
- Read your county 4-H newsletter



THE ROLE OF PARENTS

Families are the strength of the 4-H program. Youths need adult guidance to encourage and direct them in their development. It is much easier for youths to succeed in 4-H and continue to grow when they have the support and understanding of their parents and guardians. As a parent or guardian, you can be a project leader, activity leader, chaperone, or even a club leader. All parents and guardians are encouraged to assume some responsibility to help with the 4-H club because all adults are busy--share the load!

Ways to support your child in the 4-H program:

- Learn what 4-H is all about and keep informed on what is happening in your club and county
- Exhibit a genuine interest in 4-H and your child



- Attend meetings and 4-H activities with your child, and encourage your child to participate in 4-H events
- Provide encouragement and help in your child's project work with record keeping, demonstrations, judging, and completion of attempted work without doing the work yourself
- Provide transportation for members to local club meetings and activities and to county-wide activities and events
- Provide a meeting place for a project group. Assist leaders by providing refreshments or other help

- Share special talents by volunteering to be a project leader
- Help members select, finance, and manage their projects
- Help leaders conduct project work
- Help leaders locate and secure other qualified adults to conduct project work and help with 4-H activities
- Remember that you aren't expected to do it all on your own

4-H's Long-reaching Effects

Compared to other youth, 4-Hers are:

4x more likely to contribute to their communities

2x more likely to be civically active

4-H

2x more likely to make healthier lifestyle choices



NEW MEMBER CHECKLIST

- _____ Complete online enrollment through 4-H Online
- _____ Subscribe to the weekly e-newsletter
- _____ Choose 4-H project(s)
- _____ Purchase 4-H manuals, if applicable
- _____ ID animals by the deadline, if applicable
- _____ Attend 4-H meetings regularly
- _____ Parent/Guardian involvement
- _____ Re-enroll each year through 4-H Online



"You inspired us, wow'd us and offered a vision of 4-H's future. Nebraska 4-H is on the leading edge of change, and I hope we can all work together to scale this awesomeness."
—National 4-H Council & Chief Growth Operator

REMINDERS FOR PARTICIPATION

- 4-H youth are more important than the project exhibit itself
- Learning how to do a project is more important than the project itself. To "learn by doing" through a useful project is fundamental in any sound educational program, and is characteristic of the 4-H program
- There is more than one good way of doing most things
- Our job is to teach 4-H members how to think, not what to think
- Winning isn't always measured by the results of the ribbon or judging event, but by the character of the 4-H'er, parent, and leader

H  AD
HE  RT
H  NDS
HE  LTH



4-H PROJECTS

As a 4-H member, youth choose at least one project to complete. Choose a project that fits into your family, community, and lifestyle. These are typically areas that interest a kid where they will learn more and explore. Carrying out a project helps members learn by doing, make sound decisions, and master a subject matter.

Consider these questions when selecting a project:

- Does it meet the needs and interests of the member?
- Is the project in keeping with age and ability (physical and mental) or the member? Will it challenge them educationally?
- How much time does the member have and how much time does the project require? During which season of the year will most of the activity of the project be accomplished?
- How much will the project cost?
- Is adequate space and equipment available at home? Or are you able to access adequate space and equipment?
- Are there leaders to help with the project, or are you willing and/or able to help the member with the project?



4-H'ers should enjoy the project that they participate in. foster a sense of responsibility in them and have them follow through with their commitments, but allow them to quit if they're miserable in the project after they put in the effort to try the project. there's no reason to force them to continue. we want 4-h to be a pleasurable experience and members are more likely to want to continue if they enjoy the projects they're in.



