



Planning the 4-H Club Year

Suggested Timeline and Steps

Here is a tentative timeline for planning your club's year. Since enrollment begins in October, we tend to think of that as the first month of the 4-H year. For financial purposes, the 4-H club fiscal year runs July 1 to June 30. Please note: Watch for announcements in the monthly newsletter to help you discover yearly deadlines and opportunities.

August - September - at the last formal club meeting of the "old" 4-H year (or prior to the first meeting of the new program year):

1. Identify club leaders for the coming year, pending volunteer application approval. Notify local Extension Office of any changes in club leadership.
2. Any potential new volunteers talk to the Extension Office to start the volunteer application process.
3. Start recruiting project leaders for projects.
4. Elect club officers. Some clubs prefer to do this at the first meeting of the new program year. Others prefer to elect officers before summer so that they have all summer to plan for the upcoming new program year. Provide officers with information from officer manuals (which are available at the Extension Office) and encourage them to attend officer training in November.
5. Meet with club officers and determine club goals, programs, committees, and service projects for the year, referring to club standards and checklist of sample club activities for ideas. Use the Club Program Book to help set and record these items.
6. Invite prospective new members and volunteers to the first meeting of the new program year.
7. Assign a mentor to new members and volunteers to answer their questions during their first year.
8. Check Monthly Club Meeting Calendar Samples.
9. Remind youth and parents about end of year deadlines (livestock record book turn in, achievement night outstanding person nominations, etc).
10. Complete year ending paper work, including financial reports (based on funds held on June 30), charter application, bylaws, annual review, budget, annual plan and affirmative action report. These are typically due around September 1.

October - at the first club meeting of the new 4-H year:

1. Prior to your first meeting ensure your club paperwork was complete and approved.
2. Continue recruiting volunteers as needed for those projects that do not have leaders. Seek the help of other club leaders or your Extension Agent to start area-wide project groups to meet the needs and interests of members. Remember new project leaders cannot begin working with members until they have completed volunteer screening.
3. Communicate to all families about enrollment using the 4-H Online system. If possible have computers and internet access at the meeting to allow members to register. Explain the importance of carefully completing all information requested. Encourage members to pay their enrollment fees at the Extension Office as soon as possible to complete the enrollment process.
4. Announce re-enrollment deadline established by club/county (January 6) as well as new enrollment and add/drop deadline for projects (March 31).
5. Meet with project leaders and encourage project leaders to get started as soon as possible with an organization meeting.
6. Check Monthly Club Meeting Calendar Samples.
7. Remind youth and parents about achievement night and other upcoming events and opportunities.

November-at the second and/or third club meetings

1. Remind club members and leaders to re-enroll as soon as possible.
2. Train club officers. For some clubs this training may take place in the summer. If there is interest, the Extension Office will offer a valley-wide officer training in November or December which youth can attend.
3. Install officers and initiate new members.
4. Assure that a “kick-off” project or activity is completed to motivate new and current members.
5. Make sure youth are receiving their project manuals and other important literature.
6. Continue to recruit project leaders and work with other club leaders on county wide projects.
7. Encourage project leaders to get started right away.
8. Check Monthly Club Meeting Calendar Samples.

Before the end of the December:

1. Committees report plans to club for adoption.
2. Tentative club calendar created/completed and distributed to families and volunteers.
3. Host a club achievement night to recognize club member accomplishments from the past year.
4. Check Monthly Club Meeting Calendar Samples.

January – July

1. Make sure your club is aware of January 6 re-enrollment deadline and March 31 new member enrollment and project add/drop deadline.
2. Support project leaders and club officers with activities and events
3. Help members prepare record books and submit applications for state and national events and scholarships.
4. Coordinate hands on activities like skill-a-thons, quiz bowls, judging classes and demonstrations at club meetings or other events.
5. Begin preparing for the fair and local and state contests.
6. Check with Extension Office for upcoming area-wide events.
7. Prepare for camp and fairs.
8. Check Monthly Club Meeting Calendar Samples.





A Planning Guide for the Club Year

The new 4-H year is always a busy time with re-enrollment, county recognition events, new members and project leader recruitment that all need attention. However, a little time spent planning for the entire year now, can pay big dividends in the long run. **The involvement of members in this process is crucial for increasing member commitment and participation for the entire year.** This is an excellent opportunity to help members build leadership skills as they plan, implement and evaluate group activities throughout the year with guidance from parents and leaders!

The list of suggestions below is provided to help your group *start* thinking of ways to make the coming year the best one yet. Remember, community service is an important part of 4-H member development. Try to include it in your year.

Club Activity Checklist: (Check ideas you would like to see your club do)

Education Topics for Programs

- Parliamentary Procedure
- Career Night
- Environmental Program
- Project Workshops
- Character Education Games/Activities
- Effective Communication with Others
- Goal Setting
- Public Speaking/Demonstration Tips & Ideas
- Dealing with Peer Pressure
- Money Management
- 4-H Awards Available
- Team Building Activities
- Safety Programs (farm, lawnmowers, etc.)
- 4-H Judging Contests – Giving Reasons
- Preparing Exhibits for Fairs and Shows
- Time Management
- Wilderness Survival
- Record Keeping
- Visit by County Office Holder
- Cowboy Ethics (talk to Area Extension Agent for info)
- Community Service

Club Fun

- Backwards Meeting
- Halloween Party
- T-Shirt Night
- Family Potluck/Picnic
- Costume Party
- Family Camping Trip
- Mystery Trip
- Trips
 - Zoo
 - Museum
 - Amusement Park
 - Sports Event
 - National Park

- County government
- Hayride & Bon Fire
- Bowling
- Swim Party
- Canoe or Rafting Trip
- Winter Party (skating, sledding)
- Parade/Float
- Dance or Club “Talent” Night

Community Service Projects

- Hygiene kits (for homeless shelters)
- Project with Senior Citizens
- Activity Day with Preschoolers
- Project with Disability Group
- Park Clean Up/Equipment Purchase
- Help organize another 4-H club
- Sponsor Citizenship Day
- Leaf raking
- Bake/make small gifts for 4-H leaders/supporters

Fund Raising

- Garage Sale/Consignment Sale
- 4-H Cookie/Candy Sale
- 4-H Car Wash
- Food Sales (Bake sale, etc.)
- Create a 4-H cookbook for sale
- Seed/plant sale
- Dinners (chili, pancake, etc.)
- Club trip/Outing
- Labor auction

What to do with Dollars

- Scholarships for club members to camps, State Congress, or other 4-H events
- Donation to charity
- Small memento to “graduating” 4-H’ers
- Have a party or take a field trip as a club