



Spotlight on ... 4-H!



LEADER LETTER

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Learn about food allergies and 4-H—making club meetings and snack time safe for everyone
- Being “green” means more than your 4-H Clover!
- Fair time should be fun time not a stressful time. Share these tips with your 4-H'ers AND their families!

PARENTS AS PARTNERS IN 4-H

Author Toni Morrison said, “Long before I was a success, my parents made me feel like I could be one.”

Parents play the most important role in helping their children be successful. By supporting their children in 4-H, parents ensure the best experience possible for the child. Parental involvement is one of the keys to a successful 4-H member and club. Active parents mean active members.



Research shows when parents are involved, children are more likely to progress academically, to enjoy the experience, to participate in activities and are less likely to be a discipline problem.

Why Do Parents Get Involved

The reasons include a desire to help their child, the joy of helping others, personal satisfaction, sharing a skill, enjoyment in working with other adults, meeting new people, and maybe most important, someone asked them.

Bringing Parents Into 4-H

Parents who feel involved from the beginning will be more willing to help. Inform parents about 4-H; particularly if they do not have a 4-H background.

Communicate expectations for the members and the club. Inform parents of 4-H activities and events. Encourage them to attend meetings. Provide each family with a yearly club program. Keep them informed with phone calls, e-mails, home visits, etc.

Make available to each 4-H parent a “Parent Interest Survey”, to indicate their interest in participation in the 4-H club. Two forms are available from the 4-H Volunteer Information Series on the State 4-H website: <http://4h.unl.edu/volunteers/InfoSeries.htm>: 4-H Parent Interest Survey 1 and Survey 2.

What Can Parents Do

Parents are invited and encouraged to become involved. When a parent is involved they provide encouragement, assistance, guidance, knowledge, resources, leadership, ideas, and more.

Parents can assume a variety of roles. Share in the leadership as an assistant leader or project leader. Host club meetings, present programs or workshops, line up guest speakers, provide transportation, share a skill or hobby, help at the fair or other events. Match the talents of the parents with the task to be done.

4-H has a positive influence on the lives of youth. This happens only when parents care enough to share their time, resources, and talents.

An unknown author said, “When bringing up children, spend on them half as much money and twice as much time.” Parents are the key to assuring an educational and meaningful experience for their 4-H member, the key to success.



PREVENTING ALLERGIC REACTIONS DURING CLUB GATHERINGS

4-H meetings and social events can pose challenges for those with food allergies. Here are some tips to help overcome these challenges and keep all 4-Her's safe.



The most common foods that affect 90 percent of the people with food allergies are: Peanuts, Dairy Products, Eggs, Tree Nuts, Soy Products, Fish, Shellfish, and Wheat. Even though it is the family's responsibility to notify the leader of any food allergies the leader may want to ask each family if there are any food concerns.

Put place cards or labels by foods to show the ingredients, especially if the recipe includes highly allergenic foods. Ask families to consider substituting raisins or dates for nuts. The leader may need to suggest that

club members not bring foods made with these products if someone has a severe allergy to these foods.

Avoid Cross Contact of foods with those that may present a food allergy problem is poorly understood and not well communicated. Although unintentional, the effects can be devastating. For some food allergic individuals, the minutest particle of the allergen can be fatal. Some examples can be fatal. Some examples of mishaps that can induce a food allergic reaction: Plain chocolate brownies are served using the same spatula that was used to serve brownies with peanuts. French fries are prepared in the same oil used to deep-fry fish.

Wash, rinse, and sanitize all utensils, cookware, and equipment before each use. Wash hands after each preparation, or change gloves after each preparation step to assure to cross-contact. If necessary, use separate utensils, cookware, and equipment. Read labels and teach your 4-H families to read labels. Be familiar with emergency procedures. Know how to recognize the symptoms of an allergic reaction and what to do if a reaction occurs.

- Be sure to notify substitute leaders about the food allergies.
- Avoid using food in your club plans.
- Don't use food as an incentive or reward.
- Minimize the use of food in club parties or celebrations.
- Consider food allergies when planning for field trips.



Eating shouldn't have to be a risky business! Make sure you know if you have anyone with allergies in your 4-H club before you plan activities and snack duties for the year.