Projects youth can get involved with include, but are not limited to:

- Archery
- Gardening
- Geology
- Quilting
- Cake decorating
- Dog
- Photography
- Bucket calf
- Heritage
- Fishing

PICK YOUR PROJECT

Pick Your Project is an online database and selection guide for finding 4-H projects and their resources. Users can search for projects by keywords or browse by curriculum area, knowledge level, and geographic level. You can find it at <https://4h.unl.edu/news/pick-your-project>



The Douglas-Sarpy Extension Office has a selection of project curriculum in the office for free or you can order them online by visiting <https://marketplace.unl.edu/ne4h/curriculum>

4-H has a wide variety of project topics for youths to participate in. There may be some projects that your club does not have an adult leader who can facilitate project meetings. You can still foster the youth's interest by asking another club leader if their club has anyone who can teach the project and/or you can contact the Douglas-Sarpy Extension Office to see if there is curriculum or if they know of anyone who can help teach the project.

4-H VOCABULARY

This resource provides general terminology and language used within the Nebraska 4-H program. Go to <https://4h.unl.edu/glossary> for the full list.

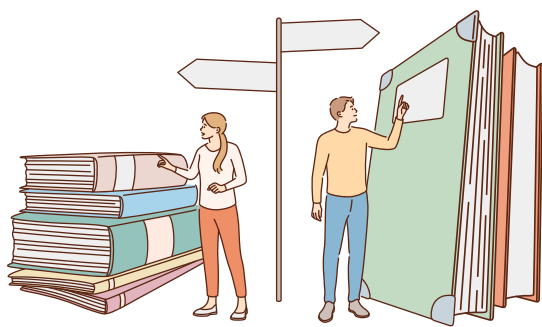
- **Ambassadors:** 4-H Youth Leadership Conference Ambassadors serve as the planning committee for the annual 4-H Youth Leadership Conference. Ambassadors meet on a monthly basis to plan and prepare for the conference while developing their own leadership skills. By serving as an Ambassador, youth have the opportunity to build connection with peers across the state, learn from adult mentors and take a leadership role in planning the annual conference.
- **(4-H) Age:** The age of the youth before January 1 of the current year. If your birthday is on January 1st, your 4-H age is the age you were on December 31st. 4-H eligibility is determined based on the 4-H age. The first



year of eligibility for participation in the 4-H Clover Kids program is the 4-H age of five (5). The last year of eligibility for participation in the 4-H Clover Kids program is the 4-H age of seven (7). The first year of eligibility for the regular 4-H program is the 4-H age of eight (8). The last year of eligibility is 4-H age of eighteen (18).

4-H VOCABULARY

18,558 YOUTH PARTICIPATED IN DOUGLAS-SARPY 4-H IN 2022



have completed a volunteer screening process established by Nebraska 4-H. Club leaders are responsible for providing leadership, organization and communication to the 4-H families enrolled in their respective club.

Code of Conduct:

The primary goal of the 4-H program is to help youth develop competency in their projects, confidence in themselves and others, connections to their community and sound character. Actions by persons (parents and 4-H youth) involved in the 4-H program will be consistent with the six core ethical values comprising good character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, caring, fairness and citizenship. Both youth and parents are asked to abide by the code of conduct during the Nebraska 4-H enrollment process. Visit 4h.unl.edu/participant-code-of-conduct for more information.



- **Community Clubs:** 4-H clubs are an organized group that meets regularly to focus on a series of educational experiences. Office enrollment is required. Visit 4h.unl.edu/programs-clubs for more information.
- **Council:** A 4-H Council is a local group of elected representatives who provide guidance, solicit support, and assist in carrying out programs and activities in the interest of 4-H. The Council is volunteer and ensures that 4-H is providing the needed educational programs for their area. They also assist with local fundraising efforts.
- **County Fair:** Members may exhibit projects at the county fair. Fair

exhibition is not a requirement for project completion, but a showcase for a member's 4-H project work and experiences. Visit 4h.unl.edu/county-fair for more information.

