



# Florida 4-H State Events & Activities Handbook



# Contents

Introduction	1
General Information	2
Commonly Used Terms	2
Guidelines for Membership & Participation	6
Non-Discrimination Policy	6
Age Policy	6
National 4-H Age Requirements	7
Cloverbud (age 5-7) Specific Guidelines	7
Overnight Statewide Summer Events	8
Criteria for 4-H Competitive & Non-Competitive Events	9
Cost	9
Program Specific Criteria	9
State Competitive Events	10
Non-Competitive Events	16
Guidelines for County Extension Faculty	20
Contact Information	20



**4-H Emblem-** The 4-H Emblem is federally protected under Section 18 US Code 707 and belongs to the Congress of the United States. The official emblem is green with white H's- the 4-H colors.

**4-H Mission -** The Florida 4-H Youth Development program uses a learn-by-doing approach and caring adults to help youth gain the knowledge and life skills they need to be productive, responsible citizens. To achieve its mission, 4-H accesses the expertise and resources of the University of Florida as well as a nationwide network of Cooperative Extension Service faculty and staff.

**4-H Vision -** Florida 4-H aspires to be the leading youth development program that creates positive change in youth, families, and communities.

**4-H Creed-** I believe in 4-H Club work for the opportunity it will give me to become a useful citizen. I believe in the training of my HEAD for the power it will give me to think, plan and to reason. I believe in the training of my HEART for the nobleness it will give me to be kind, sympathetic and true. I believe in the training of my HANDS for the ability it will give me to be helpful, skillful, and useful. I believe in the training of my HEALTH for the strength it will give me to enjoy life, to resist disease, and to work efficiently. I believe in my country, my state, and my community and in my responsibility for their development. In all these things I believe, and am willing to dedicate my efforts to their fulfillment.

**4-H Motto -** To Make the Best Better

**4-H Slogan -** Learning by Doing

**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.

## Introduction

### PREFACE

The purpose of this handbook is to set forth general operating procedures for the University of Florida's 4-H Positive Youth Development Program, in conjunction with Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) Cooperative Extension. This document also sets out certain standards and guidelines to be used to assure that 4-H is providing quality programs that promote Positive Youth Development (PYD). The 4-H Program Leader, Dr. Stacey Ellison, oversees the Florida 4-H program.

4-H operates within the policies, guidelines and procedures set forth by the University of Florida IFAS Extension program, which encompasses all youth work conducted by Extension faculty and staff. Additionally, policies and procedures of the 4-H National Headquarters, NIFA; United States Department of Agriculture also apply. Please be advised that all "policies" are on the "About Us" tab of the official Florida 4-H website. They are located on the "Our Mission" page and are subject to change within the year based on federal or state laws and legal interpretation. Policies can be found at: <https://florida4h.ifas.ufl.edu/about-us/mission/> by scrolling to the bottom of the page.

County 4-H policy is guided by the local County 4-H Advisory Committee. Legal authority for the 4-H program rests with the Associate Dean of Extension University of Florida and State 4-H Program Leader. No county 4-H policy may conflict with state or federal 4-H policies. While counties may develop additional or more specific restrictions caution should be taken to not be less inclusive or restrict youth participation unnecessarily. When developing event participation guidelines please consider WHO best should make the decision regarding participation. Many times, having advisory committee input is helpful when making decisions. Implementing best practices that support Positive Youth Development (PYD) should always be priority.

This handbook explains the general operating procedures and guidelines under which all 4-H sanctioned events and activities should be conducted. It is very important that all extension administrators, specialists, agents, para-professionals, support staff, advisory groups, volunteers, and youth associated with the conducting of events and activities of the 4-H Positive Youth Development Program understand and adhere to the general guidelines for all events, and the additional specifications for competitive events and activities at the District, State, and National levels.

General operating procedures that govern programming listed in this handbook will be consistent throughout the full 4-H year. This handbook will be updated and distributed for the start of the new 4-H year. Additionally, specific contest information and details may also exist in other university documents or websites. Please reference the State 4-H Events site (<https://florida4h.ifas.ufl.edu/events/>) for a State Calendar, event webpages, and event resources. .

# INTRODUCTION

## GENERAL INFORMATION

All 4-H events should foster an opportunity to promote Positive Youth Development (PYD) among young people. The 4-H program does this by providing a holistic approach to working with young people by respecting multiple learning styles, personalities, and motivations. Additionally, all 4-H programs should be implemented following an Experiential Learning approach. All awards and recognition opportunities provided for 4-H members should be reflective of a holistic approach and is not limited to competitive events only; but includes cooperation, progress towards goals, and participation. All 4-H programs should give members positive, meaningful experiences and promote optimum positive youth development.

Strong county programs are foundational to the success of 4-H programming. District, State, and National Events complement county programs by offering many exciting opportunities ranging from educational conferences, workshops, and camps to competitive exhibitions, demonstrations, public speaking, and judging events. District and State Events should emphasize and support the county/club level program.

4-H events and activities are a planned part of the 4-H curriculum and are reflective of the 4-H Project. All events and activities should support an approved Curriculum/Project category:

- Science: Animals, Plants, Environmental, & Technology,
- Leadership, Citizenship & Communications,
- Healthy Living: Family and Consumer Sciences, Food, Personal Well-being & Safety.

All 4-H events and activities should be designed to allow youth to:

- gain experience and develop skills in gathering, absorbing, preparing, and presenting educational information,
- enhance decision making capabilities,
- make public presentations,
- learn standards by which comparisons are drawn
- develop good sportsmanship.