Five Simple Steps to Share with 4-H'ers:

Food allergies are serious. Don't make jokes about them.
 Don't share food with friends who have food allergies.
 Wash your hands after eating.
 Ask what your friends are allergic to, and help them avoid it.
 If a friend who has food allergies becomes ill, get help immediately.

Remember it is always better to be safe than sorry.

2009 NEBRASKA 4-H MONTH

keeping it green



Keeping it Green is more than a slogan promoting 4-H. Green is in; everywhere we look someone is promoting a green lifestyle and activities. 4-H Home Environment projects are no different. There are many opportunities to make Home Environment activities green without much extra work. Many of the projects in this curriculum area already are environmentally friendly. There are classes in the fair book especially for recycled or reused projects, but any project can be “green”. The Heirloom Treasures project is all about recycling and renovating old items. In other project areas think about the materials you use to make the projects. Search the web, magazines or home decorating shows for creative ideas for club activities. Here a few easy ideas that you can incorporate in your club’s home environment projects.

- Take a field trip to the local hardware or paint store to explore environmentally friendly products like light bulbs, low VOC paints, water-efficient faucets and fixtures, recycled carpets and fabrics.
- Investigate your home to find energy wasters in your home. Look for leaks and cracks around windows and doors. Check the temperature on the thermostat. Are you using incandescent or fluorescent bulbs? Do your appliances and electronics turned completely off when not in use or are they in stand-by mode? How many energy star appliances do you have in your home? Make a plan to correct some of the areas where improvement is needed.
- Compute your environmental footprint by going to www.myfootprint.org
- Explore ideas to reduce energy at <http://www.energyhog.org/childrens.htm>
- Create a craft item using only found objects from nature or around the house.
- Use old or recycled fabrics and clothing to make quilts, rugs, wall hangings and pillows.
- Recycle magazines to make paper mache’ accessories for the home.
- Use retired wallpaper samples to make paper storage boxes.
- Use garage sale items and a lamp kit to create a one-of-a-kind lamp.
- Design a landscape for your home that increases the home’s energy efficiency.
- Visit a second hand furniture store to look for pieces that can be painted or refurbished.
- Recruit a team to participate in the new “Going Green” Challenge during the Life Challenge contest on June 29, 2009 in Lincoln. Visit <http://pase.unl.edu/booklet.html> to learn more about the challenge.



**GREEN IS IN;
EVERYWHERE WE
LOOK SOMEONE IS
PROMOTING A
GREEN LIFESTYLE
AND ACTIVITIES.**



EXTENSION: 4-H SCIENCE, ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES

Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) is by no means new to 4-H but 4-H has recently recognized it as an area that needs to be focused on more. This may be why Science, Engineering and Technology for Youth is currently the only page under Youth on the new eXtension website, extension.org



According to the website “eXtension is unlike any other search engine or information-based website. It’s a space where university content providers can gather and produce new educational and information resources on wide-ranging topics. Because it’s available to students, researchers, clinicians, professors, as well as the general public, at any time from any Internet connection, eXtension helps solve real-life problems in real time.”

Many University of Nebraska-Lincoln faculty and staff have been instrumental in putting together content and launching eXtension. Kathy Anderson, Nebraska’s 4-H and Extension Horse Specialist, helps to develop the wonderful horse content that can be found on eXtension. She is just one example of Nebraska 4-H on this site.

As you open the Science, Engineering and Technology for Youth site, you first see the scrolling screen with the current featured articles and activities. When you click on “What is Youth SET for Life”, you will find out that “Youth SET for Life is a community of learners interested in science, engineering, and technology. This site is brought to you



by a core team of members. University faculty, 4-H staff, and others will provide learning materials. Youth and adults will explore and learn together. Learners can also share their own experiences with each other.”

When you return to the Youth SET for Life homepage you will see what all volunteers like to see RESOURCES! Not only are these resources constantly being added to and updated but they include some of the hot topics for today’s young science lovers. Volunteers can find information, activities and podcasts about Water, GPS/GIS, 21st Century Agriculture, and Energy. There is also a link for Other Learning Opportunities for Youth that has information about young inventors contests and workshops.

If a volunteer cannot find what they are looking for, try asking an expert. 4-H staff from across the country will answer any questions that you may have. By asking a question on eXtension, you may get an answer from the top 4-H expert in the US!

For more information about SET or eXtension, contact your local University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension Office.

“E EXTENSION IS UNLIKE ANY OTHER SEARCH ENGINE OR INFORMATION-BASED WEBSITE.