4-H VOCABULARY



4-H'ers participate in



5M
ANNUALLY
SCIENCE
PROJECTS



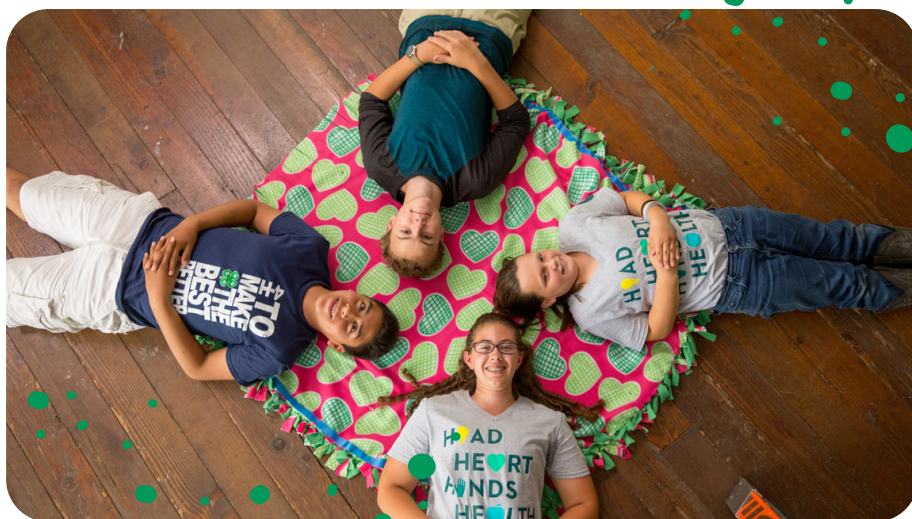
2.5M
ANNUALLY
HEALTHY LIVING
PROJECTS



2.5M
ANNUALLY
CITIZENSHIP
PROJECTS

for their achievement relative to set standards. The Danish system awards ribbons in these colors: Purple (superior); Blue (excellent); Red (good); White (fair); Green (participation). Visit 4h.unl.edu/ribbon-meaning for more information.

- **Demonstration:** A planned presentation by one or two 4-H members that teaches, by illustration or example, information related to a project or event. A member's first demonstration is usually at the project level where he or she is asked to show other members how to perform a particular skill. This may be developed into a more formal presentation that can be given at 4-H meetings, at school, or for other groups of people.
- **Enrollment:** 4-H enrollment is open year-round. However, youth must enroll in 4-H by June 15 of the current year to be eligible for county and state fair participation. Youth between 5 and 7 are invited to enroll as Clover Kids. Youth between 8 and 19 are invited to enroll as 4-H members. Visit 4h.unl.edu/enroll for more information
- **Exhibit:** Exhibits are a portion of the 4-H member's project experience that is entered at the fair. This might include



static exhibits or live animal exhibits. Exhibits are only a portion of what the 4-H member has accomplished in their project experience. They display only a portion of what the 4-H member is capable of accomplishing.



4-H VOCABULARY



- **Extension:** Nebraska Extension brings University of Nebraska expertise and research in 8 key areas of impact directly to Nebraskans from all walks of life in each of the state's 93 counties. Nebraskans turn to Nebraska Extension to strengthen their families, inspire their communities, empower young people, conserve and protect natural resources and advance their farms, ranches and businesses. Visit extension.unl.edu/our-strategic-direction for more information.
- **Extension Assistant:** The Extension Assistant role is responsible for recruiting, training, planning, and conducting events and activities in support of the overall goals of the 4-H Youth Development program. Visit epd.unl.edu to find your local Extension Assistants.