Competitive events are just one of the many teaching methods used by 4-H leaders and Extension Agents. 4-H professionals and volunteers are encouraged to keep competitive events in the proper perspective, making sure the event or award does not become an end in itself. The emphasis should be placed on providing an educational experience for the 4-H'er and not on the importance of winning an award. It is imperative that we, as agents and leaders, realize that the real winner is the 4-H'er who learns about being a more responsible member of society as a result of their 4-H experience.

## COMMONLY USED TERMS

### *4-H Program Year*

The 4-H year starts September 1 and ends August 31 of the following year. 4-H enrollment and participation revolve around this 4-H program year definition.

# INTRODUCTION

## *4HOnline*

The electronic online database used for enrollment of youth and adults. This platform is also used to send timely reminders to youth and volunteers and as an event registration system for state events.

## *Advisory Committee (4-H Association)*

A group of stakeholders including youth and adults that convene to discuss needs for county programming and who will manage the fiscal oversight of the county 4-H program. Some counties will have a Foundation that is organized for the purpose of fundraising to support the needs of the county 4-H program.

## *Calendar*

Florida 4-H publishes an electronic events (Google) calendar that is hosted at <https://florida4h.ifas.ufl.edu/events/> All statewide 4-H events should be published on this calendar.

## *County Events*

Demonstrations and speeches held in a contest setting for Juniors, Intermediates, and Seniors in various categories. Placings are awarded based on achievement of standards and peer competition; judges give scores and evaluative comments. Qualifiers for the District level events are selected at the County level. County events may also include share-the-fun, graphic design contest, or even participation opportunities for cloverbud members, such as table setting.

## *Delivery Mode*

Florida 4-H supports many different delivery systems that promote positive youth development. Delivery modes include: the community club, afterschool club, in-school club, special interest (SPIN) club, school enrichment, day camps, military clubs, specialty camps, residential camps and other educational outreach effort.

## *Demonstrations or Illustrated Talks*

A “show and tell” presentation in a specific curriculum area. Youth share what they have learned in their 4-H project using visual aids to communicate presentation content. Demonstrations or talks are presented at a club level and may proceed on to county, district and state level competitions. Pay special attention to guidelines for timing and advancing to the next level.

## *District Events*

District Events is the next level beyond county events where youth showcase project learning through a variety of competitive means, such as demonstrations, speeches, share-the-fun and others. Senior qualifiers in these areas will go on to compete in state level competition.

## *Judging Events*

A special activity in which a team of 4-H members and/or individual 4-H member test their knowledge about a particular project area against 4-H members from other counties. Judging events happen at various levels and events such as judging days or fairs. Current areas of competition include: Insect-athon, Horse, Livestock, Poultry, Land, Dairy, Meats, Forestry, Life Smarts, Marine Ecology, Hippology, Horticulture, and Quiz Bowls for Horse and Dairy.

# INTRODUCTION

## *Judging Teams*

A group of 4-H members who come together to learn about a special project area such as horses, etc. Youth should be enrolled in the project supporting their team competition.

## *Large Animal Project*

An animal project that requires the 4-H'ers involvement or ownership and care of a large animal (i.e. sheep, goat, swine, beef, dairy, or horse). This would include any supporting events and activities in the large animal projects. Cloverbud members may not participate in a large animal project.

## *Life Skills*

Positive Youth Development programs offered through 4-H should target skills for life through various project interests that are fun, engaging, and relevant to members. Please review the Targeting Life Skills Model to learn more (Hendricks, 1998).

## *Project*

A project is a planned series of six or more hours of learning experiences within an area of interest. Members learn and then share what they have learned through various competitions and events. A 4-H'er can share what they learn, create, or act out, for example, learning to grow a garden, making a dress, raising an animal, or training a dog. 4-H members should work on at least one project each year and complete the records for that project. A project should have the following elements: quality curriculum, adult support, learn-by-doing approach, sharing opportunities, record/reflection opportunities, and recognition for accomplishments.

## *Project/Record Book*

Youth are provided with a curriculum resource material that will guide their project activities through lessons (project book); or provide a manual for keeping records or reflection of their project (record book). Some project materials are electronic and can be included in the Project Report to support their project work.

## *Project Reports (Participation Summary)*

4-H members are encouraged to keep a record of their project plans, goals, and how they worked to achieve these goals along with citizenship and leadership activities, as is age appropriate. These report forms were developed in support of the Awards and Recognition program and overtime help young people build their 4-H portfolio. Reports by age division can be found on the Awards and Recognition page of the 4-H website or on EDIS.

## *Specialty Camps*

Refers to a subject specific camp (horse, marine, shooting sports, entomology, etc.) that may require previous experience in the subject matter prior to participation.

## *Share-the-Fun*

Share-the-fun is designed to help 4-H'ers discover their talents, develop them, and have opportunities to share those talents with others. It is part of the leisure & performing arts project and is conducted at County, District, and State levels.

# INTRODUCTION

## *Standards of Excellence*

The Florida 4-H program supports an awards and recognition process that recognizes youth for their progress towards goals. Youth document their progress through the Standards of Excellence forms found on the Awards and Recognition page of the 4-H website (<https://florida4h.ifas.ufl.edu/youth/awards-and-recognition/>). Awards are Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Emerald.

