



# Spotlight on ... 4-H!



## LEADER LETTER

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

**THE FIVE C'S OF COUNTY FAIR!** 2

**SEWING FOR SUCCESS** 3

**TELLING A DIGITAL STORY** 4

**RABBIT SHOW-MANSHIP** 5

**WINNING EXHIBITS ARE TEACHING EXHIBITS!** 6



DISCOVER 4-H

### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- What special tricks and tips are needed to make that sewing project "sparkle" on entry day?
- Design a digital story to show!
- What do all those ribbon placings REALLY mean after exhibits are judged?

## NEBRASKA 4-H CLUBS OF EXCELLENCE

"I belong to a Nebraska 4-H Club of Excellence" said the 4-H member with a proud smile on his face. Is your club recognized as a Nebraska 4-H Club of Excellence? And what exactly does that mean?



The overall goal of 4-H clubs is to develop enthusiastic young people who boldly take action to demonstrate life skills as capable, caring, confident, competent kids of character thus contributing to the improvement of themselves, their family, their club, their community, and their world. One way clubs might choose to measure their success in meeting that goal is their ability to gain status as a Nebraska 4-H Club of Excellence.

To receive the designation as a Nebraska 4-H Club of Excellence, clubs must meet the following:

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

- Complete one community service project
- Have members who participate in a county, district or state events)
- Celebrate member and club achievements

If the Club meets all the requirements they will get a certificate and a seal the first year and an additional seal in subsequent qualifying years.

Nebraska 4-H Club of Excellence applications will be due to the County Extension office on September 15, or earlier as designated by the county. The application form is available from the County Extension office or may be downloaded from the state 4-H web site at [4h.unl.edu](http://4h.unl.edu). Application information will be based on the official 4-H year for federal reporting of enrollment which is October 1 through September 30.

Club certificates and or insignias could be presented to clubs who meet the requirements during county achievement nights, or other appropriate times as selected by the county 4-H Council.

## 4-H Club



## of Excellence



## THE 5 C'S FOR COUNTY FAIR

**Are you ready for county fair?** We often ask this question of our 4-H members, but as a 4-H leader are you ready? Look over this check list for some ideas to help your club members prepare for the county fair.



**Clear up the confusion**—Getting ready for the county fair can be confusing, especially for new members. Your role is to help them feel confident and prepared. One way to do that is to get information, entry forms, and deadlines to them early. Encourage them to read the 4-H newsletter and the fair book. Review deadlines for entries and go over with them what to expect on entry day. Help them understand dress code expectations, herdsmanship responsibilities and release times. Don't assume that they know when to be there or what to do.

**Coach them**—Nurture and support your club members as they finish their exhibits for the county fair. Provide practice sessions for modeling or showmanship that will help them strengthen their skills and build confidence. Share a copy of the score sheet ahead of time or review the standards for a particular project. This will help your 4-H members understand what to expect during judging.



**Cooperate**—Your role as a club leader is not to undermine the decisions that are made by the fair superintendents, Extension staff or 4-H Council, but rather it is one of cooperation with those who are making the decisions about how a contest is managed. If there is a mistake or a concern, be familiar with the appeals and grievance policies that are in place for county fairs.

**Character counts**—Help youth develop good character. Be a positive role model by treating members, parents, Extension staff, judges and others with respect, courtesy and consideration. Avoid and prevent put-downs, insults, name-calling, yelling and other verbal or non-verbal conduct likely to offend, hurt or set a bad example. Teach and model fair-mindedness: be open to ideas, suggestions, and opinions of others.

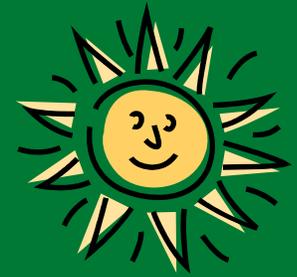
**Celebrate**—Plan an achievement meeting after the county fair to celebrate the accomplishments of your club members. Help them focus on what they have learned, not on what mistakes they made. Encourage them think about how they can apply their newly learned skills and knowledge in the future. Take the emphasis off of the amount of premium money they might have won and put it on developing purple ribbon kids.