- **Extension Educator:** Nebraska Extension 4-H Youth Development educators provide leadership to the development, implementation, and evaluation of the county 4-H program. These individuals manage, teach, facilitate, mentor, plan, and deliver positive youth development programs through various delivery methods. Visit epd.unl.edu to find your local Extension Educators.
- **Extension Office:** one or more counties that work together to provide Extension programming to local citizens and youth. Visit epd.unl.edu to find your local Extension office.
- **Independent Members:** Youth who choose not to be involved in a formal 4-H club may still join 4-H as independent members. These youth have the opportunity to participate in their county fairs, the Nebraska State Fair, and additional statewide programs. Visit 4h.unl.edu/programs-independent-membership for more information.
- **Judge:** Judges are adults (19+ years of age) experienced in particular project areas who are hired to evaluate projects and provide encouragement for youth's future growth and improvement in their project area.
- **Meetings:** The 4-H meeting is one of the educational tools used in the 4-H program, often led by volunteer club leaders and youth officers. Parts of a 4-H club meeting include business, educational program, and recreation and/or refreshments.
- **Member:** Members are youth ages 5-18 who have completed the 4-H Online enrollment/re-enrollment process for the year.
- **Officers:** Members lead the club through holding office and chairing and serving on committees. Examples 4-H officers could include: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Historian, News Reporter, Recreation Leader, Safety Officer, Flag Bearer.
- **Project:** a developmentally appropriate series of hands-on learning activities which help youth reach their learning goals. Visit 4h.unl.edu/projects for more information.
- **Project Judging:** Judges evaluate the finished product (exhibit) against a set of standards without the member present. The focus is the quality of the project itself, while considering the learning process that occurred to create the finished project. Project judging may or may include an interview with the 4-H member. Visit 4h.unl.edu/ribbon-meaning for more information.



4-H VOCABULARY

- **Re-Enroll:** All members, club leaders, and project leaders must re-enroll through 4-H Online each year to maintain membership. The re-enrollment process is slightly different from the initial enrollment process. Visit 4h.unl.edu/enroll for more information.
- **Special Interest Programs:** special interest programs include short-term experiences such as workshops or clinics, as well as experiences focused on a single topic or interest. Special interest programs are not part of a school enrichment curriculum and are not restricted to 4-H club members. Visit 4h.unl.edu/programs-special-interest for more information.
- **State Fair:** Located in Grand Island, Nebraska, at Fonner

Park. This is an 11-day event; however, 4-H activities are focused on three days. Registration for 4-H entries are separate from other entries that are shown at the Fair. Please contact your County Office for information about 4-H specific entries. Visit 4h.unl.edu/state-fair for more information.



- **Static Exhibits:** Static exhibits are products of hands-on project experiences exhibited at the fair, excluding live animal exhibits. These might include posters, living plants, harvested vegetables, baked goods, clothing items, artwork, etc.
- **Superintendent:** A key position that will contribute to reaching objectives and building good internal and external relationships. Superintendents are usually tasked with coordinating aspects of the a program, coordinating volunteer efforts, and providing a high-quality experience for youth, leaders and staff who participate.
- **Volunteer:** volunteers serve in a variety of roles in the 4-H program. Visit 4h.unl.edu/volunteer to learn more.
- **Workshops:** see Special Interest
- **4-H Online:** 4-H Online is a web-based enrollment system. All members, club leaders, and project leaders must complete annual enrollment through 4-H Online each year to maintain membership. Visit 4h.unl.edu/enroll for more information.

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



4-H LIVESTOCK VOCABULARY

Cattle

- Bovine is a term relating to cattle.
- Calf is a young bovine. This term is used from the time of birth up until about 6 to 10 months of age when the animal is weaned.
- Steer is a castrated male bovine or can be a future ox that is less than 4 years old.
- Heifer is a female bovine that has not had a calf.
- Cow is a female bovine that has had a calf. (This term may also be used for other species.)



Goat

- Goat the domesticated form of capra hircus.
- Buck is a male goat over 1 year of age.
- Doe is a female goat over 1 year of age.
- Kid is a baby goat of either sex.
- Wether is a castrated male goat (or sheep).



Rabbit

- Rabbit is a mammal of the family Leporidae or the domesticated Old World species *Oryctolagus cuniculus*.
- Buck is a male rabbit.
- Doe is a female rabbit.
- Fryer or “young rabbit” is a rabbit that is 2 months old and weighs 3 ¾ lbs to 4 ½ lbs.



