

4-H GENERAL RULES AND GUIDELINES

- A. **General Rules** - All Hitchcock County Fair General Rules also apply to 4-H unless otherwise noted. It is the responsibility of each exhibitor and parent/guardian to be familiar with all applicable rules and regulations.
- B. **Interpretation of Rules** - The Hitchcock County 4-H Council reserves to itself the final and absolute right to interpret, amend or add to these rules and regulations as its judgment may determine, and to settle and determine all matters, questions and differences in regard hereto or otherwise arising out of, connected with, or incident to the fair.
- C. **Violation** - All exhibitors are bound by the most current editions of the Hitchcock County Fair Rules and Regulations set forth by the Hitchcock County 4-H Council. Any violation of these Rules and Regulations will be subject to disqualification of project; forfeiture of all awards including ribbons, trophies, premiums, booster, incentives; penalties prescribed by law; and/or the exhibitor banned from future participation until such time a reinstatement is made by the 4-H Council. Penalties apply only to project area(s) involved in the incident.
- D. **Disputes & Ruling Of Decisions & Formal Protests** - If any issue arises during the Hitchcock County Fair the 4-H Council President, Class Superintendent(s) and the Extension Staff will rule a decision. Formal Protests must be submitted in writing to the Extension Staff and follow the Hitchcock County Grievance Policy.
- E. **Substance Abuse** - Use or possession of tobacco, alcoholic beverages or drugs (except for medical purposes) by any exhibitor who is participating in 4-H at the Hitchcock County Fair will result in immediate disqualification of that exhibitor's entry.
- F. **Courtesy & Cooperation** - All exhibitors and families are expected to extend courtesy to other exhibitors and their projects. Any questions that may arise should be referred to the Superintendent of your division.
- G. **Open Class** - Entries may be made in the Open Class Divisions by any Hitchcock County resident and residents in the townships bordering Hitchcock County. Others wishing to exhibit must have permission from the Fair Board. Any animals shown in the 4-H classes will not be eligible for open class competition with the exception of animals shown by youth under 4-H age (8 years old as of January 1st of the current year).
- H. **What Does 4-H Enrollment Mean** - Youth are enrolled when they are on the membership records in the Hitchcock County Extension office by June 1st of current year. Nebraska Extension will recognize 4-H members and volunteer leaders of the county in which they are enrolled in 4-H irrespective of their place of residence. A member cannot enroll in the same 4-H project area in more than one county or state in the same year. Example: beef (bucket calf, feeder calf, market beef and breeding beef are among those listed with the beef project area), clothing, horse, foods, etc. Regulations not covered in the County Fair 4-H rules will be governed according to State 4-H Rules.
- I. **County Fair Pre-Entry Deadlines** - All entries must have been made/completed since the last county fair. Exhibits can be exhibited only in classes listed in the 4-H Fairbook. Those exhibits incorrectly entered or identified will become ineligible, however, they may be moved to Open Class. Entries must be entered according to the 4-H fairbook and pre-entered online by June 28 and must be accompanied by all fees (if applicable) or entry will not be accepted. To be eligible to compete at the Hitchcock County Fair, all enrollment and entry deadlines must have been met.

900 Numbered Classes Are County Only: They are NOT eligible for State Fair.

Exhibitors may enter two different entries per class. The exhibits MUST be different & not from the same pattern, recipe or cultivar. Each exhibit must be entered into ShoWorks separately. If entering 2 exhibits, there are 2 entries in ShoWorks.

- J. **Age Divisions** –Divisions require a minimum of 2 youth in each Division to have three Divisions (Junior, Intermediate & Senior). If the 2 youth minimum is not met there will be 2 divisions (Junior, Senior). There will always be at minimum a Junior and Senior Division.

If requirement of 2 youth in each of 3 Divisions is met the Divisions would be as follows:
Junior 8-11 as of January 1 of current year

Intermediate 12-14 as of January 1 of current year
Senior 15-18 as of January 1 of current year

If there is not enough youth to have 2 youth in each of 3 divisions there will be 2 divisions as follows:
Junior 8-11 as of January 1 of current year
Senior 12-18 as of January 1 of current year

Age Divisions in Shooting Sports that require Hunter Safety Education will be:
Intermediate: 11-14 as of January 1 of current year
Senior 15-18 as of January 1 of current year

- K. **Eligibility Of Exhibitors** - Only those youth enrolled in 4-H in Hitchcock County are eligible to exhibit in the county fair 4-H areas. To participate youth, must be enrolled no later than June 1, of the current year and in the project area they are exhibiting in. 4-H enrollment must be done annually.

State Fair - in classes where presence of the 4-H'er is required for judging purposes such as animal exhibits, judging contests, presentations and fashion show; a 4-H member must be 10 by January 1, 2021, or become 11 years of age during 2021. The last year of eligibility is the calendar year the member becomes 19. State Fair on-line entries for the in-person contests is August 10.

