4-H Clubs of Excellence Award
Recognizes Successful Clubs

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The overall goal of 4-H is to develop capable, caring, confident, competent youth who contribute to the improvement of themselves, their family, their community and their world. Many 4-H volunteers help youth develop these skills in organized clubs. One way to help club members develop these skills is by using Nebraska 4-H Clubs of Excellence standards (see list at right).

Earning the Club of Excellence award is very achievable. At the beginning of the club’s 4-H year, 4-H leaders and members review the Club of Excellence requirements, set goals to meet the criteria, create a plan of action to achieve their goals and follow through with their plan. At the end of the year, a designated club volunteer or member completes the one-page Club of Excellence summary form and returns it to the Extension office.

In Lancaster County, Clubs of Excellence are recognized at 4-H Achievement Celebration held each February. Deadline for summary forms is Dec. 31. Lancaster County’s 2014 Clubs of Excellence were: 4-H Explorers, Denim N’ Dust, Explorers, Fantastic 4, Fusion 4-H’ers, Go Go Goat Getters, Joe’s Clover Knights, Pick-A-Pig, Rabbits R Us, Rock Creek Ranchers, Rock n’ Riders, Shamstastic Closers and Super Shamrocks.

From reviewing this year’s Club of Excellence summary forms, Lancaster County 4-H staff read some amazing outcomes of what 4-H’ers and volunteers learn through 4-H. For example, one 4-H club reported cleaning up a park, creating Valentines for veterans at the Veterans club reported cleaning up a park, creating Valentines for veterans at the Veterans

Administrations hold a coat drive for the People’s City Mission — and noted, “It provided a chance for them to give back to someone in need. In addition, club members had to plan a budget, shop and stick to a budget.”

Of this year’s 13 Clubs of Excellence, all clubs met more than the required six club meetings and all clubs reported several of their members gave speeches or presentations at the club, county or state level. 100 percent of the clubs had members exhibit at State Fair and 62 percent of the clubs had members participate in a camp.

The Fantastic 4 has been recognized as a Club of Excellence since 2006. Leader Jen Smith says, “The Club of Excellence is an award our club strives to achieve for several reasons. One, there is a sense of leadership achievement and a year of volunteer and club involvement.”

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 three 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 a volunteer/organizational leader who has 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 event(s)
- Celebrate member and club achievements

Nearly 10 parents assist with 4-H Explorers activities, such as helping with zoo clean up last year.

Last year, Joe’s Clover Knights received a Governors Agricultural Excellence award to make 36 tied fleece blankets to donate to St. Gianna’s Women’s Homes.

Requirements for “Clubs of Excellence” Award

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The Go Go Goat Getters club gives youth the opportunity to help raise goats. Before the Super Fair, club members met frequently to practice handling their goats.

Last year, the Rabbits R Us club made a club banner together, which earned “Top Banner” in 4-H static exhibits at the Lancaster County Super Fair.