

# Welcome to Ohio 4-H

## About 4-H

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4-H is a non-formal educational youth development program offered to individuals ages 5 to 19.

Among all the fun things to learn about in 4-H are animals, computers, public speaking, cooking, art, gardening, natural sciences, and much more. You can participate in 4-H in many ways—through clubs, camps, your school, and short-term programs offered through your county or the state office.

No matter what you select or how you participate, all 4-H programs focus on active involvement and quality experiences that stimulate lifelong learning of values and skills.

## Pledge

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I pledge  
My **head** to clearer thinking,  
My **heart** to greater loyalty,  
My **hands** to larger service, and  
My **health** to better living,  
For my club, my community, my country, and my world.

## Motto: To Make the Best Better

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The 4-H motto refers to each member. It means that each member will do the “best” that he/she possibly can in whatever is attempted. The member will then strive to improve the next time so his or her initial “best” becomes “better.” The 4-H motto encourages members to stretch their abilities and capacities to reach greater achievement within their own potential.

## Member Recognition

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Each county 4-H program in Ohio has a standard for measuring youth success. Many counties recognize members with a certificate of achievement for attending regular club meetings, taking part in club and project events, presenting a project demonstration, and participating in community service. Additionally, members who achieve their goals in leadership, citizenship, and service activities, often called “honor members,” also receive certificates of achievement.

County-level project judging assesses the quality of the member’s project performance. A member receives a grade ribbon for how well the project is completed. As a result, some members earn the opportunity

to compete beyond the county. Typically trophies, rosettes, and state fair participation honors are awarded to 4-H members who succeed at these levels.

Additional opportunities for recognition are available through county, state, and national award programs. These awards include state trips, national conferences, and educational scholarships. To learn more about awards and scholarships, go to [ohio4h.org/awards](http://ohio4h.org/awards).

## Message from State 4-H Leader

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Dear 4-H Parents,

Welcome to Ohio 4-H 2021! At Ohio 4-H, we believe true leaders aren’t born; they’re grown. Our statewide network of more than 140 Ohio 4-H professionals and 16,000 adult volunteers support today’s youth in growing skills through project work, camps, clubs, trips, and other hands-on learning experiences. Parents of 4-H members provide vital support to help Ohio 4-H remain strong and successful. Your encouragement and assistance in guiding 4-H members through their projects and club experiences helps them thrive. Our research-backed, hands-on 4-H approach provides the experiences required to develop the skills youth need to be successful in life. Together with your club’s volunteers and 4-H professionals, we will work together to develop citizenship, leadership, responsibility, and life skills. This leads to productive careers and strong communities. Thank you for joining with us to ensure that 4-H grows across Ohio!

Yours in service to 4-H,



Kirk Bloir, 4-H State Leader,  
Ohio State University Extension

## Expressing Thanks

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Volunteers and donors are vital to the overall success of 4-H. They give their time, talent, and money to support current 4-H members. Members receiving medals, certificates, scholarships, trips, and other awards are encouraged to make it a priority to express appreciation to the donors and sponsors who made the awards and scholarships possible. If you are a winner, remember to take a few moments to write a “Thank You!” and tell your donor or sponsor how your award or scholarship has benefited you.

# Understanding 4-H Membership

## 4-H Membership Eligibility

Ohio 4-H membership is based on a child's age AND grade as of January 1 of the current calendar year. Eligibility for Cloverbud participation begins when a child is age 5 and enrolled in kindergarten. Eligibility for participation in 4-H projects and competitive events begins when a child is age 8 and in third grade. Any youth age 9 or above is eligible for project membership, regardless of grade level. Membership requires enrollment in an authorized Ohio 4-H club or group under the direction of an OSU Extension professional or an approved adult volunteer. A youth's 4-H eligibility ends December 31 the year he or she turns 19.

Joining Ohio 4-H is a privilege and responsibility for individuals and is subject to the Ohio 4-H Code of Conduct and applicable policies of The Ohio State University.

Accommodations can be made for youth with disabilities through our Winning 4-H Plan. Visit [ohio4h.org/about/join-4-h](http://ohio4h.org/about/join-4-h) to make an accommodation request.

