

Riverside County 4-H



Project Proficiency Program

Cavy

Proficiency Program Guidelines

The Riverside County 4-H Project Proficiency program assists youth in measuring themselves against “standards of excellence” in a project area. In the Project Proficiency Program, youth strive for mastery of a subject and receive recognition as each level is completed. Each Project Proficiency is comprised of five skill levels which increase in scope and difficulty. The levels are:

- Level I – Explorer
- Level II – Producer
- Level III – Consumer
- Level IV – Leader
- Level V – Researcher

Youth members are not the only ones who benefit from this program. The Project Proficiency Program can assist leaders in organization of the project material. It also encourages leaders to infuse new ideas within specific curriculum in a sequential manner.

The proficiencies are three-fold in purpose:

1. To provide youth opportunities to sample a broad array of experiences, to measure personal progress, and to become self-directed learners;
2. To provide a standard of excellence where members are recognized for knowledge and skills they have mastered; and
3. To provide guidelines for leaders to enhance and expand project content and experiences.

The Proficiency program is **not** designed to be an award or a prize for the best in a competition. Instead, members are **rewarded** for their personal progress. The proficiencies are **not a test**. Youth should not be quizzed at the end of each 4-H year to determine how much they have learned. The proficiencies should be given to each youth member as a set of goals that they, as individuals, can work toward over one or more years. There is no deadline for completing each level. Completion of all five levels of a proficiency program indicates “mastery” of a subject.

The proficiency program is voluntary. Not all youth will find this type of activity rewarding. Many youth enter projects to learn a specific skill or group of skills, but not to achieve mastery of a subject.

We encourage leaders to give proficiency guides to members sometime during the first year in a project. At this point, the leader allows the member to determine which skills and/or knowledge areas he or she wants to master. Youth members can work on skills in several levels at the same time. They do not need to complete each skill in order, but must complete one Level before completing the next. A member must complete 80% of the skills in each level in order to complete that level.

For the skill areas which require demonstration, youth members may demonstrate individually to the project or teen leader, the group, or the club at a local meeting. Members are not required to demonstrate in front of a group as we are measuring mastery of a subject, not bravery. Some leaders leave time at the end of each project meeting for members to work on their proficiencies. This gives the youth some one-on-one time with their project and teen leaders as they demonstrate acquired knowledge and skill mastery.

Allow time to lapse between when a skill is taught and when a member demonstrates mastery. This allows time to practice and achieve mastery, not merely reflect on a newly learned skill.

Leaders are cautioned not to accept a questionable answer. This indicates incomplete mastery of the particular skill or body of knowledge. If the youth member is unsure of the correct method or term, use this time to teach the individual and allow the member time to think about it and review. The youth member will return with the knowledge learned and present it with confidence.

Reward immediately! Recognition is most meaningful when it is presented immediately following a learning experience. Sign and date the worksheet each time a member completes a level skill task.

Each proficiency program includes a certificate that can be completed and awarded to the member immediately upon successful completion of each level. The level passed can be placed in the member's project records, and the certificate can be placed in the Collection of Work portion of the Record Book.

At the year-end Awards Ceremony, the member will receive a patch for each level completed. A copy of the completed level will be turned in to the Incentives & Recognition Committee at the end of the year in order for the patch to be awarded to the member at the Awards Ceremony.

Good luck with your project!

Riverside County 4-H Cavy Proficiency Program

Level I – Explorer

	Activity	Date completed
1.	Identify, describe, and tell the important characteristics of three breeds of cavies.	
2.	Name, point out, and spell the following parts of a cavy: shoulder, rump, hip, nose, crown, chest, toes and teeth.	
3.	Describe the undesirable characteristics of a cavy: pointy head, excessive flab, pear shaped body, flat crown, buck teeth, and broken teeth.	
4.	Describe and explain the following: registered, purebred, crossbred, pedigree, parasite, and wean.	
5.	Explain which feeds are important for rabbits. What fresh vegetables should you give and not give to cavies?	
6.	Demonstrate you are willing to provide fresh water, feed, vitamin c, and daily care for your cavy.	
7.	Keep a record of your cavy project including expenses and income.	
8.	Describe a suitable cage for your cavy and how to equip it for use.	
9.	Describe what you might do for your cavy's protection during extremely hot or cold weather.	
10.	Describe what a baby cavy looks like, how it acts, and its development.	
11.	Show and tell how to lift, hold, and carry a cavy.	
12.	Make a report on your breed of cavy.	
13.	Give a demonstration or talk to your club.	

Name of Member _____ Club _____ Age _____

Project Leader signature: _____ Date _____

KEEP IN YOUR RECORD BOOK WITH THE ANNUAL PROJECT REPORT.