## *State 4-H Council*

The Florida 4-H Council is a youth governing body made up of two youth from each county, and the eight governing State Officers. The State Council meets each year at 4-H University and elects the State Council Officers. The State Council program is based around a youth/adult partnership that gives feedback to the Florida 4-H Program.

## *State 4-H Executive Board*

The Florida 4-H State Executive Board consists of four delegates from each of the 13 4-H districts, up to 30 Executive Board Appointees, and the eight Florida 4-H State Officers. The Executive Board is a group of youth from across the state that represent their county and district. The members attend working committee meetings at Executive Board Weekends, during which they offer input into events such as 4-H University, Legislature, 4-H Day at the Capitol, and Intermediate State. Additionally, this group leads the statewide service project and does other work of the state council.

## *Summer Residential Camp*

An educational, fun overnight camping experience at one of the state 4-H camps for two or more days, usually totaling five. Camps promote the development of life skills through experiential education in an environment that fosters positive youth development.

## *Speech*

A talk given without the use of props, posters, or visual aids.

## *Small Animal Project*

An animal project that requires the 4-H'ers involvement or ownership and care of a small animal (e.g. dogs, rabbits, poultry, cats, cavy, pets). This would include any supporting events and activities in the small animal projects.

## *Volunteer*

An active and enrolled volunteer (adult or teen) who guides the work of 4-H members at clubs, military bases, after school sites, etc. Volunteers also may share knowledge and skills through chaperoning at camps or other events. All volunteers must be appropriately enrolled in 4HOnline and follow appropriate Youth Protection policies as governed by OYCS.



## Guidelines for Membership & Participation

All *policies*\* should be validated by reviewing the official listing of policies on the Florida 4-H website and will be denoted by an asterisk.

### Non-Discrimination Policy

The University shall actively promote equal opportunity policies and practices conforming to laws against discrimination. The University is committed to non-discrimination with respect to race, creed, color, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, political opinions or affiliations, genetic information and veteran status as protected under the Vietnam Era Veteran's Readjustment Assistance Act. \*

### Age Policy

Age classifications give youth involved in 4-H events and activities the optimum experience in their respective project and ensure they are developmentally appropriate for 4-H members. It is important for one to be aware of the various age requirements for participation in an event or activity. Age requirements may vary for 4-H events and activities held within the State and at Regional or National levels.

Eligibility for enrolled 4-H'ers (those who have met previously stated enrollment criteria) is determined by the student's age as of September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current program year for which they are enrolled. The program coordinator will specify any exceptions for an event. Age classifications for events and activities should be determined as of September 1<sup>st</sup> of the current 4-H program year and be as follows:

**Cloverbuds: 5-7 Years of Age**

**Juniors: 8-10 Years of Age**

**Intermediates: 11-13 Years of Age**

**Seniors: 14-18 Years of Age**

Membership age of youth participation is determined by the youth's age as of September 1 of the current program year (September 1 – August 31). The minimum age of a 4-H'er is 5 years old and the maximum age for a 4-H'er is 18 years old, or completion of high school, whichever comes first. Youth whose membership age is beyond 18 who have qualified for a National contest (as a culminating event for their project learning) shall be eligible to participate in the event as long as they qualify per National Contest policies.

Youth classified as an "exceptional student" and thus determined eligible for a special program by the State Board of Education [Florida Statute 1003.01(3)(a)] shall be eligible to participate in 4-H until the age of 21 years old (National 4-H upper age limit) or completion of high school, whichever comes first. \*

# GUIDELINES FOR MEMBERSHIP & PARTICIPATION

## National 4-H Age Requirements

National level age requirements are dependent on the event or activity. Please see national rules on what age requirements are for individual events.

## Cloverbud (age 5-7) Specific Guidelines

### *Project/Program Participation*

Restrictions for this age group are due to developmental capabilities, safety considerations and insurance restrictions.

- Children 5-7 years old are not allowed to enroll in a large animal projects (i.e. sheep, goat, swine, beef, dairy, and horse) or participate in any livestock or horse shows. A 4-H'er must be 8 years of age at the beginning of the current 4-H program year (September 1) to enroll in a 4-H large animal project. (This policy does not prohibit 5-7 year olds from learning about large animals through attendance at meetings or field trips. They cannot participate, however, in 4-H activities that bring them in contact with large animals due to safety and insurance considerations.) Note: Parent(s)/Guardian(s) will assume complete liability of young children who are assisting siblings with large animals.
- Animal projects for 5-7-year-olds will be limited to small animals only. Small animals include chickens and other poultry, rabbits, dogs, cats, and pets.
- Cloverbuds are NOT permitted to show any animal *competitively*.
- Shooting sports and motorized vehicle 4-H programs will NOT permit the participation of 5-7-year-olds. Again, safety and insurance considerations are the reasons for this stipulation.
- Summer residential or overnight camping programs, operating in cooperation with the University of Florida IFAS Extension 4-H programs, are not designed to address the unique developmental supervisory needs of 5-7-year-olds. Therefore, this age group is not eligible to participate in residential camping programs. Family camps, especially designed to include 5-7-year-olds, may be provided by your local county/district program.
- 4-H'ers who are 5-7 years of age are ineligible to participate in competitive activities at any level (club, county, district, state, national, or international). However, they may exhibit or share project activities at a participation level for feedback. "Participation" awards, rather than "placement" awards may be given to this age group. Youth in this age division should be encouraged to explore multiple project areas vs choosing specific topics to focus on.

