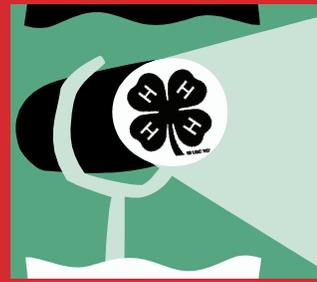




# VOLUNTEER SCREENING



Every year, hundreds of volunteers donate countless hours to the 4-H program. Volunteers lead clubs, teach skills and assist with our events. Many times volunteers even perform some of the same duties as paid staff. Volunteers do this because they care and are committed to the mission and goals of 4-H. Still, the news every day can show us that sometimes volunteers abuse their volunteer role and harm the children that we think they have volunteered to help. In Nebraska 4-H we highly respect and value our volunteers but we also know we have a responsibility to the youth and families we serve. Protecting youth is our first goal and in order to do that we screen our volunteers to identify or weed out potential problems that could arise from undisclosed criminal history with potential volunteers.

Volunteer screening must be submitted by all 4-H volunteers and staff who work directly with youth. Volunteers are screened for behavior that the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension determines, in its sole discretion, may present a risk to its participants.

The confidential Volunteer Profile completed by all volunteers and Extension staff who work with youth is processed by Health and Human Services and approved by officials at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. UNL reserves the right to limit or reject an individual's participation in the 4-H program.

Misrepresentation or omission of facts requested on this form is cause for denial as a 4-H volunteer or appropriate discipline of staff. Failure to cooperate in such screening will disqualify any volunteer or staff member from service. All Volunteer Profiles within each district/county will be updated and re-approved on a four-year basis, using a rotation schedule.

Volunteer screening must be completed for all persons working one-on-one or in a non-public setting with 4-H youth who are of legal age, which is 19 years old, in Nebraska. If you are a volunteer you will be asked to complete this form, we hope that you understand why we are screening and will help us keep the youth of Nebraska safe.



Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

The 4-H Youth Development program abides with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.

UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA-LINCOLN EXTENSION



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### Special points of interest:

- *Wondering if 4-H meetings are still worth the time and planning? Learn how important the traditional club meetings STILL are to our youth!*
- *From Culinary Challenges to the Interview Contest to Crop Competitions, 4-H offers many opportunities to teach youth about life skills focusing on presentation and preparation!*
- *How does the Strategic Plan for Nebraska 4-H fit into project ideas? Learn how to fit state 4-H goals with personal 4-H'er project goals.*





## THE VALUE OF CLUB MEETINGS

How often do you have organized 4-H club meetings? Do you wonder if it is worth it? We would like to encourage your club to meet at least monthly year round.

It can be very rewarding for a 4-H member to part of a 4-H club. In order for clubs to provide support for young people they are encouraged to be active year round and meet at least once a month. Ideally an individual club would exist for several years with some being active for many years.

### Let's consider traits of a strong 4-H club!

The club meeting should be fun for members, it should show signs of growth and activity and be visible in the community. Members will bring new members and their families are always welcomed. There is a high percentage of attendance at meetings, activities and events which relate to good communication within the club. A strong 4-H club is where youth are valued as partners and the meetings belong to them.

### So, how do we build these strong clubs?

It is important to have standard meeting times and places with an annual plan of action and purpose. A good communication system must be in place and club officers need to be trained to run club meetings. Members have real age appropriate leadership development experiences and leaders see their job as helping and involving others.

When strong clubs are in place, the learning truly begins. One of the main purposes of the 4-H program is to build leadership and community service in the minds and hearts of youth. Remember that the growth and development of the member is the reason for

4-H. Keep the experience of the member the priority.