## 4-H Membership Expectations

The expectations for 4-H membership are a balance of 4-H project work, involvement in a 4-H club, participation in 4-H activities and events, and working towards improving one's personal growth. 4-H members and their parents/guardians are also expected to abide by the Ohio 4-H Code of Conduct throughout the year, and sign off on this code as part of the annual membership process. For more information on the membership process, contact your local 4-H professional. For more information about expectations for completing projects, see page 5.

## Cross-County Line Membership

Youth are expected to affiliate with the 4-H program in their county of residence.

4-H membership in two counties simultaneously is not permitted.

In situations where the county of residence does not have a 4-H program, youth may not join 4-H in another county.

If county financial support for Ohio State University Extension ceases to exist, 4-H membership status

already established in that county will end on the date the funding ends (established by Extension Administration). 4-H membership of youth, residing in a county that has lost funding, who have pre-established cross-county line 4-H membership agreements in place will be permitted to continue participation in their non-resident county through December 31 of that 4-H membership year.

For more information about cross-county lines membership, contact your local Extension office.

## 4-H and FFA Membership

Ohio 4-H members are sometimes also FFA members, often within the same county or in an adjacent county. These members especially need to keep in mind the 4-H policy about 4-H projects being separate from school projects. To keep work in both organizations clearly separate, 4-H members are advised to take different species or non-livestock projects in the two organizations or, at the very least, to take market animals in one and breeding animals in the other. The idea is to refrain from exhibiting the same project more than once. See chart for allowable and not allowable examples.

	4-H	FFA
Allowable	Breeding Gilt	Market Hog
Allowable	Market Steer	Market Hog
Allowable	Welding (door stop)	Welding (boot scraper, made for ag class)
Not Allowable	Market Lamb	Market Lamb
Not Allowable	Welding (door stop, made for ag class)	Welding (door stop, made for ag class)

Please check your junior fair exhibition rules about exhibiting both 4-H and FFA projects and animals.

## Project Enrollment for 4-H Members and Showing Animals at the Ohio State Fair

4-H members must be enrolled in their county in any project they enter to show in the Ohio State Fair Junior Livestock Shows (including poultry, rabbits, and

dogs), regardless of whether that project is offered for county exhibition. (See more on next page.)

A 4-H member cannot enroll the same animal in two separate projects, except for dog projects and 4-H PetPALS.

## A Note About Cost Recovery

Club leaders, project helpers, and other volunteers often ask about the cost of project books. Why are 4-H members required to buy them? The cost of a project book, which is usually \$6, covers the cost of curriculum

development, printing, storage, and delivery.

This cost recovery plan is seen as the most desirable option among alternatives such as state membership or other fees. Each book purchased supports the Ohio 4-H program at the state and county levels. Ohio 4-H depends on your support in delivering high-quality, experiential education to its members. We strive to provide project books that offer value. Unless specifically stated otherwise, please help us by purchasing a new book each year for every project in which your son or daughter enrolls.

# Understanding 4-H Projects

## Project Work Through 4-H

Each project book contains a wealth of information and activities for planning and conducting a project. The projects can be completed by participating in activities through organized project groups or by carrying out the activities individually under the guidance of a parent or other adult.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### ***What is a 4-H project?***

A 4-H project is made up of three types of activities:

Hands-on activities: making, producing, practicing, observing, testing, interviewing, caring for, etc.

Organized activities: demonstrations, speeches, workshops, camps, county judging, project activities, exhibits, etc.

Leadership/Citizenship activities: conducting, planning, teaching, assisting, informing, organizing, etc.

### ***Does a 4-H member have to take a project?***

Yes. However, there are two ways to take a project, either as an individual project or as a group project.


### ***How does a member select a project?***

When choosing a project, consider your interests, background, what is necessary to start your project, and what is available to help you complete it. Review this guide as a family, club, or group. A good rule of thumb is to select no more than two projects as a first-year member.

Included in the description of each project is a level—beginning (B), intermediate (I), or advanced (A). These are primarily skill levels, so that if you have little or no

experience in a project area, for example, you are a beginner, regardless of your age. Intermediate-level projects are for members with some experience in a project area, and advanced-level projects are for members experienced in a project area. There are exceptions though! Some projects were written with certain ages in mind. In those cases, the project descriptions give the ages. Also, some projects are described with an “X,” meaning they are appropriate for all skill and age levels.

