

JUDGING 4-H PROJECT EXHIBITS



A MESSAGE TO 4-H MEMBERS ABOUT CONSULTATIVE JUDGING...



4-H events and fairs are often used to provide youth with opportunities to have their work judged against a set of standards. The evaluation of an exhibit should be a positive and motivating part of the total 4-H experience. To plan, practice, and present a finished product is to “learn by doing.” The exhibit is not an end in itself, nor does it illustrate all of the learning that has taken place during the 4-H year.

An important goal of 4-H is to teach skills to young people that they can use now, as a youth, and in later life. Standards of excellence help 4-H’ers to evaluate the skills they are learning. Standards of excellence can be useful for products (skirts, cookies, tomatoes, livestock, etc.) and skills (speaking, decision making, demonstrating, etc.).

DANISH SYSTEM

The Danish system of judging is a method of evaluation where an exhibit or process is evaluated against a set of standards, and recognition is awarded on the degree to which the standard has been met by each 4-H member. The standards of excellence are often printed on a judge’s scorecard, and allows for the exhibit to be judged on one’s own merit, and not in comparison with others in the class. The following ribbons apply:

- WHITE:** Fair, denotes much improvement needed. Fails to meet minimum standards.
- RED:** Good, some improvements needed. Meets minimum standards.
- BLUE:** Excellent, minor improvements needed. Exceeds minimum standards.
- PURPLE:** Superior, outstanding on all standards. (In some cases, this means an exhibit is selected for the state fair.)

Possible questions from a Judge:

- How did you improve your skills?
- Did you enjoy working on this project? Why?
- What was the easiest...(or most difficult)?
- Where did you learn how to... ?
- Why did you choose this?
- Next time, you may want to consider...
- Who gave you help with the project?
- I noticed you... (or) I could see you felt....
- How does this exhibit fit into your project?
- What were your goals for this project?
- You really did a good job!
- What would you like to do next year?
- You should feel proud because...
- It would be helpful if...
- Tell me more about...

4-H BELIEVES THAT...

4-H boys and girls are more important than the 4-H exhibits

Learning *how* to do a project is more important than the project itself

“Learning by doing” through a useful work project is fundamental in any sound educational program and characteristic of the 4-H program.

There is more than one good way to do most things. Our job is to teach 4-H’ers *how* to think, not *what* to think.

A balanced program of work and play, geared to the individual’s needs, is more important than “grooming winners.”

Every 4-H member needs to be noticed, to feel important, to experience success and to be praised.

A blue ribbon 4-H member with a red ribbon chicken is more desirable than a red ribbon member with a blue ribbon chicken.