Discover 4-H,  
Discover You!

Nebraska  
Lincoln EXTENSION

Visit the [4h.unl.edu](http://4h.unl.edu) website and read the Code of Ethics for Volunteers in the 4-H Policy Handbook.



Sunshine,  
Funtimes,  
it's County  
Fair Time!



**GETTING YOUR SEWING PROJECTS READY FOR THE FAIR**



After any sewing project is completed there are a few things every 4-H'er should do or double check before taking their project to Clothing Day to be judged.

Re-read the Clothing Department section of your county fairbook . Look for any general rules that apply to all clothing exhibits. Next, find the division the project is in and read those specific rules. Finally, find the class the exhibit will be in and read those requirements. Be sure you follow all the specific rules and requirements.

The judge will look at the inside of the garment. So, start preparing the garment by turning it inside out. Look for:

- ★ Loose threads or threads that need clipped
- ★ Trimming that needs to be done (notches used to match seams should be trimmed)
- ★ Are all basting treads and construction markings removed?
- ★ Are all the seams finished that need to be?
- ★ Are all the seams pressed how they should be?
- ★ Open or to one side depending on location
- ★ Vertical darts should be pressed toward the center
- ★ Horizontal darts should be pressed down

Remind the 4-H'er to tack any facings down on the seams so they don't show on the outside of the garment.

Finally, the garment needs to be pressed from the inside. Recommend the following instructions:

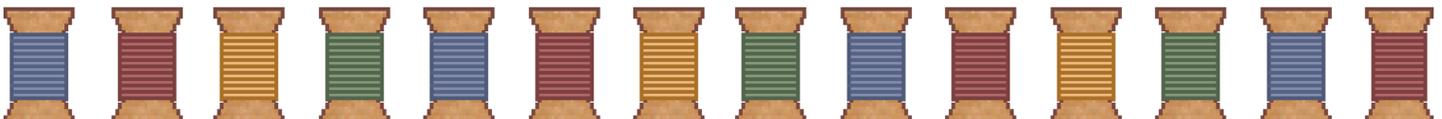


Turn the garment back right side out. Check for loose threads and any stitching the shows that shouldn't be showing. Make sure the garment is clean and give it one final press. Only the outside should be showing on facings and collars. The garment surface should be smooth and free from wrinkles. Judges will look to see if the original appearance of the fabric has been maintained. Double check that the seams and darts are pressed smoothly on the stitching line and the fabric does not fold over stitching line or look bubbled. Hang it on an appropriate hanger and attach all required tags and documentation.

Remind the 4-H'er to have fun having their exhibit judged. Remember, smile and be proud of all they have accomplished their 4-H Sewing Project!



**MAKE SURE THE GARMENT IS READY TO BE JUDGED. PREPARING THE GARMENT CORRECTLY CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE FOR A SUCCESSFUL SEWING JUDGING EXPERIENCE!**



## DIGITAL STORYTELLING

Digital storytelling is an emerging trend with youth and in simple terms it means to develop a story about real-life that uses digital tools. That may seem overly simple, but writing about oneself tends to be extremely revealing about an individual person's social and emotional growth. Since it is so revealing, the stories themselves tend to be very compelling and emotionally engaging for their audiences.

# Digital Storytelling

To get started, begin with a small idea. Stories could be about a character that we can't forget, someone we want to remember forever, a special adventure, something you've accomplished, a place, how you earn money, or something that makes you unique. It could be a story about overcoming challenges, discoveries you have made, or someone you have loved.

Everyone's life is full of stories. Think about one that you have repeated many times. Why does that story stick with you? What makes that story so compelling that you have repeated it?

