

★★ LETTERS TO ★★

NEW LEADERS

Letter 6: 4-H records and advancement programs

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- 4-H advancement programs
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Dear Leader,

Two important aspects of the 4-H program that will help both you and your members develop their projects through the year are records and advancement programs.

4-H records

Because a major goal of 4-H is to help youth develop skills for successful living, the keeping of accurate, organized records is important.

Record keeping should be incorporated as a regular part of club meetings, making it a natural part of the 4-H member's project. Keeping records helps the 4-H'er evaluate progress and gives a basis on which to make future decisions. It also helps the 4-H leader plan for club programs and activities. Like a scrapbook or diary, 4-H records are fun to look back on to see what's been learned and how we've changed.

A large calendar is a handy tool for record keeping. Encourage your members to use a calendar with large squares to write down everything they do in 4-H *on the day it happens*. This would include meetings, contests, other activities, and all transactions concerning the 4-H project (i.e. buying feed, supplies, number of hours spent working on the project, any income or savings from the project). This information can then be transferred from the calendar to the 4-H record forms at a later date.



Record forms are available at your county office of the Oregon State University Extension Service. If you did not receive them when you submitted your club enrollment forms, ask your county Extension agent for them. A set of 4-H records should include:

- 4-H records folder, in which the member keeps all 4-H records
- Project record. Most projects have a specific record form. For those that don't, use *My 4-H Project Record* (4-H 038R).
- *Oregon 4-H Permanent Record* (4-H 033R). This is a condensed record of the member's cumulative 4-H experience for all the years of 4-H membership.
- *My 4-H Notes* (4-H 039R), on which the member keeps a diary of 4-H experiences throughout the year.
- Advancement program records for the project areas in which they are available. (These are described in greater detail later in this letter.)
- Scrapbook (optional; provided by the 4-H member). To keep pictures, newspaper clippings, ribbons, and other mementos of the 4-H member's experiences.
- *4-H Record Keeping—A Teaching Tool for the Leader* (4-H 0211L) is a pamphlet for leaders to use in understanding and teaching record keeping to club members.

Many counties review and evaluate the 4-H members' record book each year. Most counties have a 4-H record book contest and/or give recognition awards for outstanding 4-H accomplishments on the basis of records. Be sure to ask your county Extension agent for a copy of the record evaluation guidelines. In some counties records are required for participation in some activities. Find out what your county recommends in regard to 4-H records.

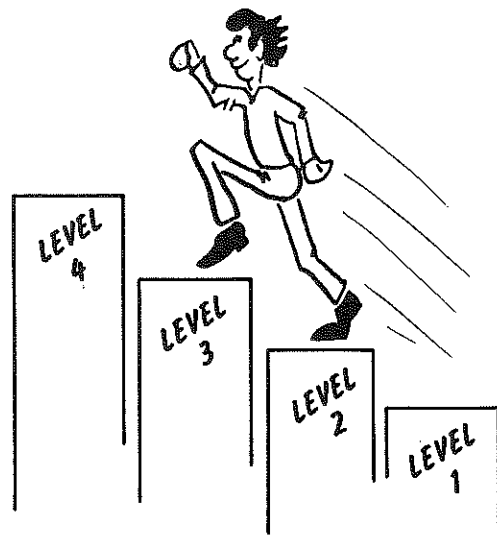


4-H advancement programs

Oregon 4-H has developed advancement programs for the following project areas: horse, meat animal (beef, sheep, swine), dairy animal (dairy cattle and dairy goats), rabbits, caviars, poultry, dogs, clothing, computer, archery, geology, entomology, and gun safety. Advancement programs also are being considered or can be developed in other project areas.

The advancement program is a guide to help members plan their learning within a project area. It is arranged in steps of progressively higher skill levels. The 4-H member can work through the steps at his or her own pace. A more detailed description is given in the publication *4-H Advancement Program Leader Guide* (4-H 029L).

The advancement program is a tremendous help to the leader in planning and arranging club activities. Leaders are encouraged to become familiar with the program at the beginning of the year and make it available to their members. Advancement programs are also a part of the 4-H member's records and should be kept with the cumulative 4-H records.



Honors based on 4-H records

There are many honors available to older 4-H members who have shown outstanding growth in their project as well as in leadership responsibilities and citizenship activities, as demonstrated through their records. These include:

County medals. Special awards available to intermediates and seniors in each county for outstanding achievement in a wide variety of project and activity areas.

College scholarships. These are available at both the state and national level to 4-H members who are seniors in high school. (Ask your county OSU Extension agent for a list of scholarships.)

Oregon 4-H Ambassadors. A special honor is awarded to those senior 4-H members in Oregon who are finalists in each project or activity area. The award is based on an evaluation of their cumulative 4-H experience as shown in their records.

National 4-H Club Congress. One Oregon 4-H Ambassador in each project or activity area is named the state winner. Most state winners receive an all-expenses-paid trip to National 4-H Club Congress in Chicago in the fall. Complete information is available at your county Extension office.

National 4-H winners at Club Congress. This honor is awarded to the top six or eight 4-H members in the nation in each of the project or activity areas. It is usually accompanied by a substantial college scholarship.

Summary

4-H records and advancement programs are guides to help members and leaders determine the progress that has been made during the year. These guides help members summarize what has been learned in 4-H and see the number of goals that have been accomplished.

Happy record keeping! Regular, consistent record keeping on the part of both the 4-H leader and the members will pay off in the future.

Reference materials

- 4-H record forms
- 4-H Record Keeping: A Teaching Tool for the Leader*, 4-H 0211L
- County record book contest guidelines (if available)
- County medal description (if available)
- 4-H Advancement Program Leader Guide*, 4-H 029L

Your county staff of the OSU Extension Service

How can I use the information in this letter:

1. New activities to plan into our club program:

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

3. Questions to ask OSU Extension staff and other leaders:

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NEW LEADERS

Letters designed to help you be a successful 4-H club leader.

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