### The club is there to develop strong kids!

*Head: Practicing learning and thinking skills*

*Heart: Caring for members and families*

*Hands: Doing cool stuff!*

*Health: Promoting healthy behaviors*

The State 4-H office recognizes those clubs that have reached a level of high distinction with the **Club of Excellence**. Each club should strive to reach this level. These are areas a club must complete:

- Have at least five members from at least two different families
- Recite the 4-H Pledge at meetings
- Meet at least six times per year
- Choose/elect youth officers
- Give youth leadership roles
- Have one club project (related to curriculum) which they do together
- Have adult role models/ (parental) involvement
- Are facilitated by organizational and project leaders who have successfully completed the Volunteer Profile
- Have members who perform a presentation or public speaking at the club level or above
- Complete one community service project
- Have members who participate in a county, district or state event(s)
- Celebrate member and club achievements



# THE STRATEGY OF NE 4-H!



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Nebraska 4-H continues on the path to achieving its 5-year Strategic Plan. The plan focuses on 5 outcomes that were identified by stakeholders as important to the youth of Nebraska. These outcomes can be integrated into the program in many different ways; at club meetings, at workshops, at new programs and more.

Another way was the addition of exhibits at fairs in a variety of project areas related to the outcomes. Child Development moved in this direction for the past several years. Four of the traditional exhibits made adjustments to fit these outcomes.

First let's review the outcomes again in case you have forgotten or are unsure of them.

- ⇒ **4-H Science:** Developing science interests, skills and abilities in the areas of agriculture, energy, environmental stewardship and technology. Helping youth think and problem solve within a scientific framework and encouraging an excitement for science.
- ⇒ **Agricultural Literacy:** Ensuring that Nebraska youth have a knowledge and appreciation of Nebraska's largest industry.
- ⇒ **Career Development/College Readiness:** Preparing youth to make informed decisions about their college and career path. Developing skills in young people that will lead to greater persistence in college and employability.
- ⇒ **Community Engagement:** Fostering youth's commitment to their communities and growing future leaders.
- ⇒ **Healthy Living:** Educating youth about how to make healthy and safe decisions in their daily lives.

Now let's look at our exhibits in Human Development under the "I Have What It Takes to Be a Babysitter" project that will ask for this connection.

1. Toy, game, or activity made for **baby (Birth - 18 mos.)**
2. Toy, game or activity made for **toddler (18 mos. - 3 yrs.)**
3. Toy, game or activity made for **preschooler (3 - 5 yrs.)**
4. Toy, game or activity made for **grade-schooler (6 - 9 yrs.)**

So how do we combine the two? The fairbook states: As you consider and develop your exhibits for these classes, remember that the toy, game or activity must be able to teach the child about something related to one or more of the outcome areas. This could be a game that teaches about healthy eating (healthy lifestyles), or a game that teaches about being a farmer (careers/agricultural literacy). Be creative!

Let's consider some other ideas:

**Science** – A stuffed bug for an infant.

**Ag Literacy** – A barn to play in for toddlers.

**Healthy Living** – A matching game of fruits and vegetable pictures for preschoolers.

**Careers** – A picture book of careers in your community for preschoolers

**Citizenship/Leadership** – A game about being a citizen for grade-schoolers.

When you stop to think about it, it can be very easy to develop something that fits. First pick the age of child you want to target and then pick an outcome you might be interested in learning more about. Decide what you want to teach that child and create a toy, game or activity that would expose the child to the outcome. Think broadly and we only ask that an attempt is made at connecting these exhibits to out outcomes

Just think if we start teaching our youngest youth about these outcomes, how much of a difference it will make. For questions, please call Child Development Superintendents – Lisa Kaslon (402)563-4901 or Angela Abts (402)987-2140.



## 4-H CULINARY CHALLENGE CONTEST

Last year a new event was added to the 4-H State Fair called the 4-H Foods Event. Due to its success, it is now a permanent contest called the 4-H Culinary Challenge Contest! This event helps youth demonstrate healthy decision making through nutrition, food preparation, menu planning, and food safety. Participants have to apply healthy living knowledge by planning a nutritious menu, demonstrate understanding of time management skills, and also express their creativity by incorporating a theme to their occasion and including one ingredient into their meal that is designated by the State 4-H Program.