There are seven elements to a great digital story. Write from your personal point of view. Everyone views a situation from a different perspective; tell your story from your perspective. Incorporate tension into the story. Unless a story has tension, a concern, or a dramatic question it really isn't very interesting to the reader.

Your story also should be full of emotion. Don't underestimate the power of music! Music really can set the tone for a scene or for an entire story. Think about what pictures really help to tell the story. Are they framed in such a way that they lend to the emotion of the story?



Before any story is complete, think about the pacing. Pauses, silence, quick phrases, starts and stops all can help to convey meaning in your story. Never underestimate the importance of good story structure and media design.

Ready to start? There are many tools available to help you create your first digital story. To create the story, you may want to try storyboarding. For many individuals, using a storyboard can facilitate thinking about all of the components of good digital storytelling. When you are ready to compose the digital media, there are many software choices available to you. One easy program to use is Photo Story 3 (Windows). While it doesn't provide you as much flexibility for developing your story, it is easy for the beginner and is a free download. Once you feel comfortable with developing digital stories, you can advance to more elaborate software, such as iMovie or Windows Movie Maker.

"Digital Storytelling" is an emerging term, one that arises from a grassroots movement that uses new digital tools to help ordinary people tell their own 'true stories' in a compelling and emotionally engaging form. These stories usually take the form of a relatively short story (less than 8 minutes) and can involve interactivity. Get started today to tell your digital story!



**"DIGITAL STORYTELLING IS AN EMERGING TREND WITH YOUTH AND IN SIMPLE TERMS IT MEANS TO DEVELOP A STORY ABOUT REAL-LIFE THAT USES DIGITAL TOOLS."**



## RABBIT SHOWMANSHIP



Rabbit showmanship is unique in that the 4-H exhibitor is being judged on the presentation to explain how well they can show and judge the quality of the rabbit rather than the animal involved. This means that the 4-H'er needs to make sure they know about the breed, the rabbit, and how it matches breed standards. They need to remember they will also be judged on how they carry their animal to the table. The rabbit should be tucked in a football-like hold with its head under the 4-H'er's arm and their arm supporting its body and hind legs.

Remind the 4-H'er to relax and smile while giving their presentation! Have them practice their presentation before the contest. Be aware of any time limits that may be used for the specific showmanship contest. Remind them to maintain good eye contact. The rate of which they speak should not be too fast or choppy. Speak clearly and loud enough so that the judge/audience may hear you. Remind them to breathe! The presentation should also be organized so that it has a good flow and moves from one point to the next. The 4-H'er should be confident and have fun! Remember to check the dress code for the show before attending.

1. Have your 4-H'ers practice walking up to the table carrying their rabbit in the proper manner. They should pose the rabbit on the table in front of the judge. The pose is based on what is best for the breed.

2. Start the presentation with introductions. What is the 4-H'er's name? Age? How long have they been in 4-H? Then, introduce the rabbit. What's its name? Breed? Age? Tattoo number? If the rabbit is crossbred, tell what breeds it descends from and what characteristics it shows from each breed.

3. The animal should be presented in a systematic manner. The 4-H'er should start on one side and work their way around the animal. For each view of the rabbit, they should show how it meets breed standards, that the animal is healthy, and any potential problems.

4. Right and Left Side Views: Show the ears. Are they free of mites? Clean? Straight? Lay correctly? Tattoo number? Show the eye. Is it clean, clear and free of discharge? Show the front foot. Is it properly placed? Show the hind foot. Is it properly placed? Show the body type – head, shoulder, rump and back of the animal. Do they follow breed standards? Is there good balance?

5. Front view: Show the ears, nose and eyes from the front view. Nose – any discharge or snuffles? Show your rabbit's teeth. Do they look healthy? Straightness/alignment of teeth?