# GUIDELINES FOR MEMBERSHIP & PARTICIPATION

## Overnight Statewide Summer Events

As per current 4-H Membership age policy\*, youth who are 4-H age 18 regardless of their high school graduation date are still allowed to attend summer programming as the culmination of their 4-H year. However, if this youth is actual age 18 (legally defined as an adult) or if they were NOT enrolled in school (public/private high school, accredited home school) then there are elevated risks associated with their attendance as a participant. There will be special considerations that events will adhere to. 4-H Extension Agents and the respective Adult in Charge must be aware of the risks associated. If an agent is not willing to chaperone a youth who is legally 18 and considered an adult, Florida 4-H will support the agents' decision not to allow that youth to participate in overnight events. The following will apply:

1. Youth will be considered a 4-H participant and must adhere to all event rules, expectations, and the 4-H Code of Conduct.
2. Youth who are actual age 18 will NOT be roomed with any youth ages 17 or younger.
3. Youth who choose to attend college classes during the event must be checked-in and checked-out in the presence of their adult in charge on the event log.
4. Youth who are actual age 18+ are considered an "adult" if they are involved in any illegal activity which includes but is not limited to, fighting, drug or alcohol possession, etc.

## Criteria for 4-H Competitive & Non-Competitive Events

In order to participate in District, State, Regional, and National 4-H Events and activities, a youth must be a Florida 4-H member with an approved enrollment and paid annual membership fees. Therefore, any county or state enrollment/membership requirements must be satisfied before a 4-H'er may become involved in supporting events and activities.

General Regulations for 4-H members in District, State, Regional, or National Events, a participant must meet the following criteria:

- All youth participation in UF/IFAS-sponsored programs is defined as UF/IFAS 4-H Youth Development and youth shall be reported via the 4HOnline enrollment system. \*
- All members must be engaged in a minimum of six hours of educational programs. \*
- Be enrolled in the 4-H project, related project, or activity area for the event entered.
- Meet any other regulations pertaining to the specific event or activity entered.
- Youth competing on a team in a contest may only compete on one team in that contest.
- For Public Speaking, Demos, or Illustrated Talks – youth members should choose one topic as their presentation topic, improving that presentation from county, to district, to state. They may only compete with 1 presentation (public speaking, demonstration, or illustrated talk) at the state level.

### Cost

The cost to 4-H'ers participating in events and activities varies. Specific dollar amounts are given in the registration information sent to all counties or provided on the events Web site. Please check with your local Extension office for further event costs as they may have additional fees (transportation to the site, etc.) that are not included in state event fees. Florida 4-H has a minimum mandatory club membership fee of \$20 per youth, fees may vary by county. Consult your agent for further details.

### Program Specific Criteria

#### *Projects*

Many of the supporting events and activities require that 4-H'ers have previous experience in project related learning situations prior to being involved in a certain event.

#### *Attire*

Florida 4-H does not have an “official dress” or “uniform” that is required to be worn during 4-H events. As part of any District or State Event, proper conduct and dress by 4-H participants, leaders, and agents is important. It is requested that local leaders and Extension Agents make sure that proper attire is being worn by all youth representing the 4-H program. Appropriate dress means that clothes are neat, clean, and modest. Florida 4-H has set forth the following appropriate dress guidelines that are applicable for all state 4-H events, <https://florida4h.ifas.ufl.edu/events/>. Green and white or black and white fashions are highly encouraged and appropriate. However, youth will not be penalized in competitive events if attire in these colors is not available. Clothing with messages or commercial logos are discouraged. Additionally, when

# CRITERIA FOR 4-H COMPETITIVE & NON-COMPETITIVE EVENTS

youth are participating in certain projects, i.e. livestock, ATV, or shooting sports, safety should be considered. \* Members are expected to abide by the dress code established for 4-H events and activities.

## *Participation & School Grades*

A students' Grade Point Average (GPA) cannot be used as a criterion for entry into a 4-H event. \*

The Florida Statutes K-20 Educational Code Chapter 1006: Support for Learning (f.s. 1006.15) states that *"to be eligible to participate in interscholastic/intrascholastic extracurricular student activities, a student must maintain at least a 2.0 or above grade point average (GPA) on a 4.0 scale, or its equivalent, for the semester immediately preceding participation, or cumulative GPA in courses required by s.1003.43 (1)."*

Several Fair Boards have adopted this rule, also called the Raise Bill, passed in 1984 as one of the conditions governing eligibility to participate in livestock shows and sales. While the Cooperative Extension Service (CES) supports the law's intent (i.e. to encourage high school students to enhance their academic performance), CES does not preclude participation in 4-H programs based on GPA because:

1. 4-H in Florida is not an extracurricular student activity conducted by the schools. 4-H is the community-based educational program of the University of Florida and Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University, conducted in cooperation with USDA and county governments. 4-H livestock shows are designed as an important component of the 4-H educational experience and are not considered a school-related extracurricular activity.
2. 4-H must make its programs available to all youth 5-18 years old, as set forth by the State Department of Education, Department of Universities, and USDA in their non-discrimination criteria. To use other criteria as a basis for participation is considered illegal. Additional information about the University of Florida IFAS statement of organization and operations can be found at <http://regulations.ufl.edu/chapter6/>. The non-discrimination policy can be found at the same web site under 6C1-1.0061.
3. Privacy of information laws state that student records are not open to non-school personnel, including county 4-H faculty, without student/family approval. Thus, county 4-H faculty are not in a legal position to monitor or enforce the GPA rule.