County fairs and the state fair often have age requirements different than those for project enrollment. When participating in a fair event, be sure to review the related guidelines.

Once you’ve selected your project(s) for the year, request the project book(s) from your 4-H club leader. Look for the  to see if the project you selected needs an additional resource book. Each project book is \$6 unless stated otherwise here or by your county Extension office.

### ***Where does a member begin when planning a 4-H project?***

Once a member has selected a project, he/she should start by reading the section of the project book called the Member Project Guide, usually located near the front. The Member Project Guide offers step-by-step instructions for conducting the activities that make up the 4-H project.

### ***Can a school project be used as a 4-H project too?***

No. In order for a member to achieve the progression of knowledge, attitudes, skills, and aspirations necessary for positive youth development, all 4-H experiences in which a 4-H member is involved must be separate and different from previous or simultaneous experiences in other programs, groups, businesses, and organizations.

***Does a member have to do everything the Member Project Guide suggests?***

No, although completing the Member Project Guide in the recommended time frame is the best way to succeed in fair judging. How much to complete is up to the member, parents, and advisor. Depending upon their interests and abilities, members may plan to do a little or a lot. Project plans also can change as a member's interests and needs change.

***How much time can be spent on a project?***

It can be a matter of days, weeks, or even months, depending on the size and scope of the member's plan. Some projects also can be repeated to accomplish additional project goals.

***Is it necessary to attend county-level judging to complete a project?***

For some members, project completion is nothing more than participating in project activities, completing a predetermined number of project goals, and reviewing accomplishments with a parent or project helper. Some counties require attendance at county-level judging. Always check with your project helper for specific judging requirements. For example,

sometimes it is necessary to bring an exhibit along with your project book to interview judging.

***How can a 4-H member qualify to compete at the Ohio State Fair?***

For non-animal and non-livestock events, qualifying for the state fair involves competing at the county level and being selected as state fair representative. Some counties hold events that are not state fair events, and some counties do not hold all of the events that take place at the state level. In addition, if you are taking a project with age guidelines and are outside of the recommended age range, be sure to double-check county and state fair regulations about participating ([ohio4h.org/ohiostatefair](http://ohio4h.org/ohiostatefair)). Generally speaking, youth outside the recommended age range are not eligible for competition. For animal and livestock events, be sure to check state fair guidelines at [ohio4h.org/animalsciences](http://ohio4h.org/animalsciences).

Please note: Ohio State Fair eligibility, as indicated by a green ribbon (🎗️), is current at time of printing but is subject to change. Eligibility for the coming year is usually available in February at [ohio4h.org/ohiostatefair](http://ohio4h.org/ohiostatefair).

## Statewide Programs

### 4-H Event Youth Assistant

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This statewide group of 4-H teens assists with Ohio State Fair events. In this process, members have an opportunity to enhance their leadership skills and be involved in the State 4-H program. Applications are due May 15. Visit [go.osu.edu/4HEYA](http://go.osu.edu/4HEYA) for more information.

### 4-H PetPALS

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4-H PetPALS (People and Animals Linking Successfully) is an intergenerational 4-H program connecting youth and their pets with senior adults in various healthcare facilities. Members learn to select, socialize, and train appropriate pets to participate in animal-assisted activities. For more information, go to [4hpetpals.osu.edu](http://4hpetpals.osu.edu).

### Alumni and Friends

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We want to connect with you! Are you interested in receiving monthly 4-H newsletters, hearing about upcoming 4-H events, and other ways to connect to the 4-H community? Sign-up today at [ohio4h.org/alumni](http://ohio4h.org/alumni).

### Camping

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4-H camping programs include day camps, overnight camps, and camps that focus on specialty areas such as animal sciences, creative arts, shooting sports, and STEM. Other camps focus on specific groups of youth including children of those serving in the military, Cloverbuds, teens, and youth with special needs. For more information on 4-H camps and their facilities, go to [ohio4h.org/camp](http://ohio4h.org/camp) or contact your county Extension office.

