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LETTERS TO

NEW LEADERS

Letter 7: Opportunities for 4-H leaders

In this letter you'll find:

Youth leadership programs
- Junior leaders
- Teen leaders

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- New 4-H leader workshops/meetings
- Project leader meetings
- County 4-H activities
- County 4-H Leaders Advisory Committee

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- State development committees
- State 4-H Leaders Advisory Council
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- Judges' workshops

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- National 4-H Leaders Forums
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- National 4-H Center

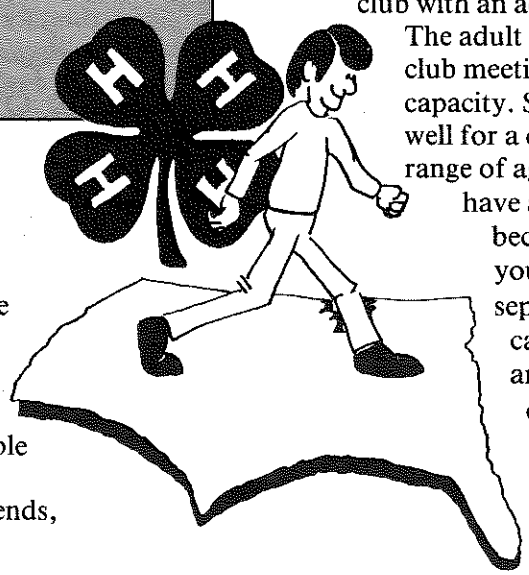
Other resources for 4-H leaders
- Master Volunteers
- Audio-visual library
- Publications

Thanks for volunteering

Dear Leader,

As you feel comfortable with one aspect of the program, you'll want to challenge yourself to take on new leadership experiences. You have probably discovered that along with your members you, too, are gaining new knowledge.

There are many opportunities available for 4-H leaders to learn more about the total 4-H program, make new friends, and develop additional skills. Your county 4-H newsletter will announce and describe these activities as they occur.



Youth leadership programs

Junior leaders. A possible source of leadership help with your club may be a junior leader. This leadership project is for 4-H members in grades 7 through 12. There may be an older 4-H member in your community who would welcome the opportunity to be a junior leader. A junior leader, experienced in the same project area, could be a valuable asset in acquainting you with the total 4-H program and could provide excellent assistance in teaching your club members.

A junior leader works with the adult leader to plan the club program, helps the younger members, and is available to provide assistance to the leader in agreed-upon areas. A complete description of the project is given in the publication *4-H Junior Leadership: A Project For Older Youth* (4-H 651).

Teen leaders. Another youth leadership program in Oregon 4-H is teen leadership. A teen leader is a senior 4-H member (grades 10 through 12) who has primary responsibility for a 4-H club with an adult leader as an advisor. The adult leader may attend some club meetings in an advisory capacity. Sometimes it works very well for a club with a wide range of ages and skill levels to have an experienced older member become a teen leader with the younger members and form a separate club. Or the teen leader can take on a specific project area of a large club. The details of this program are described in *4-H Teen Leadership* (4-H 653).

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Opportunities at the county level

New 4-H leader workshops/meetings. You may have already attended a new 4-H leader workshop/meeting with your county agent of the Oregon State University Extension Service, community coordinator, or other volunteer. If not, find out from your county Extension agent when the next meeting will be held.

Project leader meetings. One of the best ways to become familiar with the 4-H program and to find out what other leaders are doing with their clubs is to attend 4-H leader meetings in your county. Some counties have project leader meetings (i.e. livestock leaders, home economics leaders, horse leaders, small-animal project leaders, expressive arts leaders, etc.). Not only will you find these meetings helpful and informative, but other leaders will appreciate your ideas and assistance.

County 4-H activities. Consider becoming a member of a planning committee or a volunteer organizer of one of the many county 4-H activities, such as: fair superintendent or assistant, judge's clerk, contest coordinator, fundraising committee, workshop director, or summer camp staff.

4-H leaders are the key to a successful 4-H program. Leaders who take an active part in county 4-H activities not only help the program be successful, but find they become more effective leaders while developing their own skills.

County 4-H leaders advisory committee. Many counties have an organized group of leaders who meet on a regular basis to discuss the county 4-H program, review 4-H activities, conduct 4-H program fundraising, and provide program advice to the county staff of the Oregon State University Extension Service. This group may be called the "County 4-H Leaders Advisory Committee," the "County 4-H Leaders Council," or the "County 4-H Leaders Association."

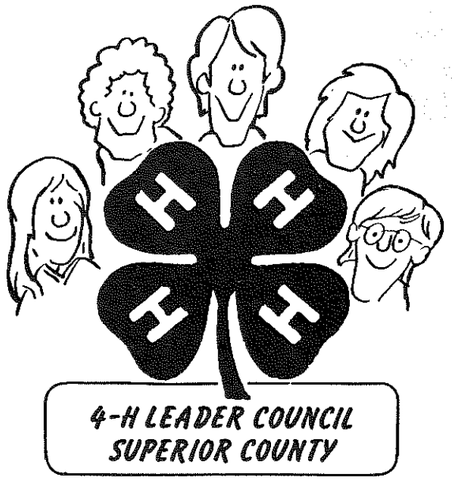
To find out more about all aspects of the total 4-H program, attend your county 4-H leaders' meetings. Talk with your county OSU Extension staff about this opportunity.