State Fair classes where the presence of the 4-H'er is NOT required; the exhibitor must have become 9 years of age during 2021. Therefore, they must be 8 as of January 1 of current year. Exhibits that have the entry tag marked for state fair, are eligible to go on to State Fair and will receive a special letter at exhibit release during county fair.

- L. **4-H Exhibits** - Training offered by agricultural education/FFA and Nebraska Extension/4-H contributes to youth's preparation for a future in agricultural production, agribusiness, and other areas. Simultaneous participation in both programs is acceptable and encouraged, if the youth choose to do so. However, there will not be duplication of project animals or other production units. For purposes of exhibition, this means an animal can only be nominated and shown in one organization or the other, not both at the county fair level. Participants enrolling in the same project or enterprise in both organizations is permissible. Any animal shown as an FFA exhibit is ineligible for the show as a 4-H exhibit by any exhibitor and vice versa at the county fair. An animal can be nominated for show in either 4-H or FFA, but not both at county fair.
- M. **Ribbons And Premiums Awarded** - The Danish system of awarding prizes will be used throughout the 4-H Divisions. Clover Kids will receive a participation ribbon. Awards will be divided into groups of merit. Purple (P) ribbons designate an exhibit of superior quality that has met and exceeded all of the standards. Blue (B) ribbons denote an above average exhibit that has met almost all of the standards in a way that surpasses the norm. Red (R) ribbons indicate average quality and indicate that the exhibit has met the majority of standards in such a way that the benchmark was reached, but not exceeded. White (W) ribbons indicate that the exhibit has not met the majority of the standards.
- All exhibits in a given class will be awarded ribbons based on quality of the exhibit regardless of the number of entries. This does not necessarily mean that each exhibit will receive an award.

Exhibits MUST be of purple quality to be named Champion and to qualify for related special awards. Likewise static exhibits must have a purple ribbon to be eligible for State Fair selection based on State Fair classes and quotas.

Awards are not available in every Department, Division or Class. All premium money listed is the maximum premium that may be awarded. All premiums are to be paid only to the owner of the exhibit. SHOULD FUNDS NOT PERMIT, A PERCENTAGE MAY BE PAID. You must complete your 4-H Career Portfolio and turn into the Extension Office by September 15 of current year to receive booster and incentive money and to have completed your 4-H project year.

4-H/FFA Exhibit Premiums: Purple \$5.00 – Blue \$3.00 – Red - \$2.00 – White \$1.00
Open Class Premiums: Blue \$1.50 – Red \$1.00 – White \$.75

- All premium checks must be cashed by December 15 of the current year.
- N. **Judges/Judging** - If any exhibitor interferes with the judges in the performance of their duties by letter, act or otherwise he/she shall be excused from competition and exhibition for such period of time as the 4-H Council may determine and may forfeit any awards received at this fair. Any person, not an exhibitor, who interferes with the judges in any manner during the performance of their duties, shall be asked to leave the fairgrounds.
- O. **Dress Code** - 4-H exhibitors must wear the official 4-H shirt sold at the Extension Office or a white sleeved shirt (or blouse) with the 4-H chevron and long dark colored jeans when person or project is being judged. With the exception of Public Speaking, Presentations, and Fashion Show. If a chevron is worn, it is to be placed only on the upper left side of the shirt front. No hats, caps, or other types of headgear are to be worn (with the exception of horse show and shooting sports). Hard soled boots or shoes are suggested for livestock exhibitors for safety purposes. While hard soled shoes are not required for the cat, dog and small pet shows, exhibitors are required to wear closed toed shoes with non-slip soles. Shooting sports exhibitors in any gun disciplines are also required to wear safety glasses or protective eye wear and closed toed shoes with non-slip soles. Failure to follow dress code will result in dropping of one ribbon placing.
- P. **Exhibits Released** - All animals and articles must remain on fairgrounds in respective buildings during the fair unless permission from a group consisting of the superintendent of the department, 4-H Council and Extension Staff have allowed early release. Removal of any exhibit prior to official release time may result in forfeit of premiums and booster bonus money.

All livestock and exhibit hall 4-H exhibits will be released on Saturday from 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. No livestock is to be loaded out before that time. All livestock pens and stalls must be fully cleaned no later than Sunday at 10:00 a.m. All exhibitors are responsible for cleaning in exhibit hall and cleaning stalls/pens in the livestock barns. Failure to clean pens will result in a penalty. Failure to participate in the Hitchcock County Fair pre & post fair clean up may result in loss of premiums, booster, incentive monies.

- Q. **Disclaimer Of Responsibility** - 4-H exhibits at the Hitchcock County Fair are entered and displayed at the risk of the 4-H member. The Hitchcock County 4-H Council, in cooperation with the Hitchcock County Fairboard and the Nebraska Extension in Hitchcock County accepts exhibits and will exercise due care to protect them. However, they cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage due to the conditions imposed by large crowds or the arrangement of the buildings in which displays are housed. 4-H'ers who have exhibits of great sentimental and/or monetary value should carefully consider whether such exhibits should be exposed to the hazards of the fair. While the greatest possible care will be exercised by the management to protect patrons of the County Fair, each individual will be held personally responsible for any injury.