This contest requires a team of two 4-H members to create a menu that contains the secret ingredient, table setting with a theme, and some counties require participants to prepare one item on their menu. This year's secret ingredient is **apples**. The participants then express their knowledge of food, nutrition, and food safety through a live interview with the judge. To aid in the skills acquired in this contest youth are required to utilize technology throughout their interview. This contest is first held at the County level. Each county is able to send four teams of 2 members each to the State Fair 4-H Contest.

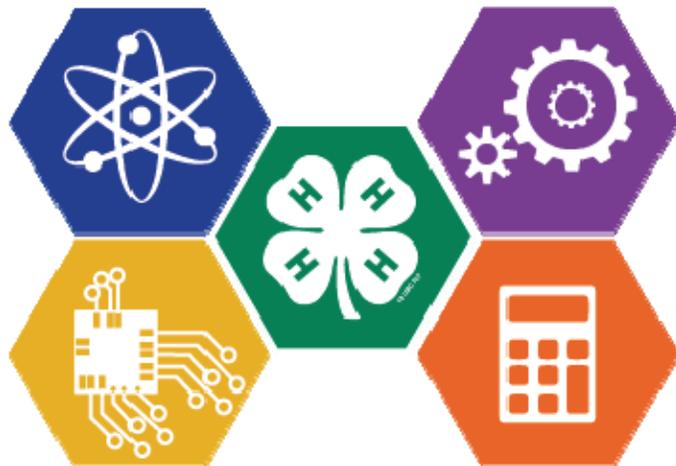
This contest can provide a great activity to use during Club meetings. If you host your club meetings at a variety of club members' houses have the member create a theme for the meeting and a couple of snacks that fit into this theme. You can challenge them to use a certain ingredient in all their snacks. At the club meeting discuss how the snacks fit into the theme or have the club members guess what the theme is.



At one of your meetings you can create a Cooking Challenge contest. For this contest you could separate members into teams and give them an allotted amount of time to create a snack. Let them know ahead of time so that they come prepared with a recipe and ingredients. After the time is up, when everyone is taste testing, discuss how different groups managed their time. Another option is to give the members a list of ingredients that you will provide for them and their time limit. They then can research to find a recipe that they would like to use.



Take time during these activities to talk about safety practices. You can ask participants what are some safety tips they use. Anytime you have youth creating their own snack, serves as a great opportunity to discuss the nutritional value of the snacks and how they might fit into the MyPlate model.



## **STEM** Science·Technology Engineering·Math

Why is science so important to include into out of school time experiences for youth?

Traditional science education in the classroom can be limited by class size or the need to meet educational standards, whereas non-traditional educational setting such as 4-H clubs offer a unique opportunities to help students develop their science skills through inquiry based learning.

Youth are able to direct the learning by asking questions and exploring. Research shows that youth who have positive experiences with science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) related projects are more likely to pursue education and careers in the STEM field. By incorporating STEM projects into monthly meetings, leaders can help empower youth by providing them hands on opportunities to grow, learn and become confident youth.

Science related projects can be found in traditional science project manuals, but STEM concepts can also be found in non-traditional science project such as the new clothing STEAM series.

Some of the activities found in this new manual include basic of techniques of sewing, but also science concepts such as exploring the different properties of fabric. This example illustrates a way to weave in science into all 4-H curriculum areas.

The most important thing is to give youth the opportunity to explore, manipulate variables, and ask questions during club meetings.





## 4-H INTERVIEW CONTEST

4-H contests teach much more than one specific skill. Helping youth make the connection between contests and career paths can give youth a jump in the right career direction and make their contest participation much more meaningful. One such contest that is giving youth a leg-up when it comes to landing that first job is the 4-H Interview Contest, which made its debut in 2013.



A partnership between Nebraska 4-H and Trusted Choice Independent Insurance Agents made the Interview Contest possible. Life Choices, the preparation program for the contest, is offering older youth a chance to develop and practice their interview, application and communication skills. The program achieves this by emphasizing life skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, serving others, as well as managing change. The program facilitates connections between local Trusted Choice representatives and the 4-H program by highlighting opportunities available through the business.



