

# A New Family's Guide to Marion County 4-H



## 4-H PLEDGE

**I Pledge:**      **My HEAD to clearer thinking,**  
                         **My HEART to greater loyalty,**  
                         **My HANDS to larger service,**  
                         **My HEALTH to better living,**  
                         **For my club, my community,**  
                         **my country and my world.**

## What is 4-H?

4-H is the largest informal youth development program in the United States with well over a million members. It began as a way of involving farm youth in practical, hands-on education in agriculture and home economics related subjects relevant to their everyday lives. In its 101<sup>st</sup> year in 2004, 4-H serves youth ages 7 to 18 in urban, suburban, and rural communities. Projects as varied as photography, wildlife, robotics, and performing arts are offered along with the traditional livestock, horticulture, sewing, and cooking projects.

4-H is a nationwide program led by state land-grant universities in cooperation with local county/district extension councils. Here in Kansas, 4-H is led by K-State Research and Extension, a part of Kansas State University in Manhattan. Extension agents help train 4-H volunteers, provide information and resources that help clubs function, and coordinate county-wide 4-H events.

## Kansas 4-H helps 4-Hers develop the following life skills:

- A positive self-concept.
- An inquiring mind.
- A concern for the community.
- Healthy interpersonal relationships.
- Sound decision making.

## What do the H's stand for?

The 4-H emblem is a Kelly green four leaf clover with a white H on each leaf. Each of the four H's on the clover represent ways youth can grow and develop in 4-H.

**Head** - critical thinking, problem solving.

**Heart** - self-discipline, integrity, communication.

**Hands** - serving others.

**Health** - choosing healthy lifestyles.

## 4-H Membership

Any boy or girl ages 7 to 18 can join 4-H. To show at the Marion County Fair in August, the youth must be a regular 4-H member by May 1 of that year. In Marion County we also have a Cloverbuds program designed for 5 and 6 year old children. They are not official club or county 4-H Member, but clubs may choose to offer the program through their club.

## **4-H Community Clubs**

4-H Community Clubs meet on a monthly basis to hold business meetings, plan and hold community service projects, and have fun. Members of community clubs are enrolled in a variety of project areas. The six community clubs in Marion County are:

**Happy Hustlers - Marion**  
**Goessel Goal Getters - Goessel**  
**Lincolnvillle Wide Awake - Lincolnvillle**  
**Peabody Achievers - Peabody**  
**South Cottonwood - Hillsboro**  
**Tampa Triple T's - Tampa**

The clubs elect officers each fall at the start of the 4-H year. These positions are: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter and Recreation Leader. Some clubs also elect a Historian, Parliamentarian, Song Leader or Junior Leaders, depending on the needs of the club.

## **Projects**

In 4-H, youth "learn by doing." Much of that learning happens through project experiences. From beef to bicycles...electricity to entomology...forestry to food science...photography to plant science...rabbits to rockets...Kansas 4-H offers project areas designed to develop the wide range of interests that appeal to today's young people. In addition to subject-matter skills, many young people develop interests that last a lifetime.

## **Life Skills**

Club participation, projects and friendships with other members become memorable parts of the 4-H Program. Equally important are the skills that last a lifetime. Record keeping, public speaking, talking with adults during fair judging, etc... Successful adults often credit their experiences in 4-H as turning points in their lives.

## **The Role of the Parent in 4-H**

In this busy world schedules often send family members in a variety of directions. 4-H can bring families together as they plan meetings, events, projects and activities together. Parents of 4-Hers play an important role.

**Here are a few example of how parents can help their child gain the most from the 4-H experience:**

- attend club meetings along with their child**
- provide support and assistance for their child in club activities and project work**
- serve as a club leader or a project leaders**
- volunteer to help with club activities such as fund raisers, service projects and club events.**

## **The 4-H Year**

October 1 to the end of September is the official 4-H year. Here is a brief overview of events and deadlines that take place throughout the 4-H year. The asterisk designates state/national events.

