



4-H Exhibit Participation in County and State Fairs

It is the goal of the 4-H Youth Development Program to strengthen life skill development for 4-H'ers participating in planned 4-H educational experiences at fairs. 4-H Judges play a key role in those experiences so need to be familiar with the guidelines which follow.

Participant Eligibility

1. Exhibitors must have completed the 4th grade through 12th grade (or that equivalent) on September 15 (current 4-H program year). (Exhibitors for the Iowa State Fair must have completed 5th through 12th grades.) See also Iowa State Fair eligibility guidelines for the 4-H Communication and Clothing Events programs.
2. Exhibits can be prepared by an individual 4-H'er, team of 4-H'ers or may be the result of a group effort. **NOTE: Class 811L, Historical/Family Heritage, includes 4-H'ers AND adults.** All 4-H'ers, individual or group, must meet the grade requirements to be eligible for State Fair exhibiting.

For example, if a 4-H group wishes to enter a notebook describing their club citizenship effort, the documentation should recognize the contributions of the 4th graders, but be prepared by those who meet the grade requirements.

3. If a 4-H'er has set a goal(s) that can be accomplished by both a classroom assignment and an outgrowth of a 4-H project goal, that's okay. The intent is that a pre-determined goal has been set. The 4-H'er must realize that the evaluation criteria and exhibit guidelines for each opportunity will be different and should prepare the required support information accordingly.

Exhibit Classes

1. State Fair exhibit classes have been written to represent broad categories. There is one or more classes for each project.

The classes are designed to allow any exhibit which is an outgrowth of a 4-H'er's goal. Note that most classes have both product and idea categories.

Some exhibits could fit in more than one class. The exhibitor should determine the class which relates best to their exhibit goal. However, the intent is not for a 4-H'er to have the same exhibit in more than one class.

At fairs judges and staff should not change an exhibit entered in one class by the 4-H'er to another class. Use this as a teachable moment to help the 4-H'er learn from the experience for future exhibiting opportunities.

2. The **Issues Department** has been established for community club 4-H'er(s) who may wish to create an exhibit related to a societal concern. Exhibits can be an outgrowth of participation in a project area or related program in which the exhibitor has participated.

Exhibit Quotas

1. Exhibit quotas have been assigned for each county based on participation of 4-H'ers in (a) community clubs, (b) school enrichment, and (c) special interest.
2. Quotas must be used as assigned for the respective delivery method or forfeited, i.e., the special interest quota if not used by 4-H special interest group participants, cannot be added to the community club or school enrichment quota.
3. Within the total community club quota a **minimum** of two exhibits must be assigned to each of the major exhibit departments: Ag and Natural Resources, Expressive Art, Family and Consumer Sciences, Personal Development, and Science, Mechanics and Engineering. And a **minimum** of one exhibit must be assigned to the Issues department.
4. Due to limited available space in the 4-H Exhibits Building county staff and fair judges are asked to use discretion in the number of **large** exhibits selected to represent the county at the Iowa State Fair. Specific guidelines will not be established unless it becomes necessary. Large items designed for outside use will continue to be exhibited in a tent or outside near the front building entrance.

General Exhibit Rules (for the Iowa State Fair)

1. Exhibit classes are broad categories. To plan exhibits, 4-H'ers are encouraged to use project guides and manuals and program materials to determine goals and learning experiences. Some project manuals include specific exhibit suggestions and procedures. An exhibit can represent a part or all of learning involved in the respective project or program. The county Extension office has more information on exhibiting.
2. Exhibits that do not comply with the class description, size guidelines, copyright, safety, and approved methods will be disqualified and not put on public display. The exhibitor will receive written evaluation comments and an explanation on why the exhibit was disqualified. Counties will be notified of disqualified exhibits.
3. Eligible exhibits are an outgrowth of the 4-H'er's participation in the selected project or program. Exhibits can be done by an individual or group. Exhibits might be, but are not limited to, an actual product, poster, display box, report, notebook, model, video tape, audio cassette, etc.
4. The 4-H'er's goal and applicable exhibit standards will form the basis of the evaluation process. Evaluation criteria will include demonstrated learning, workmanship and techniques, and general appearance and design. All exhibitors will receive written evaluation comments on the exhibits and a blue, red, or white Iowa State Fair 4-H exhibitors ribbon.
5. Because the exhibitor is not present for judging at the Iowa State Fair, a written explanation, an audio cassette, or video tape needs to accompany the exhibit. The exhibitor should respond briefly to the following questions about the exhibit:

- a. What was your exhibit goal(s)?
 - b. How did you go about working toward your goal(s)?
 - c. What were the most important things you learned as you worked toward your goal(s)?
 - d. Do you have ideas of what you would like to do in this project area next year?
 - Judges have seven to ten minutes to evaluate the total exhibit. The information requested needs to be well organized and brief.
 - Check for additional requirements in exhibit classes for food and nutrition, home improvement, photography and visual art.
6. Grade for exhibiting at the Iowa State Fair: Youth must have completed 5th grade through 12th grade (or that equivalent) on September 15 of the current 4-H program year. Exception, see rule number 3 for 4-H Historical/Family Heritage.
 7. Each county may enter the assigned number of exhibits; quotas are based on county enrollment. (Guidelines for county allocation of the quota were included in the State Fair Handbook sent to the county Extension office.)
8. Exhibitors must have participated in the project or program from which the exhibit is an outgrowth.
 - The exhibit is to be an outgrowth of work done to accomplish a goal(s) determined by the member or group **during the current 4-H year**.
 - The exhibit should be selected at a county event.
 - All entries must be made in the name of the county and certified by an Extension staff member.
 9. No entry fee is required.
 10. Due to security, 4-H'ers are discouraged from sending items that have special meaning and historical value as the exhibit or part of an exhibit. Judges should not encourage the exhibitors to include such items. Evaluation should concentrate on the item (product) developed by the exhibitor. The Iowa State Fair and Iowa State University Extension will use diligence to insure the safety of articles entered for exhibition after their arrival and placement. However, they will not be responsible for damage or loss by fire, theft, etc.
 11. Exhibit displays should be in proportion to the main item or idea being displayed. If the exhibitor chooses a display to illustrate what was learned, the following maximum size guidelines apply:
 - Posters and banners are not to exceed standard posterboard size of 22"x28" or foam core board size of 22"x30". **Exception:** See rule #5 in Communications for Poster Art.
 - Chart or graph boards and model displays, etc., are not to exceed 4'x4' in size.
 - Display boxes are not to exceed 28"x22" in height or width and 12" in depth. **Exception:** See rule #7 for Food and Nutrition exhibits.

NOTE: The exhibitor is responsible to adhere to these guidelines. County staff and judges are also responsible to select exhibits to represent the county that meet all class and size guidelines.

12. Endangered and threatened plants and animals (includes insects) should NOT be used in any exhibit. Wildflowers taken from parks should NOT be used. It is illegal to possess songbird feathers or nests. Game animals "legally taken", such

as pheasant, goose, duck, or quail are acceptable. Purple loosestife (*Lythrum salicaria*) is a plant that should not be planted in gardens. It has the potential of becoming noxious in Iowa. Other dried established noxious weeds are acceptable to use in exhibits.

13. Original use by a 4-H'er of copyright materials should not be used in 4-H exhibits. A copyright design is not allowable because in the fair setting the exhibit is on public display and that infringes on copyright laws. (See special pieces in this section on use of copyright materials for further clarification.)
14. All exhibits, activities and programs must represent appropriate safety procedures in the development of the exhibit and during the evaluation process. This includes static exhibits and activities revolving around the communications program.

**EXHIBITS WHICH DO NOT COMPLY WITH GUIDELINES 11, 12, 13, & 14,
WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED FOR ENTRY, EVALUATION
OR DISPLAY AT THE IOWA STATE FAIR.**

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