Independent Insurance Agent

### What is the Interview Contest?

The Interview Contest is an opportunity for members (11-18 years of age) to practice the real-life skill of applying for a job. The contest involves a set of job descriptions that the members use to prepare for the process of applying and interviewing for a position.

To enter the Interview Contest the member must: pick one of the three job descriptions and develop a résumé highlighting their education and experiences that they believe make them a good candidate for the job; write an accompanying cover letter for their résumé; prepare for the interview; fill out a job application the day of the contest for the chosen position; and participate in a simulated job interview.

Winners of the senior division (4-H age 14-18) from each Regional Interview Contest will advance to the State Judging contest where they will compete with other 4-H'ers from across the state for a chance to win the state competition.

Each contestant that participates at the state level will also receive \$50. Registration material, rules, and contest resources can be found at: <http://4h.unl.edu/interviewjudgingcontest> or contact your local Extension Office for more information.



# YOUTH CROP SCOUTING \_ CONNECTING YOUTH WITH CROPS



Looking for a fun club project? Want to unite your club members? Running out of ideas for club meetings? If you answered, "yes" to any of these questions, help is on the way! Nebraska Extension is pleased to present the second annual Crop Scouting Competition for Nebraska youth. Youth interested in crops have the opportunity to learn about crop growth & development and basic crop scouting principles.

Don't know a lot about crops? Ask a local agronomist to assist by providing a short lesson on crop production. You can have the agronomist meet with youth a little during each meeting or outside of the meeting. This is one way to engage those youth interested in crops.



This contest will be held at the ARDC near Mead, Nebraska on August 4, 2015. The event will include both indoor and outdoor events. Teams of junior high and high school students (those completing 7 -12<sup>th</sup> grades) from across Nebraska are invited to participate.

Clubs or other organizations may enter a team composed of three or four participants. An adult team leader must accompany each team of students. Team leaders could be FFA advisors, crop consultants, extension staff, coop employees, etc.

Top-scoring teams win prizes: \$500 for first, \$300 for second, \$250 for third and \$100 for fourth place.

Teams will be expected to know the basics of scouting corn and soybean fields. This includes crop staging; looking for patterns of crop injury; disease, insect and weed seedling identification; etc. Other topics many include but are not limited to, pesticide safety, nutrient disorders, and herbicide injury.

More information about the crop scouting competition and instructions on how to register a team are available online at [cropwatch.unl.edu/youth](http://cropwatch.unl.edu/youth). Click on the link that says, "Crop Scouting Competition".

Teams must be registered by July 15. Registration is \$50/team; the fee will be refunded when the team attends the competition. Payment by check is due along with the registration form by July 15. This program is sponsored by DuPont Pioneer, the Nebraska Soybean Board and Nebraska Extension.





# CALENDAR OF EVENTS



## GENERAL CASNR – WITH SO MANY COOL OPTIONS, IT’S HARD TO DECIDE!

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln has more than 150 majors to choose from while the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) has 30. That means a lot of possibilities and even more careers to consider when you are examining all the paths for your future.

If you don't know which major to select, we have a general option in CASNR that allows you more time to check out all your opportunities. The General-CASNR program is a great place to begin your UNL career if you know you are interested in the agriculture or natural resource fields, but you are not quite sure which major is the best fit.

This program allows students to begin their academic career while being advised by one of our CASNR faculty who will guide you in selecting courses and assist you in narrowing down your interests to a major. Our students will take courses

that provide them with maximum flexibility while ensuring that the courses contribute to any of the degree programs within CASNR as well as most at UNL.

The General-CASNR option also enables students to be a part of CASNR and receive the benefits of our College. You will still be eligible for our guaranteed job offer program and CASNR scholarships, and you also take part in our CASNR Cares and CASNR Career Services programs.

Learn more about CASNR and the General-CASNR option at <http://casnr.unl.edu/> or contact Sue Ellen Pegg at 402-472-0615 or [spegg2@unl.edu](mailto:spegg2@unl.edu).

**4-H! YOUR FIRST CLASS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA!**