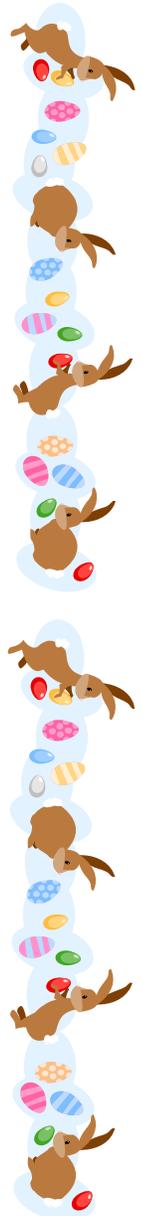
6. Rear view: Show the tail. Is it straight? Show hocks. Are they free of sores or abscesses? Show the rump. Is it rounded? Show the fur. What type of fur does your rabbit have? Do your rabbit's coloring and markings agree with breed standards?

7. Flip your rabbit onto his back. Show his back and front legs. Are they straight? Well furred? Show the chest and abdomen. Is it free of sores, abscesses or growths? Show the sex of the rabbit. Is the vent area free of any abnormalities? If the rabbit is a buck, are both testicles present? Show that it has all its toes and toenails. Note if the toenails are the proper coloring or if any are broken or missing.

8. Finish up with a final pose of the rabbit. Remind the 4-H'er to ask the judge if they have any questions. Remind them to answer to the best of their ability. They may not know the answer to every question and it is ok to say "I don't know."

It may help to include some facts about your breed or tell the judge something unique about the breed. Know the parts of the rabbit, how you cared for and feed your rabbit, and possible diseases a rabbit can get.

Use the ARBA Standards of Perfection to determine how well your rabbit conforms to the breed standard.



## SPOTLIGHT ON 4-H!

### IF YOUR EXHIBIT HELPED YOU LEARN, YOU ARE A WINNER

County fair week is near. Leaders can help prepare members for a positive learning experience. Judges are hired to evaluate exhibits according to a standard and award a ribbon accordingly.

The definition of the ribbon system is where most get confused. Many believe judging starts at the purple ribbon level and go down. Not true.

#### Judging begins at the red ribbon.



A **red ribbon** means exhibit is average. It meets all minimum requirements, shows honest effort has been made and, while there are visible signs of needed improvement, the skill level of 4-H'er is improving.



A **blue ribbon** exhibit exceeds minimum standards. The exhibit may have some smaller flaws needing improvement.



A **purple ribbon** exhibit is outstanding and flawless, or there are only few small flaws.



Most misunderstood ribbon in 4-H competition is the **white ribbon**. White ribbon means the exhibit does not meet all minimum standards. It DOES NOT mean the exhibit isn't worthwhile.

When a 4-H'er sees the ribbon on their exhibits; first question to ask is "What have I learned and how can I make it better?"



Picture Source: University of Delaware

Competition has risks. By entering competition, 4-H'ers are agreeing to accept these unknowns. A judge's opinion is one person's opinion on one day. If the exhibit helped the 4-H'er learn, they are a winner. We need to remember that even though a 4-H'er may have a red ribbon exhibit every-one is a purple ribbon person. Help members realize it is not the ribbon that is important but what they have learned from the experience.



## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Lancaster County Fair Online Resources

Lancaster County 4-H has many county fair resources on the web at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Fair/>, including:

- Entry Information
- Exhibit Tips (helpful information & resource videos)
- Updates
- 2009 photos & results (updated as information is available)

### Volunteers Needed

Adults *and* youth are needed to help during the Lancaster County Fair. If you can help, please contact the extension office at 441-7180. Help is especially needed in the following areas:

- **Static exhibit set-up days** on Thursday, July 30 at 6:30 p.m. (pizza will be served) and Saturday, Aug. 1 at 8 a.m. (doughnuts will be served) in the Lincoln Room
- **During judging of static exhibits** on Tuesday, Aug. 4 in Lincoln Room

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Lincoln