Opportunities at the state level

Oregon 4-H Leaders Forum. There are many statewide 4-H activities in which volunteer leaders may become involved. One of those is the Oregon 4-H Leaders Forum. This is an educational activity held every 2 years for adult, teen, and junior leaders (grades 10 through 12). There are many workshops that focus on general leadership skill development and specific 4-H project areas. Also, sometimes counties in the same geographic area will get together and offer local workshops or leader forums.

State Development Committees. The state 4-H staff works through development committees in most project areas. These advisory committees assist the staff with project curriculum development and activity planning. The membership on these committees is composed of county Extension agents, volunteer leaders, and older 4-H members. After you have been a leader long enough to become familiar with the program, you may be interested in serving on one of these committees. Talk with your county agent of the Oregon State University Extension Service about the nomination process.

State 4-H Leaders Advisory Council. This group meets twice a year to give advice to the state 4-H staff on policy issues, review recommendations made by state development committees, and provide guidance for program direction. Each county is represented on the State 4-H Leaders Advisory Council by a volunteer 4-H leader from that county's district. Membership on this council rotates among the counties in each district, so your current representative may or may not be from your county. This representative will report to your 4-H leaders advisory committee and 4-H staff after each meeting.



State Fair. State Fair offers many opportunities for volunteer 4-H leader involvement. Volunteering as a judge's clerk is an excellent way to find out what judges are looking for in 4-H exhibits. Hosts and hostesses serve for a few hours in the 4-H exhibit building, greeting the public and answering questions about 4-H. Volunteer show chair and vice-chairs (superintendents) plan, organize, and conduct many of the shows and activities that are conducted during State Fair. Talk to your Oregon State University Extension Service county agent about how to get involved in these opportunities.

Judges' workshops. The staff of the Department of 4-H Youth Development at OSU conducts judges' training seminars, which are also good workshops for resource leader training. These are usually open to all volunteer leaders. County Extension offices receive announcements about upcoming judges workshops.

Opportunities at the regional and national level

Western Regional 4-H Leaders Forum. Every year a Western Regional 4-H Leaders Forum is held in one of the 14 western states in our region, usually in February or March. The program features 3 days of informative seminars and meetings, tours and meals, and an opportunity to meet and exchange ideas with other 4-H leaders from all over the west.

National 4-H Leader Forums. The National 4-H Council conducts ~~several~~ 4-H leader forums ~~each year~~ at the National 4-H Center in Washington, D.C. or at a regional site. They range from workshops on various project areas to leadership and citizenship development. The Department of 4-H Youth Development at OSU coordinates the application process for these workshops.

Information and application forms are available at your county Extension office.

Scholarship assistance. Some counties have limited scholarship assistance available for leaders who apply for state, regional, or national workshops. Information is available at your county Extension office.

National 4-H Center. The National 4-H Center near Washington, D.C. is available for 4-H leaders to stay with their families while visiting the nation's capitol. Reservations must be made in advance. Check with your OSU Extension Service county agent for more information.

Other resources for 4-H leaders

As you can tell from these letters, the best resource persons for a new leader are your county's 4-H staff and other volunteer leaders. Don't hesitate to contact them for ideas, information, and assistance. In addition, the staff of the Department of 4-H Youth Development at OSU is available for assistance. They can be contacted through your county Extension agent.

Master Volunteers. Other agents in your county and trained Extension volunteers (such as Master Gardeners, Master Food Preservers, Master Woodland Managers, Master Food Shoppers) are useful resources for information about your 4-H club.

Audio-visual library. Your county office of the Oregon State University Extension Service has a catalog of audio-visual aids that you can borrow from the state 4-H office. These include slide sets with tapes, teaching kits, and video tapes on different project areas, general leadership, and citizenship. These should be ordered 3 to 4 weeks in advance from your county Extension office.

Publications. In addition to the publications already listed in these letters, there are a multitude of resource publications at your county office of the OSU Extension Service. Also available ~~are 4-H subject matter newsletters published by the OSU Department of 4-H Youth Development, the *National 4-H Leaders Magazine* (available by subscription), and~~ the *National 4-H Supply Catalog*. Ask your county Extension staff about these.

Thanks for volunteering.

We hope that the information in these letters has been helpful to you. We know it is a challenge to be a 4-H leader, and we also know it can be one of the most rewarding experiences you will have—helping young people develop into successful, caring, and productive citizens.

Welcome to the role of volunteer 4-H leader!

Your county staff of the OSU Extension Service

Reference materials

4-H Junior Leadership, 4-H 651
4-H Teen Leadership, 4-H 653

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How can I use the information in this letter:

1. New activities to plan into our club program:

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

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   _____

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

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   _____

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LETTERS TO

NEW LEADERS

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

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