



University of California

Agriculture and Natural Resources

■ 4-H Youth Development Program

HANDBOOK FOR FAMILIES

**UNIVERSITY OF
CALIFORNIA 4-H**

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Welcome to UC 4-H!

4-H is a non-formal educational youth program, conducted by the University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources (UC 4-H). The purpose of UC 4-H is to help young people discover and develop their potential, by learning to set goals, making plans and decisions, building self-confidence, and learning to understand others. UC 4-H offers an opportunity to enjoy learning with family and friends. UC 4-H is open to all people equally and Affirmative Action is practiced to insure fair opportunities to all. This guide is designed for new families in UC 4-H to help them have a positive experience.

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Mission Mandates

The 4-H mission mandates clearly articulate program priorities, nationally. They also provide state and county staff the framework to organize their program implementation strategies. The mission mandates are: 1) citizenship; 2) science; and 3) healthy living.

Positive Youth Development (PYD)

PYD refers to a focus on the developmental characteristics, which lead to positive behaviors and outcomes among young people. Positive youth development is a cornerstone of the UC 4-H.

<http://4h.ucanr.edu/About/Thrive/>

Time commitment

Clubs generally start in September - October and go until May-June. Some clubs may have project or club meetings over summer. Club meetings generally occur monthly and last approximately one hour. Projects require a minimum of 6 hours of meeting time. Many projects have more than 6 hours of meeting time and some may even require time outside of the project meeting itself to be successful.



UC 4-H BASICS

Fees

Enrollment Fee: Each child pays an annual state program fee. This fee contributes to costs for county staff positions, online systems, statewide events and activities, and accident/sickness insurance. Some counties and/or clubs have additional program fees that support county and/or club activities. The UC 4-H is open to all youth, regardless of their ability to pay. Program fees can be waived or reduced for eligible youth. Contact your county Extension office for more information.

Project Fee: Most of the time, each child or parent is responsible for acquiring the materials needed to carry out project activities. Additional fees may be included for some projects, depending on the needs. Some project groups will fundraise to help lower the costs for everyone involved in that particular project. We recommend that families review these costs with club and project leaders before signing up for a particular project.

Events: Most county-level events are free; some may have participation fees. Costs of overnight conferences or camps cover the costs of putting on the event. Each participant is responsible for paying their event fees. Some counties hold fundraisers to help members cover the costs of these events.

Age Groups

Your child, depending on their age, will be eligible to be in one of the membership levels below. 4-H age is based on the age of the child as of December 31st of the program year:

- **Primary 5-8 years old:** Primary 4-H members must be 5 years old by December 31st of the program year. Youth enrolling or turning nine on or after January 1 must participate as a primary member until June 30th. For safety reasons, primary members may not enroll in large animal projects (e.g., cattle, horse, etc.), but may enroll in small animal projects including rabbits, poultry, and cavy. There are a few other policies that affect primary members. Please see the Primary Member Fact sheet for more information: 4h.ucanr.edu/files/4719.docx
- **Junior 9-10 year old:** Junior members are eligible to enroll in all 4-H projects.
- **Intermediate 11-13 year old:** Intermediate members may enroll in all 4-H projects and/or serve as Junior Leaders.
- **Senior 14-19:** Senior members may enroll in all 4-H projects and/or serve as Teen Leaders.

To see more information about membership levels based on age, online in Chapter 5, II. Membership Policy of the Policy Manual: <http://4h.ucanr.edu/Resources/Policies/Chapter5/II>



UC 4-H BASICS

Record Books

Record keeping can be a part of your UC 4-H experience. It helps young people track their activities, events, profits and losses, skill development, learning experiences, and much more. Keeping continual records in the Online Record Book is one option (paper forms are also available). Another is to use blank paper, a notebook, or calendar and then later the information can be transfer into the report forms. See more information about record books and their requirements online at <http://4h.ucanr.edu/Resources/Members/RecordBook/>

Uniforms

Uniforms are not required for UC 4-H membership and may not be required or used as evaluation criteria for any UC 4-H activities. Some local, county, and district fair boards require wearing the official uniform of the organization they are representing for participation in livestock shows. See more information about the uniform online at:

<http://4h.ucanr.edu/About/Uniform/>. The 4-H hat, scarf and tie may be purchased from some Extension Offices, the local 4-H club or Leslie Carman 4-H Club Supplies at www.4hsupplies.com.

Fair

Fairs provide opportunities for members to exhibit the best of their project work from the past year and see how their skills have grown. Fairs also share with the community what UC 4-H activities are taking place in their area. Each fair is governed by a set of rules that should be carefully reviewed by UC 4-H staff. Most fairs are not run by UC 4-H. Entering UC 4-H projects in county, district, and state fairs is the responsibility of the UC 4-H members. They should contact their project leaders to obtain necessary forms, help with completion of forms, and required signatures. Members are responsible for turning in their entries on time. It is the member's responsibility to find out the rules of a fair and follow them, while representing UC 4-H and following UC 4-H Code of Conduct.



Participants in the Shasta County 4-H program exhibit their project series at the Shasta District Fair.



STEPS TO SUCCESS

To help new families understand UC 4-H and to make sure that every youth has the same opportunities for success in UC 4-H, the Steps to Success was created. This document describes key terms and requirements for member in good standing, project completion, club participation and more. More information can be found here:

<http://4h.ucanr.edu/files/210544.pdf> and <http://4h.ucanr.edu/files/224707.pdf>.





CLUBS AND PROJECTS

In California, there are five different types of UC 4-H clubs: 1) Community Clubs, 2) Afterschool Clubs, 3) In-School clubs, 4) Special Interest (SPIN) Clubs and 5) Military Clubs. The core elements of each club model are the same but the objectives, program structure, and setting differ based on the needs and interests of youth and families. For more information on these different club models contact your county Extension office.

Some UC 4-H clubs have separate club and project meetings, in others the project and club meetings occur together, and in others project work occurs during the club meeting.

Club Meetings

UC 4-H members in clubs operate under an established constitution and by-laws or set of operating procedures. Clubs either elect youth officers or have youth leaders provide leadership to the club. In partnership with adults, youth develop and implement an annual educational plan. The Club leader or other adult volunteer supports the members in these activities and guides them as they acquire leadership skills. Club meetings also provide an opportunity for members and parents/guardians to share experiences and interests. For clubs that have business meetings, any parent or adult volunteer may join the discussion, but only UC 4-H members vote on matters that are brought before the club.

Did you know?

For clubs that have officers, below are common positions:

- **President**—conducts meetings and appoints committees
- **Vice President**—is in charge of the program plans
- **Secretary**—keeps minutes and attendance records
- **Treasurer**—pays club bills and deposits funds received
- **Historian**—keeps a lasting record of the club's yearly story
- **Sergeant at Arms**—assists the president with club duties and politely keeps order during the meetings



Project Meetings

Members choose to learn within “projects”. A project may be a topic like geology, photography, small animals, food and nutrition, or bicycling. It can be almost any subject that young people are interested in. Each club offers different projects depending on the needs and interests of youth and availability of caring adults to lead the project. Completed projects may be exhibited at the County Fair or similar UC 4-H event. They are judged and awards are given for quality work.



ROLES

Responsibility of a Project Leader

Project leaders are UC 4-H adult volunteers, sometimes parents/guardians of members. They are interested in young people, and they:

- Help members plan and organize their project work based on a proven experiential model
- Help members organize and conduct project meetings
- Obtain project curriculum and distribute materials
- Encourage members to set attainable, measurable objectives and develop their own standards for project work, according to their abilities and interests
- Keep members informed about project-related events in which they are eligible to participate; give members ideas on how to prepare for these events
- Give recognition for any kind of progress to encourage continued improvement
- Spend some time at the end of each year with each member showing them how to measure and evaluate the overall progress made in the project
- Talk with parents of members who need extra help or who have problems working with other members
- Participate in meetings, keeping the club leader informed of their own group's work and progress
- Work with junior and teen leaders to maximize their contribution to the project

Role of a member

UC 4-H members work as individuals and as a team. The level of participation in UC 4-H is left up to the member and their family. Opportunities common across UC 4-H clubs, counties and the state include:

- Select projects with guidance from a UC 4-H adult volunteer and parent/ guardians
- Create and complete a plan for project work
- Keep a record of project work
- Attend UC 4-H meetings
- Participate in local, county, state and national UC 4-H activities and events
- Learn the UC 4-H Pledge and Motto
- Exhibit project work
- Participate in committees
- Participate in community service activities
- Participate in other UC 4-H clubs and programs, such as camp
- Abide by the UC 4-H Code of Conduct





YOUTH LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



One goal of UC 4-H is to help members develop into confident, effective leaders. UC 4-H youth leaders use their knowledge, skills, and influence to establish relationships with people and help others meet goals. Many leadership opportunities are offered through the UC 4-H program, and members are encouraged to become involved at all levels, including club, county, state, and national.

PROJECT LEVEL

Junior & Teen Leaders

Junior and Teen Leaders assist the project leader in teaching and helping other members of the project. They receive special patches and pins for their 4-H hat. Check with your club's project leaders for opportunities.

CLUB LEVEL

Club Committees

Clubs may have committees for various reasons such as setup/take down monthly meetings, club judging day, fundraising, events, community service, and others. Find out from your Club Leader what committees are available.

Club Chairperson

The chairperson is responsible for the organization and facilitation of their committee. Some clubs hold elections for chairperson positions. Other ways are to be appointed, be the founder of the committee or volunteer for an ongoing project your club already has in place.

Club Officer

Some clubs have elected officers that provide leadership for the club and plan and carry out club meetings. Generally, the executive board consists of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Reporter, and others. Positions available vary by club. Clubs hold elections once a year for new officers. Check with your Club Leader on how to get nominated. For more information, visit <http://4h.ucanr.edu/Programs/Clubs/Officers/>



YOUTH LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

COUNTY LEVEL

All Star (County Ambassador)

All Stars are the ambassadors of the UC 4-H program in a county. They represent their county, visit UC 4-H clubs in their county, network with other organizations in the community, and organize and run county events and ceremonies.

Call your local county Extension office or visit their website for details.

AREA OR STATE LEVEL

Area Summits

Area summits are a great opportunity to learn and practice leadership skills, public speaking, citizenship, character building, and more. Area summits are held throughout the state, one in each area and are designed for intermediate and/or senior members. Youth may attend any summit throughout the state and typically attend the closest one. The State Leadership Conference (SLC) is held annually and is designed for senior members. Requirements vary, check with your local county Extension office or the State UC 4-H website http://4h.ucanr.edu/4-H_Events/.

State Ambassador

State Ambassadors are youth who have excelled in the areas of leadership and community service. The State Ambassador position is one of the highest service opportunities and recognition attainable. This is a working honor and each year State Ambassadors choose a platform to focus on, advocate for and promote the program, plan state events, and lead workshops within and outside of UC 4-H. All expenses are paid by the State UC 4-H Office for travel and other expenses related to Ambassador commitments. Applicants must be 16 years old or more, and pass a selection process conducted by the State. For more information, visit <http://4h.ucanr.edu/Projects/Leadership/SA/>.

California 4-H Management Board

The California 4-H Management Board is composed of UC 4-H members and adult volunteer directors who provide leadership for area programming; assess local and area needs; connect state and area programming; increase awareness, visibility, outreach, and participation in the program; and raise money in support of the program. The Management Board has a variety of committees. New members are selected annually. For more information or to apply go to http://4h.ucanr.edu/Get_Involved/Management_Board/

State 4-H Advisory Committees

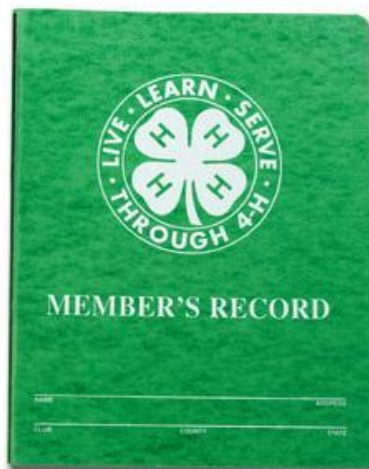
The State 4-H Office has several advisory committees ranging from animal science to healthy living to camping. These committees provide an opportunity for UC 4-H members, adult volunteers, and program partners with a particular interest or expertise to provide leadership and help advise on the direction of the UC 4-H. New members are selected annually. For more information or to apply go to http://4h.ucanr.edu/Get_Involved/Advisory_Committees/



HOW YOUNG PEOPLE LEARN

4-H'ers are sometimes involved in long-term learning experiences with peers and adult volunteers. Active, hands-on learning is an important part of UC 4-H. Our point of view is that youth learn through experiencing. They reflect through sharing and processing the experience, and applying what they learn in real-life situations. This is why we offer a range of experiences. Each UC 4-H member learns through participation in many opportunities, including:

- **Projects.** Projects help members gain new knowledge and skills. They take responsibility for their decisions. Some project work continues at home. This gives members a chance to develop stronger relationships with parents/guardians/siblings. (*Parents: be supportive and help guide your 4-H'er; don't try to do their work for them*).
- **Presentations.** Through oral presentations, members show and tell others how to do something they have learned. Members gain confidence in their public speaking skills. This is one of the first steps in developing personal leadership skills.
- **Record Keeping.** The ability to keep accurate records is an important life skill. Through entries made in their UC 4-H record books, members learn good record keeping skills. These records help members learn from their UC 4-H experiences, and develop business skills. In order to successfully complete a UC 4-H project, members are required to keep records of their project work.
- **Recreation.** Members learn to enjoy life, balance work with leisure time, and develop social skills through their interactions with others. Recreation also provides opportunities to teach leadership skills.
- **County (and other) Contests.** Through their participation in contests, members learn cooperative and competitive skills. Awards may be provided in recognition of their efforts.
- **Exhibits.** Members may choose to exhibit their project results at the county fair or some other setting. Exhibiting UC 4-H projects allows the public to learn what 4-H'ers are doing. It helps members learn how they can improve their work and gives them a sense of pride and accomplishment.





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- **Camps.** Many counties provide camping opportunities. Members take part in educational and recreation experiences as they learn more about nature, science, and living with people.
- **Ambassadors (All-Star and State Ambassador).** For older members: the UC 4-H Ambassador program develops leadership and public speaking skills. These youth become more effective UC 4-H advocates within their respective communities, county and state.
- **Exchanges.** Exchanges are arranged with UC 4-H groups from other counties or states. Exchanges help 4-H'ers develop a broader knowledge of people and living situations and provide the chance for creating lasting friendships. Some international exchanges are also available.
- **Recognition and Awards.** Youth are recognized and rewarded in a many ways for work they do. Recognition may range from acceptance by peers and leaders to ribbons, certificates, trips and scholarships. Accomplishments in both cooperative and competitive settings may be recognized.
- **Fundraising.** Members may be asked to participate in club or county fundraising efforts. This allows the club or county to offer additional educational opportunities. It also helps decrease the cost of events, activities, and programs. The skills learned in these fundraising activities add to the member's leadership and organizational skills, and may influence career choices. While UC 4-H is provided with some public funds, private funds are essential to the operation of UC 4-H.



INCENTIVES AND RECOGNITION



UC 4-H promotes participation and excellence through rewarding members of all ages with ribbons, pins, patches, medallions, stars, and certificates. Primary members (5 to 8 years old) should only receive recognition for participation. Youth development research has shown that competition does not have positive effects on this age group. In UC 4-H, competitions are judged one of two ways. In the American judging system, competitors are judged against one another and awarded 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place. In the Danish judging system, competitors are judged against a universal standard and their score awards them medals like gold, blue, and red. The biggest difference to note is that in the Danish system there is no maximum or minimum number of gold, blue, or red awards that can be awarded – every competitor has an equal chance at the highest award.

Many UC 4-H members choose to display their awards on their 4-H hat, which is part of the 4-H uniform. On the hat, you will find pins, patches, stripes, and stars. The stripes represent each year the member has been active in UC 4-H. Members can earn gold stripes by serving in leadership roles. The pins above each stripe also represent the years the member has been active in UC 4-H. Officer pins are often displayed above the year pins. Officer pins are awarded to youth members who serve as club officers, like President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, etc.

High school seniors may also be eligible for scholarships through the UC 4-H program in support of their higher education goals.



STATE AND NATIONAL EVENTS

Event	Dates	Brief Description and Link
Equine Field Day	Varies; Spring	The Equine Field Day is an educational event that offers presentations for each of the five 45 minute sessions. Youth and adults are encouraged to attend. http://4h.ucanr.edu/4-H_Events/4H_Equine_Field_Day/
Area Presentation Days	Varies; March-May	UC 4-H members may present at a Presentation Day to receive feedback and an award. Youth who receive a gold award at County Presentation Day may participate in an Area Presentation Day. http://4h.ucanr.edu/4-H_Events/SFD/
National 4-H Conference	Varies; March-April	The National 4-H Conference is a working conference. Youth and adults develop recommendations to help guide 4-H nationally and in their communities. This event brings together youth, volunteer leaders, and state and county staff members from across the United States, the U.S. territories, and the Canadian provinces. http://4h.ucanr.edu/4-H_Events/N4-HC/
Animal Science Symposium	May	The Animal Science Symposium is a train-the-trainer conference with educational sessions on animal welfare and animal health. http://4h.ucanr.edu/4-H_Events/Symposium/
State Field Day	Varies; May-June	The largest and most comprehensive educational event for UC 4-H youth members (age 9-19) and UC 4-H volunteer educators. http://4h.ucanr.edu/4-H_Events/SFD/
California Focus	June	Citizenship educational experience that combines hands-on participation in workshops, debates and simulations with speakers, tours, activities and new friends from across California. For youth ages 14-19. http://4h.ucanr.edu/4-H_Events/CF/
Leadership Washington Focus	July	An educational conference is offered at the National 4-H Center near Washington, D.C. It gives youth in grades 7-9 the opportunity to explore, develop, and refine the civic engagement skills they need in order to become better citizens. http://4h.ucanr.edu/4-H_Events/LWF/
Citizenship Washington Focus	July	An educational conference for youth ages 15 to 19. Hosted at the National 4-H Center near Washington, D.C., it gives youth the opportunity to explore, develop, and refine the civic engagement skills they need in order to become outstanding leaders. http://4h.ucanr.edu/4-H_Events/WF/
4-H Cooking Challenge	July	In the yearly UC 4-H Cooking Challenge at the State Fair, teams compete to prepare a healthy three-course meal using a surprise secret ingredient. http://4h.ucanr.edu/News/Calendar/?calitem=326996&g=1245
State Leadership Conference	July or August	A conference for UC 4-H members, 8th grade graduates and above. The conference holds workshops, informative presentations, and social activities for youth members to network gain new skills and build relationships. http://4h.ucanr.edu/4-H_Events/SLC/
Horse Classic	July or August	The California 4-H Horse Classic offers members the chance to showcase the culmination of their efforts put forth in their equine projects, throughout the year. http://4h.ucanr.edu/4-H_Events/Horse_Classic/
Livestock Bowl	October	This contest is open to both UC 4-H and FFA members. The top UC 4-H team and the top FFA team at this contest are eligible to compete at the Western National Round Up . http://4h.ucanr.edu/4-H_Events/Livestock_Quiz_Bowl/
Area Summits	Varies by area	Annual area summits are hosted in each area of the state. These summits engage 4-H'ers in learning opportunities and workshops, increasing their leadership, citizenship, and public speaking abilities. They also include fun recreational and social activities that allow UC 4-H members to network with those outside their county. http://4h.ucanr.edu/4-H_Events/

See <http://4h.ucanr.edu/News/Calendar/> for the most up-to-date State and National Event Calendar. Some events may offer Financial Aid when available. Check the event information for details. Gift certificates are also available for some events: http://4h.ucanr.edu/4-H_Events/Gift_Certificate_Program/



ENHANCING YOUR EXPERIENCE

We want every UC 4-H member to feel welcome and successful in the program. Here are some items that will help you navigate your way through UC 4-H.

Helpful Hints for a Successful Club Experience

As a UC 4-H parent/guardian you can contribute to your child having a successful 4-H club experience by doing some of the following:

- Get to know your club leader(s) and project leaders
- Attend local club/project meetings with your child whenever possible
- Ask for a copy of your club's bylaws and constitution or operating procedures and yearly calendar of events
- Encourage your child to complete project work and to meet deadlines
- Bookmark your county Extension program website and visit it occasionally



Supporting Your Child's Club

- Serve as a project leader. If you have an activity or hobby that you have a passion for and would like to share, then you could become a project leader teaching something you love to youth
- Assume a specific club responsibility such as helping with member registration, working with a committee of youth to plan an activity, or helping a club officer with her/his responsibilities
- Adults helping in any role can be enrolled as a UC 4-H adult volunteer. Adult volunteers fill out an application and pay the accident/sickness insurance fee and are also covered under the University's general liability insurance. Speak to your club leader or the county Extension office about how to become a UC 4-H adult volunteer
- If you know an individual, business, or organization that would be interested in financially supporting the UC 4-H program in your county, refer them to this link to donate <http://ca4hfoundation.org/>.

Ensuring Satisfaction with UC 4-H

Please see above for expectations of the club and project experience. If your expectations are not met, please contact your local county Extension office to speak to the UC 4-H Program Representative. If you still feel that the issue had not resolved, contact the local UC 4-H Youth Development Advisor. If there is not an Advisor in your county, you may need to contact the County Director. Contact information for the Advisor and/or County Director can be found on your county's webpage.



IF I HAD ONLY KNOWN...

From members...

- I would read the county newsletter each month
- I can go to any county activity listed in the newsletter
- Any of my friends can join 4-H and they do not need to own an animal or live on a farm
- Writing down the 4-H activities and presentations I do throughout the year makes it easier to fill out my record book later
- You may join 4-H at any age between 5 and 19 years' old
- Each project and club is different. Keep trying different projects and/or clubs until you find one you like
- 4-H has a lot of terms and words that are unfamiliar. I wish I had known about the Cloverpedia which has defined those terms
http://4h.ucanr.edu/Resources/4-H_Manuals_-_Publications/Cloverpedia/

From parents/guardians...

- I would read each issue of the county newsletter for upcoming events and activities that will benefit my child
- Parent(s), guardian(s) and grandparents are encouraged to attend and participate in 4-H meetings, events and activities with their youth
- I would have sent a calendar with my child to mark down club/county deadlines and events
- I would encourage my child to write down anything completed in relation to 4-H in preparation for completing a record book
- Find out how the project leader(s), club leader(s), and county office communicate with families and make sure I am connected in to get information
- If I have a question, I can contact the club leader(s), other parents, or the UC Extension Office (4-H staff) with any questions no matter how small it might be





Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)

Are UC 4-H adult volunteers background checked?

Yes, all UC 4-H adult volunteers must be fingerprinted and cleared by the California Department of Justice.

What projects are available in UC 4-H?

There are over 100 projects for youth to participate in with some of the major categories being health, animals, technology and engineering, leadership and more: <http://4h.ucanr.edu/files/14270.pdf>

Where can I get more information about UC 4-H?

There is a State 4-H website and a county Extension website. The state website can be located at: <http://4h.ucanr.edu/>. Your individual county website can be accessed by visiting this link: http://ucanr.edu/County_Offices/

**UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCES (UC ANR)
NONDISCRIMINATION AND AFFIRMATIVE ACTION
POLICY STATEMENT FOR UC ANR
PUBLICATIONS REGARDING PROGRAM PRACTICES**

May 2015

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University policy is intended to be consistent with the provisions of applicable State and Federal laws.

Inquiries regarding the University's equal employment opportunity policies may be directed to: John Fox, Affirmative Action Compliance Officer and Title IX Officer, University of California, Agriculture and Natural Resources, 2801 Second Street, Davis, CA 95618, (530) 750-1397. Email: jsafox@ucanr.edu.

Website: http://ucanr.edu/sites/anrstaff/Diversity/Affirmative_Action/.

This policy statement supersedes the UC ANR Nondiscrimination and Affirmative Action Policy Statement for University of California Publications Regarding Program Practices dated July 2013.