Riverside County 4-H Cavy Proficiency Program

Level II – Producer

	Activity	Date completed
1.	Identify, describe, and tell the important characteristics of three additional breeds of cavies.	
2.	Build a suitable carrying case, feeder, or some other cavy equipment.	
3.	Demonstrate how to tell the sex of a young cavy (approximately three weeks of age).	
4.	Explain how to breed a boar and sow (gestation and whether to remove a boar during kindling).	
5.	Take part in a 4-H judging contest.	
6.	Take part in a 4-H cavy showmanship contest.	
7.	Describe the following diseases and ailments and their remedies: lice, mites, cold, bumble foot, diarrhea, salmonella, and broken teeth.	
8.	Describe the desirable characteristics of a cavy's ear, type, crown, head, and eyes.	
9.	Describe the following undesirable conditions in a cavy: pea eye, angle wing, torn ears, eye circles, and bonnet strings.	
10.	Start a library on cavy literature.	
11.	Explain the three major uses of cavy: food, fancy, and science.	
12.	Make a report on the history of cavy.	
13.	Arrange a tour of a caviary for your club.	

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Level III – Consumer

	Activity	Date completed
1.	Keep a sow production record through at least three litters.	
2.	Explain breeding, heat period, conception, gestation, and kindling.	
3.	Explain why a cavy's body needs fresh vitamin C. Name at least five sources of vitamin C.	
4.	What are several measures you can take to avoid problems with pregnancy and birth?	
5.	What is the difference between hair and fur?	
6.	Invite and introduce a guest speaker to one of your project meetings. Ex: local cavy breeder, feed dealer, a judge, registrar.	
7.	Describe three more diseases of cavies and their treatment.	
8.	Describe body type in a cavy.	
9.	What are angel wings and where do they show up?	
10.	Describe condition in a cavy.	
11.	Describe the cavy's relationship to its rodent relatives.	
12.	Describe the difference between satin and regular hair. If possible look at it under a microscope.	
13.	Teach showmanship to another member.	

Name of Member _____ Club _____ Age _____

Project Leader signature: _____ Date _____

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Riverside County 4-H Cavy Proficiency Program

Level IV – Leader

	Activity	Date completed
1.	Make a report to your club on how to prepare and enter a cavy at an ACBA open show.	
2.	Attend, and if possible enter your cavy in an ACBA open show.	
3.	Name and explain characteristics or conditions of cavies due to inheritance.	
4.	Name and explain characteristics or conditions of cavies due to environment and feed.	
5.	Make a bibliography of your cavy library.	
6.	What are the signs of pregnancy toxemia? What is pregnancy toxemia and what causes it? How do you prevent it?	
7.	Give three examples of characteristics that are dominant and three that are recessive.	
8.	Explain cavies' use in laboratories in the 1900's.	
9.	Explain Mendel's basic law of genetics.	
10.	Keep a pictorial record of your cavy's development.	
11.	Explain dilution and give a set of examples that are dilute varieties.	
12.	Ear tag a cavy.	
13.	Make a cavy related game and play it at a meeting.	

Name of Member _____ Club _____ Age _____

Project Leader signature: _____ Date _____

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Level V – Researcher

	Activity	Date completed
1.	Join ACBA.	
2.	Learn the registration process.	
3.	How does someone become a judge or a registrar?	
4.	Do a report on the breeding and potential outcome of cavies with lethal gene factors.	
5.	Make a written and pictorial record of your cavy's strengths and weaknesses. Chose a mate for it and record the offspring's strengths and weaknesses.	
6.	Select three feeding programs and feed it to three different groups of cavies for three months and record the effects on condition.	
7.	Study and prepare a paper on one of the following and send it to the county newsletter: 1. Results of # 6 2. General management of cavies 3. Genetics involved in cavy breeding 4. Breeding and pregnancy 5. Cavy diseases, prevention and control 6. Kinds of bedding available and the advantages and disadvantages of each 7. Keeping and using records for your cavy program	
8.	Sell a litter and record your marketing techniques and the money earned.	
9.	Host a cavy breed ID, judging, or showmanship competition or clinic.	
10.	Help another member start their project.	
11.	Become a junior or teen leader.	
12.	Clerk at a show.	

Name of Member _____ Club _____ Age _____

Project Leader signature: _____ Date _____

KEEP IN YOUR RECORD BOOK WITH THE ANNUAL PROJECT REPORT.



Certificate of Achievement



Explorer

Date

Leader's Initials

Producer

Date

Leader's Initials

Consumer

Date

Leader's Initials

Leader

Date

Leader's Initials

Researcher

Date

Leader's Initials

This certifies that

*has completed the Cavy Proficiency
in the Riverside County 4-H Youth Development Program*

Leader

Club

Date