

## GROUP DECISION MAKING METHODS

Provide opportunities for all youth to share their **voices and choices** in the 4-H club. Use a variety of decision-making techniques to keep meetings interesting and gather input from everyone.

### Brainstorming

The purpose is to create as many different ideas as possible. Write down all ideas, making sure each one is considered possible. No ideas are discussed until the list is complete. The group discusses the ideas, narrows them to the best ideas, and makes a decision.

### Consensus

The purpose is to reach general agreement, a collective opinion or belief which represents what appears to be the best resolution for the group. Consensus often means combining diverse opinions into a mutually acceptable course of action. Consensus does not need to be a unanimous agreement. Consensus is developed by listening to others, showing empathy and respect, and valuing others' thoughts and concerns. People tend to be cooperative when encouraged to do so.

### Rapid Response

Pose a question and call out someone's name to respond. Move rapidly from person to person to get a range of answers. Have several members record the answers. "Pass" is acceptable.

### Suggestion Box

Provide a suggestion box, index cards, and pencils at each club meeting. Youth can anonymously share ideas and concerns about club meetings. This is a club improvement method. Officers can review the ideas before the next meeting and try to incorporate suggestions.

### Buzz Group

Form small groups for an informal, quick method to collect information on ideas. Work in groups of three to four members. Take one minute (or a designated amount of time) to generate as many ideas as possible on a topic. Select a reporter to share the group's ideas with the large group. Share round robin, one idea (group) at a time, and share only ideas that other groups have not shared. Move as quickly as comfortable from group to group until all ideas are shared. Then discuss and select the best idea.

### A Great Idea: Use Committees!

Committees improve the effectiveness of 4-H clubs business meetings.

- ✿ Committees can help get everyone involved. For large clubs, committees are an excellent way to get all member involved and to help them get to know one other.
- ✿ Some individuals who will not accept individual responsibility may agree to work on a committee.
- ✿ Members have a chance to grow into responsibility that will help them develop leadership skills.
- ✿ Club business meetings can be shortened when committees bring recommendations to the club for a vote.

Source: *Vibrant 4-H Clubs*, Iowa State University Extension; V. Grover, C. Ehlers, M. Hartung, D.Goble, J. Luckstead, J. Macomber, J. Levings

