



LETTERS TO NEW 4-H LEADERS

Letter 3: Planning and Conducting 4-H Club Meetings

In this letter you will find:

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- ▶ Tours, Activity Days, etc.

Dear Leader,

By now you may have questions about planning and conducting 4-H meetings. This letter includes information about the basic, everyday ingredients of a successful 4-H meeting, both for projects and club/groups.

Setting Goals with Your 4-H Group

It's helpful for you, together with your 4-H members, to set a few basic goals for the year. (Not too many or you may get discouraged!) Consider the needs of the different age groups. You will want to consider these needs as you plan your activities together. If you are a community club leader, you'll find that the *4-H Club Management Volunteer Manual* has valuable information on setting club goals. Project leaders can find helpful hints in the *Project Leader's Digest*.

Encourage your 4-H members to set personal goals. You will want to do this for yourself as well. You've heard the saying, "How do you know if you've gotten there if you don't know where you're going?"

Planning a 4-H Calendar

As soon as goals have been selected by your group, it is really helpful to plan a calendar of activities. Be sure to involve your 4-H members and their parents in developing this plan. There are many excellent 4-H program ideas. You and your club will want to talk to other 4-H leaders to assist in developing your plan.

Find out from the 4-H Office what the county 4-H event calendar includes, especially the dates of those events, contests, fairs, etc. designed primarily for your project area. The Tehama County 4-H



newsletter, *In the Clover*, prints the calendar at least once during the 4-H year and includes monthly calendars of 4-H activities. This monthly newsletter also includes articles describing the activities and entry information. Be sure you are on the mailing list, and share this information with your members.

Club Officers and Committees

Election of officers gives the members an opportunity to develop leadership skills and responsibility. Suggested 4-H club officers are:

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Healthy Living Officer
- Communications Officers: Reporter, Historian, Newsletter Editor, Sergeant at Arms

Along with officers, clubs may have committees such as telephone committee, meeting host or hostess coordinator, field trip committee, cleanup committee, etc.

There are officer manuals and special instructions sheets for officers available at the 4-H Office.

Many leaders like give each member an opportunity to serve as an officer or a committee chair. The officers and committee chairs then become a planning committee to develop the calendar of activities for your project, club or group.

If your club/project decides it is necessary to have a fundraising activity to establish a treasury, be sure to check with your county office of the University of California Cooperative Extension about guidelines and policies.

Teaching the 4-H Pledge, Motto and Symbols

It helps members and adults to better understand 4-H if the leader presents the 4H pledge, motto and symbols to the group early in the year. They are all described in the publication, "Welcome to 4-H: A Members Guide," 4-H 1052.

The leader may find it helpful to make a poster to use at each meeting, showing the 4-H pledge and the 4-H motto, so members can read it while memorizing it. After the first meeting, each member can take turns leading the flag salute and the 4-H pledge. Some members may also want to give a short talk on the meaning of the 4-H symbols. 4-H flag sets are available in the, "National 4-H Supply Catalog." Small and large sets are available. Other 4-H meeting aids are also available in this catalog.

Possible Agenda Items for a 4-H Meeting

Following is a suggested agenda for a 4-H club or group meeting. There are agenda suggestions in the Officer's Manual (4-H 1077). If you do not have a copy, contact your county 4-H Office.

- Welcome/Pledge of Allegiance/4-H Pledge (5 minutes)
- Mixer or Get Acquainted Activity (10 minutes)
- Roll Call (5 minutes)

- Song (5 minutes)
- Announcements by Adult Volunteers and Members (10 minutes)
- Reports and Discussions from members (10 minutes)
- Recreation and Refreshment (15 minutes)

There are endless variations of this agenda and variety certainly helps make the meeting more interesting and lively. Your county 4-H Office may have some suggestions for learning games or other fun activities.

Involving Parents with Your Group

There are a variety of methods for getting parents involved; successful 4-H membership usually includes a great deal of parental support. The classic reason for becoming a leader is because a son or daughter wants to join 4-H. It is logical to encourage other parents to be co-leaders, assistant leaders, resource leaders, or special teachers. Don't hesitate to ask for help.

The Tehama County 4-H Program strongly encourages parents to attend all meetings with their children. Parents may be asked to chaperone club activities, host a meeting, teach a special skill, or share a particular interest. If they are sharing information with the group, it does not necessarily have to be related to the project; it could be regarding citizenship, leadership, community service, or other topics.

Tours, Activity Days, etc.

Your members will really enjoy a variety of field trips, tours, and special activity days. A well-planned field trip can be a great learning experience.

An excellent source for ideas on where to take your club or project members on a tour is to ask other 4-H leaders. They are full of helpful ideas about where to go, how to organize and prepare for a tour and how to evaluate a tour.

Your 4-H members will enjoy doing some of the planning for a field trip and may even want to invite another club to join the trip.

A special activity day is another excellent teaching tool. Perhaps you can invite a parent, a resource leader, or a friend with a special skill to teach it at one of your regular meetings.

If you have further questions or concerns, contact your county 4-H staff or another volunteer leader. We all want to help you succeed.

Have a good meeting!

Check out our website at <http://cetehama.ucanr.edu> or call 530-527-3101 to reach the staff at Tehama County 4-H Office:

4-H Program Representative - **Lynn Strom**, lmstrom@ucdavis.edu

4-H Secretary - **Spring Severson**, sseverson@ucanr.edu

Also visit the California 4-H website at <http://www.ca4h.org>



Reference Materials

Project Leader's Digest

Welcome to 4-H: A Member's Guide—4-H 1052

Officer's Manual—4-H 1077

How Can I Use the Information in This Letter?

1. New activities to plan in our 4-H program:

2. Other people who could help us and how they might help:

3. Questions to ask 4-H Extension staff and other leaders:
