



UNIVERSITY OF  
NEBRASKA-LINCOLN  
EXTENSION

# Spotlight on ... 4-H!



## LEADER LETTER



### RETAINING 4-H MEMBERS

A new excited family joins 4-H in your local club. They soon become active in the club and county events. Before you know it they no longer show up for your activities and do not enroll next year. Attracting new 4-H members is not a problem for most 4-H programs across the state. The challenge is to keep them in the program after they join a club. According to the research, most families leave 4-H for the following reasons: lack of understanding of the 4-H program (goals, activities, events, and time commitment); moved; never felt welcome or part of the group; conflicting time commitments; or project groups didn't meet often and/or frequently enough to satisfy children. How can we retain new families into our 4-H programs at the local club and county levels?

Here are few suggestions for leaders and educators to incorporate into their program.

- Implement a new-family mentoring system to support first-year members. This will assist new families to learn the "4-H language" and understand the deadlines associated with the program.
- Conduct a needs assessment for intermediate and senior members to develop programs and activities to keep them active in 4-H, especially with their competing school and community activities.

Helping new families feel welcome to your 4-H program, should allow them to stay active in the program and continue their membership. It is also suggested that current 4-H families need to spend time with the new members to get to know them. Those conversations will help leaders and parents discover their skills, interests, and previous experiences to get them involved in your club. Another important tip for

families to understand about 4-H is that it's a "family affair", because parents will need to be involved in some form of the program.

Here are a few suggestions to try at your next club meeting with your new families:

- Consider holding a special event party, (bowling, picnic, etc.) with all new members at the beginning of the 4-H year to make them feel special.
- Match new families with current families to mentor them for a couple years.
- Get to know them & help them get to know you.
- Be polite at all times.
- Don't play favorites and be consistent with all members.
- Let them know that their contributions are needed and appreciated in your club.
- Allow you members time to get involved and feel comfortable with the group.
- Provide new members with a calendar of events, 4-H documents, and contact information for leaders, project leaders, extension office, etc.
- After their first year, have them participate in a group evaluation process. Go over your organizational goals and objectives and look at your plans for the future. As for their feedback and input on how to expand your 4-H club.
- Have them help to shape the organization but also have time to socialize and celebrate your achievements. If all you do as a group is work, it will become a burden to participate and your members will quickly lose interest.
- Remember to have fun at your club meetings!



#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

**KITCHEN SCIENCE THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH TO** 2

**CLUES 2 CLOTHING LEVEL 1!** 3

**4-H ROCKETS TAKE OFF!** 4

**BUCKET CALF BASICS** 5

**NEBRASKA 4-H CURRICULUM** 6



DISCOVER 4-H

#### SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Discover tasty tidbits with fun food science!
- Learn how to select patterns and fabric for Clothing Level 1 projects!
- Beef Begins with Bucket Calves! What do you need to know?
- What does Nebraska 4-H have to offer for curriculum?



**EVER WONDER.....?**

Ever wonder why.....potato chips left in the sun get a bad taste?.....juice in juice boxes doesn't spoil?.....milk sours?.....apples turn brown?.....cake batter expands.....or where jello gets it's jiggle? Let kids experience hands-on activities to find out the "whys". It's all about food science, an exciting and rapidly expanding industry – and simply - the study of food products, new food products being developed, new preservation and packaging techniques, improving old products and more. Science is cool! and kids love food!

Exploring, experimenting, tasting – it doesn't get much better than that! Ever wonder how.....ice cream can be baked without melting? Let's explore hands-on!



The need for food scientists keeps increasing because of the growing need to improve the quantity, quality, nutrition, variety and safety of foods.

**Baking Ice Cream: All it Takes is Some Insulation.**

**3 egg whites**  
**1/2 cup sugar**  
**3 chocolate chip cookies**  
**1 cup ice cream**

1. Heat oven to 500 degrees. Cover baking sheet with aluminum foil.
2. Beat egg whites until soft peaks form. (Mixing bowl should be clean of fat.)
3. Add sugar to beaten egg whites, a tablespoon at a time, beating egg whites after each addition.
4. Continue beating egg whites and sugar until mixture is thick and glossy. (This is meringue).
5. Put cookies on baking sheet and place a scoop of ice cream on each cookie.
6. Spread meringue thickly over ice cream. Be sure ice cream is completely covered with meringue.
7. Place baking sheet in oven. Bake on lowest rack of oven 3 to 5 minutes until meringue is lightly browned. Eat right away!

Ask questions to incorporate the following: In desserts such as baked Alaska, ice cream is coated with meringue (beaten egg whites with a little sugar). Meringue acts as insulation, much as an insulated foam drinking cup or a down-filled coat. Insulation has small air spaces trapped in it that slow down the passage of heat or cold. When egg whites are beaten to make meringue, many small air spaces are created. When meringue is spread over ice cream, the ice cream is insulated so the oven heat cannot get in during the short baking time. It is important to completely cover the ice cream.

Why not explore career options while you're at it. The need for food scientists keeps increasing because of the growing need to improve the quantity, quality, nutrition, variety and safety of foods. Job placement and salaries are amazing.



**4-H FOOD SCIENCE ACTIVITY PAGE**

Developed by Donna Bradley, Extension Agent, Hickman County  
 Kathy Finley, Extension Agent, Robertson County

**Your 4-H Food Science Project**

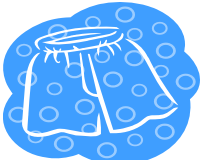
To have a healthy lifestyle, it is important to learn about the foods we choose to eat. It is important to know how foods are prepared and where we get the foods we eat. Some of the skills you can learn and activities you can do this year are listed below. Check your favorites. Then, work with your 4-H leaders and parents to make a 4-H

**Beginning**

**Life Skill**  
 Healthy Lifestyle Choices

Visit <http://www.utextension.utk.edu/4h/projects/foodscience.htm> for more career information as well as outstanding activities, community service ideas, and other resources.

**EVALUATING CLOTHING LEVEL I PATTERNS AND FABRICS**



In Clothing Level I, 4-H'ers are ready to use a commercial pattern and learn to sew very simple clothes to wear.



Look through the pattern books in fabric stores for simple garments such as pull-on pants, pull-on shorts, pull-on Capri's, pull-on skirt, simple wrap-around skirt, pull-on top/shirt or simple lined button less vest. Also check with the County Educator to see if a simple pull-on jumper or simple pull-on dress can be constructed. Do not select patterns that feature collars, set-in sleeves, waistbands (other than casing type with elastic) and zippers. These sewing skills will be learned in Clothing Level 2.



The right pattern size is very important. Even if a 4-H'er's measurements are not identical to the pattern size, fewer changes will be needed by choosing the correct size. Instructions for finding the right pattern for different figure types and sizes are given in back of pattern catalogs. After determining the figure type,



select the size with measurements closest to the 4-H'er's measurements. Also compare the 4-H'er's measurements to the 'body measurements' found on the back of the pattern envelope. Once the pattern is purchased, compare the 4-H'er's measurements with the 'finished garment measurements' found printed on the pattern tissue. The 'finished garment measurements' give the total ease designed into the pattern. Ease is needed to move in clothing so the paper pattern is larger than the body measurements.



Construction skills to be learned in Clothing Level I include seam finishes, clipping, trimming, grading, notching, reinforcing crotch seams, staystitching, understitching, interfacing use, applying facings, constructing casings, and hemming by hand and machine. In addition, 4-H'ers learn how to make raglan, cap or kimono sleeves and patch or in-seam pockets.



A good fabric choice is important to a project's success. When shopping, look for medium-weight woven fabric that will sew and press smoothly. Select firm fabric that will not slip when sewn. Knit fabric is not a good choice for Clothing Level I. Also look for color-fast fabric that has been treated for shrinkage. A solid color or small, overall print is best. Plaids and stripes are not to be used in Clothing Level I projects. They are more difficult fabrics to work with because the design must be matched.



The 4-H clothing construction program enables youth to develop competencies, knowledge and skills necessary to create clothing they enjoy wearing.



A good fabric choice is important to a project's success.

**LOOK THROUGH THE PATTERN BOOKS IN FABRIC STORES FOR SIMPLE GARMENTS SUCH AS PULL-ON PANTS, PULL-ON SHORTS, PULL-ON CAPRIS, PULL-ON SKIRT, SIMPLE WRAP-AROUND SKIRT, PULL-ON TOP/SHIRT OR SIMPLE LINED BUTTONLESS VEST.**



## 4-H ROCKETRY



Building a rocket and blasting it off is one of the most exciting 4-H projects. This thrilling, hands-on experience gives youth a real connection to science, engineering, and technology.

Your first assignment is to read the rocket section in your county fair book. Among the rules, you will discover there are three levels of rockets – Skill Level 1, Skill Level 2, and Skill Level 3. If youth are new to rockets, Skill Level 1 is where they belong, no matter what their age.



Your next assignment is to purchase the required materials. You can do this via [www.estesrockets.com](http://www.estesrockets.com) or by visiting a local store like Hobby Town USA. Printed on the rocket package will be Skill Level 1, 2, or 3. The package provides engine options – the farther down the alphabet and bigger the number, the higher the rocket will zoom. Purchase at least three engines. The magic number of launches needed for scoring at the fair is three. 4-H'ers can personalize their rocket by selecting their paint color. Be sure to purchase glue and recovery wadding. A launch controller and launch pad are also needed.

Follow the instructions carefully when building the rocket. Most instructions call for three sanding-sealing cycles before painting. This will be a several day process. Poor sanding results in rough fins and an uneven paint surface. Check out the Model Rocket Scoresheet and Rules (sf92) available from your Extension office. The rules offer valuable information.

It's launch time! Make this a group event, with all the club rockets being launched together. It's fun as a group, plus the more eyes the better to find the rockets when they fall to earth! Be sure to choose a calm day, wind is the enemy.

Insert the engine into the rocket, making sure the igniter plug is completely inserted, put the rocket on the launch pad, and attach the launch controller leads. The controller should have fresh batteries for a fast ignition.

For 4-H, the rocket needs to launch three **successful** times. A report needs to be included for judging. Important items to record for each launch include: weather, flight height, and flight distance. Pictures taken throughout the building and launching process add to this report.

Finally, support the rocket on a base no bigger than 12" x 12" for submission to fair. Be creative when painting your base. Attach your rocket to the base by screwing a used engine to the base.

4-H'ers can enroll in the rocket project yearly to learn more advanced skills in science, engineering, and technology.



4-H'ers can enroll in the rocket project yearly to learn more advanced skills in science, engineering, and technology.

**MAKE LAUNCHING THE ROCKET A GROUP EVENT, WITH ALL THE CLUB ROCKETS BEING LAUNCHED TOGETHER. IT'S FUN AS A GROUP, PLUS THE MORE EYES THE BETTER TO FIND THE ROCKETS WHEN THEY FALL TO EARTH! BE SURE TO CHOOSE A CALM DAY, WIND IS THE ENEMY.**



## AN EXCITING HANDS-ON APPROACH TO ANIMAL SCIENCE!

The bucket calf project can serve as the perfect introductory method to the Animal Science curriculum. The youth learn responsibility and caring while also learning about feeds, grooming, showing, and communication.

The bucket calf project can be the beginning of a new business for many children also. This may be the beginning of the 4-Hers' new cow herd. The youth begin by raising a calf on artificial milk, often an orphaned or twin calf. The youth learn responsibility in doing chores and caring for the calf that relies on them for survival. They can begin to learn about the digestive system and feeds as the calf grows and begin eating solid feeds. The diet and daily intake also are an important part of the learning to keep the calf healthy and growing.

Exercise and grooming become important as the calf grows and the weather begins to warm up. As a parent you might not have to worry about where the kids are as they will be out playing with their calf. The calf can be the best friend, and playmate.

Getting a bucket calf trained for showing can be another new experience, as they like to follow the person that brings them food, but that may be before they have a halter placed around the head. I've seen all kinds of coaxing methods tried, not always successfully. But usually the 4-H member outlasts the calf's stubbornness.

The bucket calf is a great introduction to the beef field. As the calf grows, the member will gain competence and self esteem. An 8-10 year old youth with a 1,000 pound calf compared to the 80 pound calf will be safer working with the bucket calf, until they learn the nature and methods of working with a larger animal.

Communication is another important step the youth learns with this project. Most judges when judging bucket calves ask the youth questions about the care the member is giving the animals, the member hasn't any doubt in answering as they have been the primary care giver. They are eager to tell the judge about their calf. This communication can also be directed to the veterinarian or the feed salesman as the member discusses the calf's needs as it grows.