### **October**

- **Start of the 4-H Year** - Members complete a new enrollment card listing the projects they would like to be involved in for that 4-H year. They also fill out a participation form each year.
- **National 4-H Week\*** - The first full week in October set aside to recognize and promote 4-H across the United States. Clubs might have downtown window displays about their clubs activities or hold membership drives at school. The first Sunday during National 4-H Week is designated as 4-H Sunday. Clubs may choose to attend a local church as a group during National 4-H Week.
- **Record Book Judging** - member record books are judged and project champions selected

### **November**

- **National 4-H Congress\*** - This annual trip offered to state project winners is a recognition, educational, cultural, and community service experience held each year in Atlanta, GA.
- **Kansas Youth Leadership Forum\*** -Designed for youth 14-18 years of age who wish to enhance their leadership skills. The Forum will include speakers, track sessions, service learning, consulting groups and election of area representatives to the State 4-H Council.
- **Achievement Night** - The achievements of 4-Hers during the past year are celebrated during a dinner and awards program.

## February

- **Club Day** - 4-Hers develop their public speaking skills by giving project or illustrated talks, demonstrations, speeches, readings, or performing vocal and instrument solos and duets. Clubs sometimes put on a skit or one-act play.

## March

- **Regional 4-H Day** - Top winners of the Marion County Club Day can compete at this regional event held in El Dorado. Eligible 4-Hers will be notified soon after Club Day.

## April

- **Project Enhancement** - Each year educational workshops are offered.
- **Spring Beef Show**
- **National 4-H Conference\*** - Four Kansas delegates are selected by applications and interviews to attend this working conference at the National 4-H Center in Chevy Chase, Maryland each spring. Delegates work with the national program leaders on issues, visit government officials and participate in cultural opportunities.

## May

- **Deadline to Add/Drop Projects** - 4-Hers must be enrolled in a project by this date in order to exhibit in that division at the county fair. There are additional deadlines earlier in the spring for livestock projects. Read the newsletters for these deadlines.
- **Discovery Days\*** - This mini-college experience held on the K-State campus gives youth, 13 and older, the opportunity to learn from a variety of classes, seminars, and college tours.

## June

- **County Camp at Rock Springs** - A 4 day/3 night camp for youth finishing grades 2 through 7 and a 2 day/1 night camp for "Rookie" campers finishing K & 1<sup>st</sup> grades. Marion County is a member of a multi-county camping group that plans fun activities to be held in addition to the Rock Springs activities like canoeing, horseback riding, archery and crafts.
- **Citizenship Washington Focus\*** - 15-18 year-old members apply to attend this intensive summer citizenship experience in our nation's capitol. Along the route, delegates tour educational sites like the St. Louis Arch and Gettysburg Battlefield.
- **Food Fest** - Food/nutrition project members show off their project skills by creating a theme meal menu, decorating a table/table setting, and by preparing one food item from the menu. Participants also attend fun educational sessions that increase their project knowledge.

## July

- **Tri-County Fair** - 4-Hers from Morris, Dickinson and Marion can enter livestock and project

exhibits at this fair held in Herington. A Tri-County Fair book is available from your club leader or at the extension office in late June/early July.

- **Pre-Fair Entries** - certain fair divisions require pre-registration to the extension office by July 15. Check the fair book for specifics.
- **Marion County Fair** - This provides the chance for 4-Hers to show off all they have learned in the 4-H projects during the year by entering exhibits in the fair. The fair paper is usually sent as an addition to the Hillsboro Free Press in early July.

## August

- **County Wide Swim Party**

## September

- **Kansas State Fair\*** - Serves as the showcase for Kansas 4-H by providing opportunity for county-qualified competitive exhibits in typical 4-H projects, plus livestock shows, dog shows and judging contests. Exhibitors must be 10 or older on January 1 to participate in the competitive events. The State Fair always begins the first Friday of September following Labor Day. 4-Hers eligible for non-livestock events will be notified.
- **Kansas Junior Livestock Show\*** - This show is co-sponsored by K-State Research and Extension, Kansas Livestock Association and Wichita Chamber of Commerce. Livestock divisions are offered for market steers, hogs and lambs, plus breeding beef and sheep.
- **Record Book Completion** - 4-Hers complete their permanent records and project records. Each 4-Her will complete a champion nomination form listing projects they feel they have excelled in. The books are turned in to their club leaders who will take them to the extension office.
- **Officer's Training** - Newly elected club officers attend this training session to learn what is required of them in this leadership position.

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Marion County 4-H

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