



Muscatine County 4-H Record Keeping Guidelines

Better Learning through 4-H

December 2013

Philosophy: The purpose of 4-H record keeping is to teach an important life skill. Recognizing individual differences, youth are encouraged to select from a variety of alternatives to meet their needs and learning styles.

- Objectives:**
1. To learn goal setting, action plans, and evaluation
 2. To learn the skills of record keeping and organization for current and future use
 3. To learn to communicate and summarize
 4. To learn responsibility through completion of a task
 5. To evaluate information that will market personal skills through future resumes and applications

Minimum Requirements: These are the minimum requirements for 4-H'ers to meet in completing their records:

1. Fair Exhibit Write-up* (see back page for further information) for one project area
2. Documentation of educational presentation/communication activity
3. Livestock projects must include appropriate worksheets

Record Keeping Options:

A "4-H Project Recognition Check List" must be included with any of these options if you wish to earn project recognition seals.

1. **Written Record – Formal:** Complete the following forms:
 - a. "Yearly 4-H Summary" (4H-96)
 - b. **One** of the following for at least one project:
 - i. "Experienced Project Record" (4H-96B)
 - ii. "Advanced Project Record" (4H-96C)
 - iii. The Fair Exhibit Write-up* as well as:
 1. Leadership, citizenship, and communication activities
 2. Livestock worksheets, feed records, or photography forms
 - c. Financial and Performance Summaries – All 4-H projects have some costs involved, some are simple while others are more complex. Other projects require that performance information be kept (i.e. livestock performance). For each project the 4-H member should develop a system to keep track of this type of information. Listed in the "Pick-A-Project Paper" are project worksheets that can be used. Some summaries can also be generated using commercially available financial record keeping systems or computer software.
 - d. Use the following Table of Contents to organize your Formal Written Record:

Table of Contents

1. **Organizational Information**
 - a. Table of Contents
 - b. "Muscatine County 4-H Record Keeping Guidelines" (01/09)
 - c. "Muscatine County Program Guidelines" (7/07)
 - d. "Iowa Youth and 4-H Enrollment Guidelines" (4-H 14, 11/06)
 - e. "Iowa 4-H Animal and Poultry Identification..." (4-H 202, Rev. 1/13)
 - f. Club By-laws (optional)
 - g. Club Program (current year, followed by previous years)
2. **Personal Area** (separate each year by tabs)
 - a. "4-H Membership Recognition Certificate" (4-H 876 or 4-H 876A)
 - b. Current year's "Yearly 4-H Summary" (4-H 96A)
 - c. Current year's non-project related clippings, pictures (club & county activities, fair booth, sports, etc.)
 - d. Member/Leader Conference Guide
 - e. Previous year's personal records (items b-d above)
3. **Project Area** (separate project areas by tabs; i.e. Beef, Clothing, Electricity, etc.)
 - a. Project Area #1
 - i. "Muscatine County 4-H Project Recognition Checklist"
 - ii. "Muscatine County Project Certification of Achievement" (received after first year)
 - iii. Current year's project form – Experienced (4H-96B) or Advanced (4H-96C) or Fair Exhibit Write-up
 - iv. Financial summaries, written or computer generated (if not included on project form)
 - v. Project-related pictures and clippings
 - vi. Previous years' project area #1 records (items iii-v above)
 - b. Project Area #2 – continue as above

2. **Written Record – Informal:** These basic elements should be included in any written record:
- a. 4-H Year at a Glance/Summary – Projects in which you were enrolled, recognition, events and activities attended, offices held, committees, etc. This can be a list, a story, or however you wish to present it. You may choose to complete the “Yearly 4-H Summary” (4H-96).
 - b. Individual Project Area – You may choose to complete **one** of the following for at least one project:
 - i. “Experienced Project Record” (4H-96B)
 - ii. “Advanced Project Record” (4H-96C)
 - iii. For Project Area with Fair Exhibit you may choose to include the Fair Exhibit Write up* as well as:
 1. Documented report **or** Project Record for additional project activities not taken to the fair
 2. Documented report of leadership, citizenship, and communication activities related to project
 3. Livestock worksheets, feed records, or photography forms
 - iv. For Project Area without Fair Exhibit (This is for any activity or project you do during the year but do not bring an exhibit to the fair):
 1. Project Record form **or** documented report of project activities
 2. Documented report of leadership, citizenship, and communication activities related to project
 3. Livestock worksheets, feed records, or photography forms
 - c. Something Extra - Clippings, Membership Recognition Certificate, Project Certificate of Achievement, photos, information from your club meetings, guidelines, forms, communication activities outside of project area, community involvement outside of project area, club activities, or anything else you wish to include. These can be added anywhere in your record.
3. **Create Your Own Record Keeping System:** Following the objectives listed above, create a system that reflects the 4-H’ers goals, accomplishments and future plans. Options might include, but are not limited to the following:
- a. **Digital Records:** Records can be kept in various digital forms. You can make a record in the same style as the Formal Written Record or Informal Written Record, except you create your record using your own computer software. You may choose to record your 4-H experiences using a digital recorder, camcorder or digital camera. Suggestions to help you do this are available at the Extension Office, ask for “Using Audio or Video Tapes for 4-H Project Record Keeping” (4H-97A). To preserve and share your digital record, you can burn it to a disc or flash drive.
 - b. **Portfolio:** A portfolio is a representative collection of your 4-H work. A portfolio can have many looks. There is no one kind of container or appearance that is right for all portfolios. Guidelines to help you develop a portfolio are available at the Extension Office, ask for “4-H Portfolio Guidelines” (4-H-97B). These guidelines include a Portfolio Progress Checklist and a Self-Assessment of your project experience.

***Fair Exhibit Write up for either exhibit or project includes answering the following questions:**

- What were your exhibit/project goals?
- How did you go about working toward your goal(s)?
- What were the most important things you learned as you worked toward your goal(s)?
- What would you like to do in this project area next year?
- What is the cost?

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