## **State Competitive Events**

Competitive events within the Florida 4-H program occur at the county, district or area, state, and regional or national levels. Most competitions require some qualifying level of participation. This progression may be county to district to state OR county to state OR district to state. The time and location of events vary and it is important to reference event specific pages and pay special attention to information disseminated through the weekly update and posted on the Events calendar.

These additional guidelines relating to district and state level junior, intermediate and senior competitive events must be complied with, regardless of participation category. Counties and/or districts to encourage greater participation by younger 4-H members may establish additional participation (non-advancing) categories for cloverbuds, juniors and intermediates. This is an agent decision.

# CRITERIA FOR 4-H COMPETITIVE & NON-COMPETITIVE EVENTS

## Competitive Event Rules

A youth must be a 4-H member:

- Enrolled in the project at least 30 days before event.
- Who meets all other specified requirements for the specific event entered.
- For competitive events, if a senior places first at a state event, individually or part of a team, they may not compete in the same state event in the future. They may advance to a National Contest if one is available. Exceptions can be made to this rule by the specialist in charge of the judging event if these guidelines are not in accordance with the National contest. (Exceptions are not made in the case of demonstrations, illustrated talks, public speaking competitions, or share-the-fun.)
- Junior and intermediate members will be allowed to return and continue to compete in state events even if they have won first place in their division.
- State level winning senior teams should encourage alternates to practice with the team in the event that one of the team members is unable to compete at the National competition. Should a substitution be required for a team, the specialist for the contest should direct how the substitution is made.
- Specialists reserve the option to cancel an event if participation is too low to justify the resources needed to conduct the event.

### *Demonstrations and Illustrated Talks*

Demonstrations/ Illustrated Talks should be placed in the category (see listing of project categories on page 17 of this Handbook) that most closely reflects the related project. Otherwise, demonstrations/ illustrated talks may not be suitable for competition at the district and state levels. Competitors must also adhere to the regulations for competitive events listed on the previous pages.

**District:** Each county may enter all blue qualifying junior, intermediate, and senior individuals and all blue qualifying junior, intermediate, and senior teams. Counties reserve the option of working with red placing entries, to improve the entry to a blue quality standard and qualify the entry for district competition.

**State:** Each district may enter all blue qualifying senior individuals and all blue qualifying senior teams in state level competition in demonstrations and illustrated talks. Participants must meet a blue standard in district competition to qualify for state.

**Regional/National:** Selected project areas give 4-H'ers the opportunity to compete beyond the state level. In such cases, one overall demonstration will be certified for competition although there may be an individual and team winner at the state level. Please adhere to guidelines for National contests as is applicable.

### Guidelines and Regulations

- No living specimens may be used for a demonstration either in person or on video at the District or State Level. This includes all vertebrates and invertebrates (i.e. insects, crustaceans, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, or mammals).

## CRITERIA FOR 4-H COMPETITIVE & NON-COMPETITIVE EVENTS

- Demonstrations/ Illustrated talks must be between 3-12 minutes for juniors and intermediates, and 5-12 minutes for seniors.
- A team demonstration is one in which two team members, in the same 4-H Age Division, participate both in speaking and presentation. No more than two members per team.
- State entries must have competed at the county/district levels. Participation guidelines for county/district level activities that do not culminate at the state level are at the discretion of planning committees at the county/district.
- Each presentation (i.e. demonstration, illustrated talk, share-the-fun activity, speech, etc.) will be the same from district level to state level. A 4-H'er should improve on his/her presentation, but it must remain basically the same. If a 4-H'er is participating at the state level with a similar illustrated talk or demonstration to the previous year, the demonstration or illustrated talk must be changed to include more depth and growth. Participants must provide all equipment and supplies for their presentations. (Efforts may be made at competitive events to provide technical equipment; however, youth should bring connectors/adaptors/laptops/jump drives as a backup.) Competitors are responsible for all aspects of their preparations and set-up of their competitions. Only competitors are allowed in the set-up/dressing room at State Competitions.
- The demonstration/illustrated talk and public speaking competitions combine two forms of achievement and recognition for youth. These are: a.) Standards of Excellence as established by experts and defined by the scorecards for demonstrations/illustrated talks and/or public speaking and reflected by a ribbon color (blue, red, white). By measuring personal progress against standards of excellence, youth can gain insight into their own efforts and abilities and set goals for improvement. b.) Peer Competition where a panel of judges subjectively identifies, in a concrete time and place, the best team or individual. It is a strong motivator for some youth, however is developmentally inappropriate for youth under the age of eight.
- At state competitive events both "standards of excellence" and "peer competition" as described above are used. Youth participants must meet the standards/criteria set forth for the event based on the score sheet before being considered for the "best" or "top three placings" among their peers. Therefore, placings and trophies are not awarded merely for participation in the event. This judgement of quality of performance against the standards are made by the panel of judges and an average of the scores will determine the color of the ribbon awarded. All judges' decisions are final.
- In the event of a tie the highest score in "Subject Matter" (Section 3 on the scoresheet) will prevail. Should a tie remain, the score for "Organization and Presentation" (Section 2 on the scoresheet) would break the tie, and then, if needed, the score for "Member" (section 1 on the scoresheet).