### CARTEENS

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4-H CARTEENS, a traffic safety program conducted by 4-H teen leaders and their program partners, is for first-time juvenile traffic offenders referred by local courts. The program's goals are to reduce the number of repeat juvenile traffic offenders, increase teen awareness of traffic/vehicular safety, and improve public speaking and leadership skills of teen instructors. For information on 4-H CARTEENS, please go to [ohio4h.org/families/just-teens/carteens](http://ohio4h.org/families/just-teens/carteens) or contact your county Extension office.



## Cloverbuds

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The youngest 4-H members are called Cloverbuds (youth age 5 and in kindergarten to age 8 and in the third grade). 4-H volunteers lead activities that explore topics such as health, earth and the environment, citizenship, plants and animals, science and technology, personal development, creative arts, and more! For more information, visit [ohio4h.org/cloverbuds](http://ohio4h.org/cloverbuds) or contact your county Extension office.

## Dog Achievement Program

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In this non-competitive program, 4-H members have fun, learn more about dogs, and earn certificates and pins by completing categories of achievement such as basic training, exercise, and health and safety. More information about DAP is available at [ohio4h.org/DAP](http://ohio4h.org/DAP).

## International Exchange

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Open your world! Ohio families have the opportunity to share their lives and learn about another country without leaving home by hosting youth or adults from around the world for three and a half weeks each summer (applications due April-May). Interested in traveling? Ohio youth can live with host families in other countries for one month each summer, too. Traveler applications are due November 15 and partial scholarships are awarded to all selected candidates. For more information, visit [ohio4h.org/youth/international](http://ohio4h.org/youth/international).

## Ohio Military Kids

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The mission of Ohio Military Kids is to support the children and families of all branches of the military by delivering a wide range of recreational, social, and educational programs as they cope with the stresses of knowing their deployed family members may be in harm's way. Ohio 4-H offers staff support and resources to provide these programs in partnership with the Ohio National Guard. To learn more or to serve as a volunteer or camp counselor for our youth programs, visit us at [go.osu.edu/OMK](http://go.osu.edu/OMK) and on Facebook (OhioMilitaryKids).

## Shooting Sports

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The Ohio 4-H Shooting Sports program teaches young people the safe and responsible use of archery equipment; the fundamentals of firing air guns, .22 caliber and muzzleloading rifles, pistols, and shotguns; the basic principles of hunting; and the value of

studying historic lifestyles and heritage crafts. To learn more about these projects and shooting sports camp, go to [ohio4h.org/shootingsports](http://ohio4h.org/shootingsports).

## State Fashion Board

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State 4-H Fashion Board members are selected from across the state to assist in conducting the Ohio State Fair 4-H Fashion Revue, assist with educational programming efforts related to textiles and clothing, and serve as advocates for Ohio's 4-H textiles and clothing projects and programs. Applicants are selected at the county level and interviewed during the Ohio State Fair Clothing Days. To learn more, please visit [ohio4h.org/families/just-teens/state-4-h-fashion-board](http://ohio4h.org/families/just-teens/state-4-h-fashion-board) or contact Laryssa Hook at [hook.26@osu.edu](mailto:hook.26@osu.edu).

## STEM Pathways

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Explore STEM Pathways challenges and programs in science, technology, engineering, and math to enhance your curiosity, critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, and teamwork. Discover how these workforce skills are necessary to compete in a high-tech global society. The STEM Pathways formula is simple: Engagement + Problem Solving = Learning! For more information, contact your local Extension office or visit [ohio4h.org/stem-pathways](http://ohio4h.org/stem-pathways) for challenge curriculum and videos.

## Teen Leadership Council

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This is a statewide group of 4-H teens and young 4-H alumni that provides a youth stakeholder perspective in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of Ohio 4-H programming. Applications are due the Friday following Ohio State Fair. Visit [go.osu.edu/TLC](http://go.osu.edu/TLC) for more information.

## Volunteers

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At its heart, Ohio 4-H is an organization of volunteers dedicated to positive youth development. Learn more about joining our efforts at [ohio4h.org/volunteer](http://ohio4h.org/volunteer) or by contacting your county Extension office. Already a volunteer? Take a look at the Ohio 4-H Volunteer Handbook at [ohio4h.org/volunteerhandbook](http://ohio4h.org/volunteerhandbook).