As you proceed through this project you will want to check with your local University of Nebraska Extension County office about rules. This project does not have state rules. Often the project is limited to younger members, as a learning step. Grooming may also be limited, as the younger members are encouraged to do the work themselves, which may limit clipper use, and grooming compounds. Simply learning to comb or brush the animal is a great beginning step. Counties may have a second year project, using the same animal the second year, so it is tame and partially trained. At this level members then can learn more advanced grooming, feeding, and breeding components of the animal science projects.



**THE BUCKET CALF PROJECT CAN SERVE AS THE PERFECT INTRODUCTORY METHOD TO THE ANIMAL SCIENCE CURRICULUM. THE YOUTH LEARN RESPONSIBILITY AND CARING WHILE ALSO LEARNING ABOUT FEEDS, GROOMING, SHOWING, AND COMMUNICATION.**



## SPOTLIGHT ON 4-H!

### FOCUS ON 4-H CURRICULUM

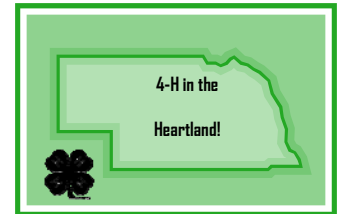


Turn your spotlight on the 4-H curriculum and let your 4-H members soar! 4-H members follow the motto of “learning by doing”. Those members learn in 4-H by enrolling in 4-H curriculum. In other words, 4-H’ers learn through their 4-H projects, or 4-H curriculum, in which they enroll.

Over 150 projects are offered through the University of Nebraska-Lincoln 4-H program. Many projects are developed in Nebraska in conjunction with faculty researchers at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension staff.

Nebraska 4-H projects focus on experiential, activity-based, hands on learning to help youth learn life skills that are important to them. 4-H projects, or curriculum, encourage youth to experience the activity, share what they did, discuss their learning, connect it to the real world and then apply what they have learned to other situations.

4-H projects are categorized into eight different curriculum areas including: Animal Science, Communication and Expressive Arts, Consumer and Family Sciences, Environmental Education & Earth Sciences, Healthy Lifestyles Education, Leadership & Citizenship, Plant Science and Science and Technology.



Learn more about Nebraska 4-H projects by visiting the 4-H web site at: [www.4h.unl.edu](http://www.4h.unl.edu). By clicking on the 4-H Programs and Curriculum tab you will be introduced to the wide range of projects available to your 4-H members. The “Pick A Project” publication is available on-line which lists the available projects, describes the fun and learning in each project and suggests appropriate ages, or skill levels, for each project. The 4-H Curriculum web site contains links to other resources and on-line games to support Nebraska 4-H Curriculum. You might also want to check out the top ten reasons to choose a Nebraska 4-H project at this web site!

Encourage your 4-H members to enroll in a 4-H project that may stretch their imaginations! At your next club meeting, ask your members to respond to the following questions at role call: What is your favorite 4-H project? What is a 4-H project that you would like to try? What is one favorite activity that you found in your 4-H project? List one of your top ten reasons to enroll in a 4-H project/curriculum? Leaders might also consider holding an on-line scavenger hunt. Youth can search the 4-H web site to learn more about 4-H curriculum. The 4-H member that finds the most 4-H project information would be the one to win that 4-H spotlight!



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## Jammie Jamboree, March 28

Join us at the Jammie Jamboree and make jammie bottoms on Saturday, March 28, 9 a.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. Bring your own pull-on pajama bottom pattern, prewashed flannel or 100% cotton fabric and matching thread. Also bring your sewing machine, basic sewing equipment and a sack lunch. Open to all youth (need not be in 4-H). Sign up by March 27 by calling 441-7180. Jammie bottoms may be entered at the county fair and styled in the 4-H Style Revue under Clothing Level 1.

## 4-H Clover Challenge, April 13

A fun Clover Challenge aimed at 4-H’ers ages 10–18 interested in family & consumer sciences will be held Monday, April 13, 1 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. Similar to a quiz bowl, Clover Challenge consists of a series of multiple choice and true/false questions based on family finance, health, foods, clothing and home environment. Teams of two, three or four youth participate against each other in randomly chosen tournament-like brackets. This is a good opportunity to practice for Life Challenge contests! Preregister by April 9 by calling Tracy at 441-7180.