# CRITERIA FOR 4-H COMPETITIVE & NON-COMPETITIVE EVENTS

## *Public Speaking Overview*

This program is designed to give 4-H'ers experience in the preparation and delivery of a 4-H related speech. This contest requires 4-H'ers to recognize, organize, and present information on a given topic. The timed speech must be orderly and thorough. 4-H'ers must acquire the ability to speak convincingly in public, expressing ideas effectively with poise and confidence.

- Speech must be original and specifically related to 4-H in a demonstrable way. The entire speech does not necessarily have to feature 4-H, but every contestant must, at some point in his/her speech, mention 4-H and its relationship to the material being presented. Contestants who break this rule will be subject to penalization by the judges
- All requirements set forth in general regulations for participation at Florida 4-H University must be satisfied for senior participants at the state level.
- General: Public speaking times must be between 3-7 minutes for juniors and intermediates, and 5-7 minutes for seniors
- Horse: Public speaking times must be between 8-10 minutes.
- Contestants whose speeches ignore the outlined time specifications and reference to 4-H will be subject to penalization as outlined on the score sheet.
- Previous first place General and Horse 4-H public speaking contest winners at state competition are not eligible to compete in this event after earning first place.
- Participants may refine their speeches between district and state competition, but the content should not change dramatically.
- Individual participation only, no team speeches will be allowed.
- General: The top two winners in each age division may advance from county to district and the top two senior district winners (who earned blue ribbons) advance to state. General State entries must have competed at the county and district levels.
- Horse: The first-place Senior winners (who earned blue ribbons) at county events advance from county directly to state. Horse State entries are encouraged to compete at the district level for practice and feedback.
- Blue, Red, and White awards will be awarded based on quality of performance. First, second, and third place will be awarded to the highest scoring individuals. The top three senior age winners at state competition may have the opportunity to participate in the Western National 4-H Roundup Public Speaking contest in Denver, Colorado at their own expense.

## *Share-the-Fun*

The 4-H Share-the-Fun program is designed to help 4-H'ers discover their talents, develop them, and have opportunities to share those gifts with others. It is part of the 4-H Leisure and Performing Arts Project and is conducted at County, District, and State levels. The objective of share-the-fun is to enhance the following areas: appreciation of talent, leadership, confidence, interest in special training, and the ability to discover opportunities for wholesome recreation.

All 4-H Age Divisions may compete at the County Level. 1<sup>st</sup> place Juniors, Intermediates and Seniors advance to District Competition. 1<sup>st</sup> Place Seniors advance to State Competition at 4-H University.



# CRITERIA FOR 4-H COMPETITIVE & NON-COMPETITIVE EVENTS

## Act Classification

- Instrumental: Musical instruments of all descriptions
- Vocal: Singing numbers
- Dance: All dance, baton, and acrobatic routines
- Dramatic and Novelty: Skits, stunts, pantomimes, monologues, puppetry, ventriloquism, impersonations, etc.
- General: Acts which include two or more of the above classifications

## Acts and Competition

- Acts may be presented by an individual or a group. All Group member participants should be in the same 4-H Age Division.
- Group acts should be limited to a maximum of five participants.
- Entertainment groups with more than five members are discouraged because of the difficulty in facilitating a group that size. However, this does not rule out participation by such a group if their talent is of exceptional quality and they meet all other requirements. Such an act must be cleared through the State 4-H Headquarters prior to District Events (contact State 4-H Events Coordinator). Acts with more than five participants who are not cleared through the State 4-H Office in advance will not be allowed to perform at Florida 4-H University.
- The time for each act can range from 3-5 minutes. Participants will have a one-minute warning and then the act will be called at 5 minutes.
- Participants will be expected to attend a rehearsal prior to the State Share the Fun Contest.
- To advance to district or state competition, all performers must be of the same 4-H age category, including any musical accompanist. Performers may use a recorded musical accompanist in MP3/4 format.
- The University of Florida bans live animals (i.e. mammals, amphibians, reptiles, etc.) from UF facilities where the State 4-H Share-the-Fun Competition is held, with the exception of service animals.
- An electric piano and basic sound equipment will be supplied. All other props, instruments, amps, equipment, or other items necessary for the performance are the responsibility of the participant. The sound crew will have the ability to play standard format, store bought music CD's.
- The State 4-H Events Office will not be responsible for the acquisition of gymnastic equipment such as parallel bars, balance beams, floor mats, etc. to be used by participants in the show.
- No living specimens may be used for Share the Fun either in person or on video at the District or State Level. This includes all vertebrates and invertebrates (i.e. insects, crustaceans, fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, or mammals).

# CRITERIA FOR 4-H COMPETITIVE & NON-COMPETITIVE EVENTS

## *State Photography Contest*

The 4-H Photography Program allows 4-H members to develop their photography skills and share their images. Junior, Intermediate, and Senior entries are judged separately. Blue, Red, and White awards are given to each entry. A top overall Junior, Intermediate, and Senior will be selected from each county. These three entries can advance to the state competition.

## *Graphic Design Contest*

The 4-H Graphic Design Program provides 4-H members an opportunity to use their creativity and artistic ability to promote their project areas or 4-H program. 4-H'ers are encouraged to develop their visual communication skills by also identifying locations to display their created materials to communicate to external audiences about 4-H. This contest is open to all 4-H age divisions. Cloverbud members are encouraged to participate, but their materials will not be sent on to the state for competitive review.

