



# Lancaster County 4-H 2026 Horse Incentive Program

Jan. 1–July 20, 2026

Due to Extension office no later than July 24

Any Lancaster County 4-H'er may participate in the horse incentive program and earn points by participating in horse-related activities. See guidelines on next page. The more points you earn, the more valuable the reward!

How it works:

- Track the points you earn from participating in horse-related activities between January 1 and July 20.
- Some activities have a set value of points (such as competing in 4-H contests). Track these points on the Horse Incentive Point Summary Sheet.
- For some activities you log hours (such as taking care of your horse) — 1 hour equals 1 point. Keep track of hours/points on either of the log sheets (Option 1, Option 2 or a combination of both). You must describe what you did for hours/points you record on the log sheet — if you run out of room, write the date and what you did on the back of the page.
- Total your points on the Horse Incentive Point Summary Sheet.
- Submit the official sheets and Reward Request Form to the Extension office no later than July 24.

**HONESTY PLEA:** Honesty is a foundation that supports the 4-H pillars of character, which include trustworthiness. Please make sure the hours/points logged are accurate and true.

For example, if you groom your horse for 15 minutes, log 15 minutes. Don't round up to half an hour or an hour. Spot checks will be done.

## Special Notes:

- Drive time doesn't count when driving to shows or other horse related activities. Only log hours when you are directly involved with the horse or event.
- In order to get credit for some points, like watching your vet do something on your horse, you must have their initials.
- The Lancaster County Horse VIPS Executive Committee reserves the right to require verification of the hours you log.
- You must have a parent/guardian signature on your log sheets when you turn them in.
- **Families must have paid \$20 annual family dues to the 'Lancaster County Horse VIPS' to be considered for incentive awards.**

Horse Incentive Program forms are available online at <https://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/horse> and at the Extension office. If you have questions about the Horse Incentive Program, contact Kate Pulec at [kpulec3@unl.edu](mailto:kpulec3@unl.edu) or 402-441-7180.

Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

The 4-H Youth Development program abides with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.

# GUIDELINES

## Activities to include in your logged hours/points:

- 4-H meetings, ring practices, Jr. Leader volunteer work, watching instructive horse-related videos or programs, visiting other horse facilities
- Feeding, grooming, cleaning stalls, observing farrier, vet or other horse professional, making or repairing horse-related items
- Competing in horse shows, volunteering at horse shows, trail rides, general riding, judging
- Reading or studying about horses (max 20 hours). To get credit for reading, you must turn in a minimum of a 1-page book report on the book you read with your incentive forms
- Any volunteer/community service (max 20 hours)

## Possible point values:

- 1 point for each month you serve as a club officer
- Up to 5 points for watching a veterinarian and completing the vet form
- 5 points — you aren't showing, but you support a friend who is showing
- 5 points for attending (not competing) Stampede, State Horse Expo and/or State Rodeo
- 5 points for attending Horse VIPS Committee meetings
- 5 points for giving a horse-related speech or demonstration at a 4-H club meeting
- Up to 8 points for watching a farrier and completing the farrier form
- Up to 10 points for watching someone check your horse's teeth and completing the teeth form
- 10 points if you complete and turn in the Lancaster County 4-H Horse Incentive Goal Sheet
- 10 points for giving an educational horse-related speech or demonstration at a community, regional or state meeting
- 10 points for attending a clinic (examples: 4-H roping, western dressage, etc.)
- 10 points for writing a horse story (fictional or non-fictional); must be a minimum of 2 pages in length, single spaced.
- 10 points for creating a horse-related book cover; can be original artwork or computer generated
- 10 points for writing a report about a war horse; must be in your own words, 1-page minimum, single spaced and must be about a war horse ridden by Generals George Washington, Lee, Grant, McClellan, Sherman, Stonewall Jackson or Sheridan
- 10 points if you are an active Junior Leader in your 4-H club
- 10 additional bonus points if you are a Teen Council member (count the hours spent doing teen council activities and then add the additional bonus points)
- 15 points for competing in Stampede art or photography contest
- 20 points if you turn in incentive forms in a 3-ring notebook organized with dividers for each section (example: activity log sheets, book reports, reward request form, vet/farrier question forms, original horse stories, book covers, war horse reports, etc.)
- 20 points for achieving a new level of horsemanship
- 20 points for competing in Stampede or national speech, demonstration or horse bowl
- 20 points for competing in a Hippology contest at Stampede or nationals
- 20 points for competing in State Horse Expo and/or State Rodeo
- 20 points if you turn in a completed Lancaster County Horse Record Book
- 20 points for competing in a horse judging competition (county, regional, state or national level) WITHOUT oral reasons
- 25 points for competing in a horse judging competition (county, regional, state or national level) AND GIVING oral reasons
- 20 points for working in the 4-H Council food stand at the Lancaster County Super Fair (reported hours from the previous year go towards the current year)

## Levels

Gold..... 390+ Hours/Points (must turn in completed Light Horse Record Book or Lancaster County Horse Record Book)

Silver..... 225+ Hours/Points

Bronze... 100+ Hours/Points

## Horse Incentive Suggested Book Reading List

To get credit for reading, you must turn in your incentive forms with a minimum of a 1-page book report (single spaced) on the book you read.