Horse

- Horse is a domesticated large single hoofed mammal (*Equus caballus*) with a short-haired coat, a long mane, and a long tail used for riding, pulling, or carrying loads.
- Foal is a young equine under 1 year of age.
- Gelding is a castrated male horse.
- Mare is a female horse after her 4th birthday.



4-H LIVESTOCK VOCABULARY

Poultry

- Poultry are domesticated birds that are kept for meat or eggs including birds of the order Galliformes: chicken, turkey, natatorial (swimming) birds: duck and goose.
- Chicken is a common domestic fowl (*Gallus domesticus*).
- Broiler is a meat chicken processed at the age of 7-12 weeks when it reaches 2 ½ to 3 ½ pounds live weight.
- Chick is a newly hatched or a very young chicken.
- Cock is a male chicken at least one year of age or older.
- Cockerel is a male chicken less than one year old.
- Hen is a female chicken at least one year of age.
- Pullet is a female chicken less than one year of age. A pullet is, in industry, a young female that has yet to start laying eggs
- Rooster is a male chicken over one year of age.



Swine

- Swine are even-toed ungulates of the family Suidae, including pigs, hogs, and boars.
- Barrow is a castrated (before sexual maturity) male swine.
- Boar is an adult male swine.
- Gilt is a female swine that has not given birth.
- Market animals are raised to be sent to market.
- Breeding animals are raised to breed and expand a herd with desired characteristics



Small Pets

Other animals that can be shown at county contests are dogs, cats, fish, gerbils, cockroaches, and anything else you keep as a pet in your house!

4-H LIVESTOCK VOCABULARY

Sheep

- Sheep the domesticated species *ovis aries*.
- Ewe is a female sheep at least 1 year of age.
- Ewe lamb is a female sheep under 1 year of age.
- Lamb is a young sheep. When referring to meat, lamb is meat from a sheep that is 12-14 months old or less.
- Ram is an intact male sheep that is at least one year of age.
- Ram lamb is a male sheep that is under 1 year of age.
- Sheep is a mature ovine at least one year of age and may also refer to the ovine species.
- Wether is a castrated male sheep (or goat).



START YOUR OWN CLUB

Starting your own club is pretty easy! Grab your friends and create a club tailored to your interests.

Follow the steps below to start a club and call the Extension Office with any questions. Visit <https://4h.unl.edu/> to learn more.

1. Apply for a club charter
 - a. Choose a name
 - b. Gather your members
2. Fill out and submit the club's constitution and bylaws to the Extension office
 - a. Fillable template available upon request
3. Once you have received your club's charter, enroll as a new club leader with 4-H Online and complete the screening
 - a. <https://4h.unl.edu/enroll/new-club-leader>
4. If you plan to fundraise/handle money, complete an application for an EIN
 - a. Once you successfully obtain an EIN, report to your local Douglas-Sarpy 4-H staff person your EIN along with the name of your bank and when you opened the account
5. Review the volunteer handbook



**VOLUNTEER TODAY.
INSPIRE FOR A LIFETIME.**

STAY CONNECTED

Visit us in person at 8015 W Center Rd., Omaha, NE 68124 during our business hours.
We're available Monday through Friday, 8 AM to 4:30 PM.



@DouglasSarpy4H
@DouglasSarpyExt



douglas-sarpy4h@unl.edu



402-444-7804



go.unl.edu/douglas-sarpy

NE 4-H Fast Fact

In 1895, E.C. Bishop, a teacher and county superintendent, is credited as introducing Boys and Girls Club Work in German Town near Garland, Nebraska in Seward County, and near Bradshaw in York County in 1898. These groups eventually turned into 4-H clubs!

FURTHER RESOURCES

For more information, visit:

<https://4h.unl.edu/policy-handbook>

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

<https://extension.unl.edu/statewide/douglas-sarpy>