## *State Competitive Events at 4-H University*

The above-mentioned contests all happen at 4-H University. During 4-H University, individual 4-H'ers can participate in one demonstration OR public speaking event AND share-the-fun, as long as schedule permits. Please contact the State Events Coordinator to confirm the schedule for these events. Youth at county and district levels can be encouraged to participate in both demonstrations and judging or other events. 4-H members may compete in contests and be a council delegate.

## *Other Statewide Competitive Events*

The below listing will give you an idea of competitive events by project area. More specific details can be found by viewing the event specific website or consulting the appropriate action team chair. Remember specialists reserve the right to cancel an event due to low registration numbers. Some contests such as fashion review may only have county and/or district contests. Statewide contests are held based on project enrollment and specialist support.

### Animals

Hog-n-Ham, Livestock Exhibitions, Horse Shows, Hippology, Horse Judging, Horse Demonstrations, Illustrated Talks, and Public Speaking, Horse Quiz Bowl, State Dairy Show, Livestock Judging, Meats Judging, and Poultry Contests, Avian Bowl

### Environmental Science/Nature and the Outdoors

Insectathon, Shooting Sports, and Forest Ecology, Virtual Agriculture Judging, Nature Poetry Contest

### Plants and Gardening

Horticulture Identification and Judging

### Science and Technology

None

### Citizenship & Leadership

None

# CRITERIA FOR 4-H COMPETITIVE & NON-COMPETITIVE EVENTS

## Communication & Expressive Arts

4-H Public Speaking, Demonstrations, and Illustrated Talk Contest, Photography Contest, Graphic Design Contest

## Family & Consumer Sciences & Healthy Living

Life Smarts, Tailgate Contest, Food Challenge

## Non-Competitive Events

Non-competitive events usually refer to educational programs that are not competitive in nature (i.e. do not incorporate competitive activities during the event). However, in some cases, participation is limited, and competitive selection procedures are employed to determine participants.

The events listed in this section are conducted annually through the State 4-H Headquarters and/or through program specialist leadership. The events are evaluated annually, and programming suggestions are received from county personnel, state event committees, specialists past attendees, and the Florida 4-H State Council. The programming emphasis may change from year to year, but the primary objectives remain essentially the same.

In addition to the below events and activities Florida 4-H also offers statewide specialty camps and open enrollment residential camps. Residential camp is an opportunity that should be offered to all youth regardless of their length of participation in 4-H.

**Florida 4-H University** is a statewide event that provides opportunities for youth to Lead, Learn, and Serve while they explore multiple project areas. Youth are engaged alongside professionals, make career connections, and are provided opportunities to share knowledge learned.

## Animals

Horsemanship School, Dairy Conference, Livestock Judging Clinics, Southeast Youth Dairy Retreat

## Environmental Science/Nature and the Outdoors

Shooting Sports Instructor Certifications, Forest Ecology Clinic

## Plants and Gardening

None

## Science and Technology

4-H National Youth Science Day

## Citizenship & Leadership

State Council, Executive Board, Florida 4-H Day at the Capitol, Month of Service, 4-H Legislature, iLEAD: Intermediate Leadership Conference, Southern Region Teen Leadership Conference, National 4-H Congress, National 4-H Conference

## Communication & Expressive Arts

# CRITERIA FOR 4-H COMPETITIVE & NON-COMPETITIVE EVENTS

None

Family & Consumer Sciences & Healthy Living

Food Smart Families, Living on My Own Simulations

## *Florida 4-H Curriculum and Project Categories*

The following category definitions were updated in June of 2015 and reflect the categories appropriate for 4-H Projects including demonstrations and illustrated talks as well as other events where 4-H members are sharing what they have learned from participating in a 4-H Project.

### **Animals**

#### *Animal Industry*

Includes all presentations related to beef cattle, dairy cattle, swine, layer, broilers, turkeys, rabbits, meat goats, dairy goats, quail, duck, geese, emu, ostrich and rhea. Topics can include raising healthy animals, selecting animals based on genetics, managing feed and health, marketing, managing reproduction and production and harvest of animals for food. Also included is the real world agriculture processing systems relating to converting or using live animals to create food products such as milk, eggs, meat and other products; and wholesale, retail and food service merchandising of animal products. No equine related topics will be accepted in the category.

#### *Small Animal and Pets*

Includes all presentations related to dogs, cats, rabbits (not related to meat production), rodent pets, and other pets, including pet facilitated therapy in nursing homes, etc.

#### *Horse*

Includes all presentations relating to horses.

### **Environmental Science/Nature and the Outdoors**

#### *Environment, Marine and Aquatic Sciences, Outdoor Adventures, Shooting Sports, Soil, Water and Land Use, Wildlife, Natural Resources, Earth Sciences*

Includes the areas of energy, earth science, astronomy, waste management, and water quality/conservation. Includes the areas of forestry, marine and aquatic science, wildlife ecology, shooting sports, and sport fishing.

### **Plants and Gardening**

#### *Plants & Gardening, Entomology*

Includes all presentations related to production and marketing of fruits, vegetables, flowers, turf, ornamental, field crops, forage, landscaping, greenhouses, propagation, soils, hanging baskets, bulbs, citrus, and harvesting or processing crops, such as hay or silage. Artistic arrangement demonstrations may also be included here or in visual arts. The Plants and Gardening category also includes all entomology projects.

# CRITERIA FOR 4-H COMPETITIVE & NON-COMPETITIVE EVENTS

## **Science and Technology**

*Aerospace, Computer, Bicycles, Electricity, Energy, Geospatial, Robotics, Small Engines, and Weather & Climate*

Includes all presentations related to general engineering, bicycle maintenance and mechanical operations, automotive, electronics, aerospace/aviation, and computers. In addition, all presentations related to care of, and operation of small engines.