IT’S A SPACE WHERE UNIVERSITY CONTENT PROVIDERS CAN GATHER AND PRODUCE NEW EDUCATIONAL AND INFORMATION RESOURCES ON WIDE-RANGING TOPICS. BECAUSE IT’S AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS, RESEARCHERS, CLINICIANS, PROFESSORS, AS WELL AS THE GENERAL PUBLIC, AT ANY TIME FROM ANY INTERNET CONNECTION, EXTENSION HELPS SOLVE REAL-LIFE PROBLEMS IN REAL TIME.”

OLD FASHIONED FUN AT THE 4-H FOUNDATION TRAIL RIDE!



For a weekend of fun, horseback riding and good old time fellowship, horse enthusiasts are invited to the annual 4-H Foundation Trail Ride held the second weekend in October. During these two fun filled days, over 100 horseback riders enjoy the fun and excitement as they ride through the hills and trees of the Nebraska National Forest near Halsey.

The four weekend rides are filled with wonder and excitement as the riders file through the only man-made forest in the World. Wildlife, wild flowers, and grasses, are common as riders of all ages wind through the

trees and into the open spaces of the forest.

After the first day of six hours on horseback, horses are unsaddled, groomed and bedded down for the night in stalls from panels donated by local ranchers. Certified weed free hay donated by a local rancher is available for the horses.

After the horses are cared for, pickups filled with hungry riders head for the Nebraska 4-H Camp. Here they are welcomed with steaks ready to grill and plenty of food for a hearty meal after a long day on the trail.

Also waiting is a crew of volunteers ready to help make a craft item related to horses. A wide variety of carefully crafted reins, halters, headstalls, hoof picks, and lead ropes have left with riders each year.

Local country music entertainment offers a great time for relaxation and fellowship at the end of the day. During the evening an auction is held to raise funds for the 4-H Foundation. Over \$70,000 has been raised during the past ten years to help fund camps and other 4-H events.

Riders bed down for the night in cabins at the 4-H camp, in tents and trailers at the horse camp or in local motels. A cowboy breakfast followed with cowboy inspirational services awaits them on Sunday morning.

This weekend is famous as a great outing for family time and fun. It is filled with youth, parents, and grandparents as they bring their horses and ride together. Time on the trails and around the tables people find plenty of time for fellowship.

Many non-riders enjoy the weekend as well. A local rancher brings a team and wagon and gives non riders a chance to enjoy much of the local scenery.

As the trailers are hooked up and horses loaded, people are buzzing about the great time they had and how they are looking forward to next year's ride! It will be held on October 10 and 11.



<http://www.ne4hfoundation.org/>

Nebraska 4-H Foundation

Supporting Our Youth

SPOTLIGHT ON 4-H!

TAKE A LITTLE STRESS OUT OF GETTING READY FOR THE FAIR

Joshua finished the display in the van on the way to the fair, Nicole stayed up most of the night to complete an exhibit, Morgan's parents had to make a mad dash to the local store for supplies, and John and his parents exchanged harsh words.

Getting ready for the 4-H fair can cause lots of stress in a household. And even though it's the 4-H member and his/her project that is being evaluated, parents may at least subconsciously view the success of the 4-H'er and his/her project as a reflection on their ability.

So, how can we lower the stress level of preparing for the fair?



First, try to **put the 4-H fair in perspective**. The county 4-H fair is only one part of the total 4-H learning experience. Serving as an officer, giving a talk, completing a project, and going to camp are a few of the experiences a 4-H'er learns from throughout the year.

Probably the most obvious way to decrease stress is to **encourage club members to start early preparing their exhibit**.

Read and make sure the members understand all the rules for the exhibits. Members who have taken a specific project could help those exhibiting for the first time.



Understand the purpose of exhibiting and judging projects. 4-Hers learn more about his/her project, and gain life skills evaluating one's own work. Judging is done according to quality standards, not a matter of judge's likes. Score sheets are available at <http://4h.unl.edu>.

Relax and have a good time. Winning a purple ribbon is an excellent goal to set. But a person may learn just as much by not reaching a particular goal.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

2009

LANCASTER COUNTY FAIR AUGUST 5-9

New this year, gate admission tickets will be required at the Lancaster County Fair. The extension office will have gate admission tickets FREE, available July-Aug. 9.

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