You can read any horse book of your choice and have it count toward incentive points. However, just for fun, here is a list of books all horse lovers would enjoy (and probably should read). Know a good book that is not on this list? Tell Kate Pulec about it!

**Anna Sewell**

- *Black Beauty*

**Walter Farley**

- *The Black Stallion Series (books 1-18)*
- *Man O'War*

**Marguerite Henry**

- *King of the Wind: The Story of the Godolphin Arabian*
- *Misty of Chincoteague* (Misty #1)
- *Sea Star: Orphan of Chincoteague* (Misty #2)
- *Stormy, Misty's Foal* (Misty #3)
- *Black Gold*
- *Born to Trot*
- *Justin Morgan Had a Horse*
- *White Stallion of Lipizza*
- *Mustang: Wild Spirit of the West*
- *Brighty of the Grand Canyon*

**Laura Hillenbrand**

- *Seabiscuit: An American Legend*

**Mary O'Hara**

- *My Friend Flicka*
- *Thunderhead*

**Enid Bagnold**

- *National Velvet* ()

**Michael Morpurgo**

- *War Horse* (War Horse #1)

**John Steinbeck**

- *The Red Pony*

**James Herriot**

- *All Creatures Great and Small*

**Kathleen Duey**

- *Spirit: Stallion of Cimarron*

**Suzanne Selfors**

- *Spirit Riding Free*

**Horse Diaries:**

- *Patricia Hermes: Koda and Black Cloud*
- *Catherine Hapka: Elska, Yatimah, Jingle Bells and Luna*
- *Whitney Sanderson: Golden Sun, Darcy, Calvino and Lily*
- *Alison Hart: Bell's Star and Risky Chance*
- *Jane Kendall: Maestoso Petra and Tennessee Rose*
- *Kate Klimo: Cinders*

# 4-H Horse Incentive Goal Sheet

(worth 10 points in the Horse Incentive Program)

There is a saying: "If you don't know where you are going, you'll probably end up somewhere else." Think about that for awhile! Talk to an adult about what that saying means.

Now explain in your own words what the saying means. \_\_\_\_\_

**Goals will help you decide what you want to do, how to get where you want to be and how to measure your success.** A goal should have four parts:

1. Set the goal.
2. Figure out the steps you'll need to take to help you reach the goal.
3. Decide what the end result will be.
4. Set an estimated timetable.

*Before you set your goal, ask yourself if the goal is realistic. Make sure the outcome of the goal is something you can control.* For example, look at these two goals:

1. Before the Super Fair, I want to learn what a judge looks for in a good showman.
2. I want to get a blue in showmanship at the Super Fair.

Goal number one is a good goal because you have control over the goal. Goal number two is not a good goal because you don't have control. The Super Fair judge has control over who gets a blue ribbon.

For some of us, learning how to set and achieve goals can be hard and takes practice. Some of you may want to ask an adult for help to get started.

1. A goal for the 2026 4-H year is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What steps do I need to take to achieve this goal?

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

C. \_\_\_\_\_

D. \_\_\_\_\_

E. \_\_\_\_\_

F. \_\_\_\_\_

G. \_\_\_\_\_

H. \_\_\_\_\_

3. The end result will be \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. I hope to accomplish this goal by (date) \_\_\_\_\_

## 2026 Questions to Ask the Person Checking Your Horse's Teeth

(One point earned for each answer, a “dentist/vet” must initial)

1. How often should you have your horse's teeth checked/floated?
2. What are the signs of a horse with a tooth abscess?
3. What is a parrot mouth?
4. What is the strangest thing you have seen when dealing with a horse's mouth?
5. What is the difference between ‘canine’ teeth and ‘wolf’ teeth?
6. Name five symptoms/behaviors you might notice with your horse that might indicate problems with their teeth (worth one point each).

## 2026 Questions to Ask Your Farrier

(One point earned for each answer, farrier must initial)

1. How often should a horse's feet be trimmed?
2. Which farrier tools are your favorite?
3. What are the benefits of leaving a horse barefoot?
4. What should a person consider when choosing to put shoes on a horse?
5. How can you tell when a horse is lame or off?
6. How can you tell if a hoof has a bruise?
7. How can I help my horse's hoof health?

## 2026 Questions to Ask Your Vet

(Each question worth one point, vet must initial)

1. What vaccines does my horse need? Why?
2. What is the strangest thing your vet has had to treat? Explain.
3. What are the main things I should have in my horse's first aid kit?
4. What is Strangles? What are the symptoms/signs? How would I treat it if my horse gets it?
5. What else can I be doing to improve my horse's health?