## **Citizenship & Leadership**

*Citizenship, Community Service, Global Education, Leadership Development, and Career and Workforce Preparation*

Includes all presentations related to citizenship, community service programs, global education leadership development and workforce preparation and career development. These topics are broad and can include presentations on different cultures and ethnicities, conducting service in your community, the art and science of becoming a leader, and the skills necessary for political participation and starting a business.

## **Communication & Expressive Arts**

*Leisure & Performing Arts*

Includes all aspects of leisure activities and recreation, including cycling, music, clowning, arts & crafts, cake decorating, floral arranging, wood-working and metal crafts.

*Communication & Media Arts*

Includes the “topic” of public speaking, American Sign Language and other forms of communication, all phases of photography, graphic arts, computer graphics, video and other current technologies used in communication media.

## **Family & Consumer Sciences**

*Childcare and Child Development*

Includes all presentations related to the growth, development, personality and character development of children and youth. These topics might include infant development, child development, babysitting, nuclear families, step-families, self-esteem, family communication, parent-adolescent communication, single-parent families, teen parents, and coping with crises.

*Clothing and Sewing*

Includes all presentations related to clothing design, selection, buying, care, construction, textiles, accessories, personal appearance, and grooming.

*Money Management*

Includes all presentations related to comparison shopping, sales approaches, advertising, consumer rights and responsibilities, labeling, credit, money management, banking, investment savings, and time management.

# CRITERIA FOR 4-H COMPETITIVE & NON-COMPETITIVE EVENTS

## Healthy Living

### *Food Preparation*

Includes all presentations involving preparing foods to eat. Demonstrations should show the steps involved in preparing foods, including food how to safely handle and measure ingredients. In an effort to support current Dietary Guidelines, preparing food items moderately low in fat, sodium, and sugar is recommended. Although safe food handling practices should be used in all demonstrations, presentations that emphasize food safety topics and issues should be entered in the Food Science and Safety Category.

### *Food Nutrition, Food Safety, and Food Science*

Includes all presentations related to food nutrition, food safety, and food science (new technologies that do not involve food preparation). Suggested topics include nutrient needs, nutrition in the life cycle (e.g., for infants, teens, or the elderly), dietary guidelines, nutrition and fitness/sports, hunger, obesity, food labeling, cultural food patterns, new food science technologies, processing and preservation.

### *Personal Well-being*

Includes all presentations related to keeping fit and healthy that doesn't fall in the food preparation or food nutrition, food safety and food science categories. Suggested topics include radon and mold in homes, the need for immunizations, pollution, fitness equipment and human diseases.

### *Safety*

Includes all presentations related to general health education (i.e. coping with stress, first aid, substance abuse, self-help skills, physical fitness, dental care, healthy lifestyles, sex education, immunizations, and prevention of disease). Also includes all presentations dealing with accidental safety hazards including demonstrations in disaster preparedness or home environmental health (i.e. mold, radon or other hazards). This also includes ATV (All-Terrain Vehicle) Safety.

# Guidelines for County Extension Faculty

## *Policy Reference*

- 4-H membership is available to all youth ages 5-18 without regard to race, color, gender, sexual orientation, handicap, or national origin. However, selected projects or programs do have enrollment restrictions. Not all projects or program activities are deemed appropriate for all age ranges due to either developmental appropriateness, safety, or other considerations. \*
- When 4-H members and volunteers participate in open shows and other events that conflict with 4-H policies (such those that allow competition or showing large animals which are being permitted for cloverbud age youth), it is important for youth, parents, and volunteers to avoid giving the impression that they represent 4-H during those activities such as by wearing 4-H attire while participating. \*
- Extension/4-H faculty and staff are not permitted to provide significant support for or actively promote open shows and other events that conflict with 4-H policies (such as those that allow competition or showing large animals which are not being permitted for cloverbud age youth). 4-H volunteers and parents who provide assistance to such events should avoid giving the impression that they represent 4-H during those activities such as by wearing 4-H attire while participating. \*

If 4-H is not a partner with the Fair Board or sponsoring organization in planning and conducting the program and these groups choose to control participation (allowing children under 8 years of age to participate, using GPA or other criteria not acceptable to 4-H), then 4-H members may be invited to participate as private citizens. However, the sponsoring organization will be responsible for monitoring GPA and/or other participation criteria. In this situation, the cooperating organizations may not use the 4-H name and emblem in the title of the event, promotional material, or fund-raising activities.

---

## Contact Information

Please contact the Florida 4-H State Headquarters with any questions or clarifications.

Policy, Risk Management, and Insurance – Dr. Stacey Ellison, State 4-H Program Leader

Programs, Curricula, and Evaluation – Dr. Sarah Hensley, State Specialized Extension Agent

Volunteer Management and Development – Dr. Candi Dierenfield, State Specialized Extension Agent

State 4-H Events – Courtney Quirie, Florida 4-H Events Coordinator



Florida 4-H  
2142 Shealy Drive; Gainesville, FL 32611  
**Tel** 352-846-4444  
Florida4H.org

To make suggestions for consideration regarding Events and Activities guidelines please consult with the respective Regional Specialized Extension Agent/Action Team Leader for consideration by Priority Work Group 1: Positive Youth Development.

Last Revised September 28,  
2023