# Statewide Events

## Cloverbot Challenge

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The Ohio 4-H Cloverbot Challenge occurs in June and gives 4-H Cloverbuds the opportunity to work cooperatively in teams to problem-solve using STEM skills. A new theme is selected each year. Teams research a topic, build a working model of their solution to the Challenge issue, and create a poster to illustrate their findings. [ohio4h.org/cloverbot-challenge](http://ohio4h.org/cloverbot-challenge).

## Ohio Youth Institute (OYI)

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Become a Borlaug Scholar! Norman Borlaug's work made a difference in feeding a hungry world—you can make a difference, too! In partnership with the World Food Prize, high school students research and write a paper on a global challenge related to hunger and food insecurity. You'll present your findings at the OYI, a day-long conference at Ohio State—meet with researchers, experts and other students, participate in immersion activities from the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES). Selected participants attend the Global Youth Institute and all OYI Borlaug Scholars are eligible for USDA internships in college. Make this a 4-H self-determined project! [ohio4h.org/ohio-youth-institute](http://ohio4h.org/ohio-youth-institute)

## Ohio 4-H Conference

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Please visit [ohio4h.org/about/ohio-4-h-conference](http://ohio4h.org/about/ohio-4-h-conference) for up to date information regarding the 2021 Ohio 4-H Conference.

## Dairy

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The Ohio 4-H Dairy Cattle program, online at [ohio4h.org/dairy](http://ohio4h.org/dairy), includes opportunities for 4-H members to engage in a variety of fun and informative events. Plan to take your dairy project and take part in Dairy Palooza ([ohiodairypalooza.com](http://ohiodairypalooza.com)), where you will engage in hands-on learning workshops; Dairy Quiz Bowl, a double elimination competition with junior and senior divisions; Dairy Judging Team; and the National 4-H Dairy Conference in Madison, WI ([national4hdairyconference.org](http://national4hdairyconference.org)). Details are online and on Facebook at Ohio 4-H Dairy Program.

## Horse

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Events include State 4-H Horse Bowl Contest, Judging Contest, Hippology Contest, and Communications

Contest. Winners go on to compete at the Eastern National 4-H Roundup in Louisville, KY. Runner-ups compete at Quarter Horse Congress in Columbus in October. State 4-H Poster Contest, Groom and Clean, and Competitive Trail Ride are also offered. [ohio4h.org/horse](http://ohio4h.org/horse)

## Livestock Judging Teams

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Youth develop and practice livestock evaluation skills by placing market and breeding classes of livestock (beef, swine, sheep, and goat) during the Ohio State Fair. The top three senior teams represent Ohio 4-H at national or regional contests, and an all-state team comprised of the top senior participants will represent Ohio at the national contest in Louisville, Kentucky. Rules and registration available at [ohio4h.org/events/ohio-state-fair-4-h-livestock-judging-contest](http://ohio4h.org/events/ohio-state-fair-4-h-livestock-judging-contest).

## Ohio State Fair Animal Skillathons

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Show what you know about different animal industries at the Ohio State Fair Skillathons! Evaluate your knowledge through hands-on activities in any one of nine different species (horse, goat, dairy, sheep, dog, poultry, swine, beef, and rabbit). Skillathons are free, and you do not have to be a state fair exhibitor or be enrolled in an animal project to participate. Top individuals in livestock species (beef, swine, sheep, and goats) are invited to practice for selection of an all-state team representing Ohio at the national contest in Louisville, Kentucky. Schedule, rules, and study resources are available at [go.osu.edu/OSFSkillathons](http://go.osu.edu/OSFSkillathons)

## Poultry

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Ohio 4-H members test their knowledge about all aspects of poultry in the Ohio State Fair 4-H Avian Bowl contest. They can also develop and practice their poultry evaluation skills by grading eggs, placing live bird classes, and placing market classes at the 4-H Poultry Judging contest. The first place senior team in each contest has the opportunity to represent Ohio at the National 4-H Poultry and Egg Conference held with the North American International Livestock Exposition in Louisville, KY, in November. [ohio4h.org/events/ohio-state-fair-4-h-poultry-judging-contest](http://ohio4h.org/events/ohio-state-fair-4-h-poultry-judging-contest) and [ohio4h.org/events/ohio-state-fair-4-h-avian-bowl-contest](http://ohio4h.org/events/ohio-state-fair-4-h-avian-bowl-contest).