Nebraska State Fair exhibits are entered and displayed at the risk of the 4-H member. Nebraska Extension 4-H Youth Development, in cooperation with the Nebraska State Fair Board accepts exhibits and will exercise due care to protect them. However, 4-H and the State Fair Board cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage due to the conditions imposed by large crowds or the arrangement of the buildings in which displays are housed. 4-H'ers who have exhibits of great sentimental and/or monetary value should carefully consider whether such exhibits should be exposed to the hazards of the fair.

Large exhibits requiring two or more people to move will be the responsibility of the exhibitor to transport to and from State Fair. Some items may be deemed to large too exhibit at State Fair per State Fair guidelines.

- R. **Copyrighted Materials/Use Of 4-H Emblem** - Copyrighted materials are prohibited being used on 4-H exhibits. When using the official 4-H Emblem, it must follow approved guidelines, which can be viewed at <https://4h.unl.edu/name-emblem-guidelines>.

Grievance Policy

- The Hitchcock County 4-H Council (Protest Committee), has the authority to make appropriate decisions on local 4-H disputes. These decisions will be formulated using state policy and national directives as formulated by this policy or as dictated by law.
- All protests must be submitted in writing and signed by the protester.

- The written protest must include:
 1. Names of persons involved
 2. Cause of complaint or appeal
 3. Situation and documentation
 4. Recommendations for correction
 5. Specific action, rule, etc., in question
 6. Additional persons who may be contacted for further clarification
 7. Procedures and/or steps carried out by the person involved prior to submission of the protest to the Protest committee.
- Membership of the protest committee will be 4-H Council. Nebraska Extension faculty will be a member(s) of this committee.
- Protests will not be accepted after the exhibit or event/activity is completed/released.
- The protest will be acknowledged after receiving the written protest and will be responded to in a timely manner.
- Protests related to judges' integrity, decision, placings or other evaluations will not be accepted.
- The committee will review the written protest. They may call for a face-to-face meeting with affected persons and event leadership to discuss the situation and the official ruling. Recommendations will be developed, followed, and communicated both verbally and in writing to the individual or group affected.
- Failure of the protester to attend the face-to-face meeting with the Protest Committee will result in no action and forfeiture of the deposit.
- In cases of protest, the 4-H member/parent/leader may continue to participate. Results of participation will be subject to change based on the outcome of the protest process.
- The Protest Committee and Event Leadership reserves the right to withhold any award. The 4-H member/parent/leader may be excluded from 4-H if action warrants.

4-H Code of Ethics

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-Her's) involved with the 4-H Program will be consistent with the six core ethical values comprising good character: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, caring, fairness and citizenship. As a 4-H Participant/Parent/Guardian I will:

- Treat all people and property with respect, courtesy, consideration and compassion. Avoid and prevent put-downs, insults, name calling, swearing and other language or nonverbal conduct likely to offend, hurt or set a bad example.
- Keep informed about 4-H program policies and projects and read materials pertaining to the county 4-H program.
- Teach and model kindness and compassion for others. Recognize that all people have skills and talents which can be used to help others and improve the community. Teach and foster teamwork and discourage selfishness.
- Practice fair-mindedness by being open to ideas, suggestions and opinions of others. I will make all reasonable efforts to assure equal access to participation for all youth and adults regardless of race, creed, color, sex, national origin or disability. Decisions will be made fairly and treat all individuals and families with impartiality.
- Obey laws and rules as an obligation of being a good citizen. I accept responsibility for the proper treatment and care for other youth and adults, the program facilities and/or equipment.
- Demonstrate the responsible treatment of animals and stewardship of the environment.
- Not use alcohol or illegal substances (or be under the influence) while working with or participating in any part of the 4-H Program.
- Provide a safe environment for all parties involved in 4-H. I will protect those involved from sexual harassment, physical force, verbal or mental abuse, neglect, or other harmful behaviors.

Youth Participant/Parent/Guardians who do not abide by the above code of conduct, will be subject to the following consequences:

1. Be asked to explain actions to the 4-H Educator.

2. Be dismissed from an event at own expense.
3. Further disciplinary action determined in cooperation with the local Extension Educator, the District 4-H Coordinator, the State 4-H Program Administrator and as warranted, the Dean of Nebraska Extension and IANR Administration. Disciplinary action may include:
 - a. becoming ineligible to participate in specific 4-H activities,
 - b. becoming ineligible to participate in the Nebraska 4-H Program.
4. Reimburse the proper entity for any property damage or for liability resulting from inappropriate actions. In the case of vandalism, guilty party may be required to reimburse 4-H and/or the facility.
5. Multiple violations of the code of conduct may result in:
 - a. suspension for a period of time
 - b. becoming ineligible for 4-H participation in their county.
6. Parent/Guardian violation may also result in:
 - a. restriction from contacting 4-H families, volunteers, donors, and/or sponsors pertaining to any 4-H matter.