

SANDERS COUNTY 4-H HORSE PROJECT GUIDELINES 2020-2021

The guidelines may be amended by the Sanders County 4-H Horse Committee each year between October 1st and January 30th. No changes will be made from February 1st through September 30th. If any member or leader wishes to request an exception to any rule in the guidelines, they must request a hearing with the Sanders County 4-H Livestock & Horse Committees. 2019

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SANDERS COUNTY HORSE PROJECT

Purpose

The purpose of the Sanders County 4-H horse program is to help members:

- Develop life skills
- Foster a positive self-concept
- Learn decision-making and responsibility for choices
- Develop an inquiring mind
- Relate to self and others; acquire a concern for communities - local & global
- Develop leadership, initiative, self-reliance, sportsmanship, and other desirable traits of character.
- Experience the pride and responsibility of having a horse by being involved in its training, care, feeding, management and related costs.
- Appreciate horseback riding as a healthy and wholesome form of recreation.
- Gain skill in horsemanship, patience, and understanding in handling horses.
- Acknowledge safety precautions to prevent injuries to themselves, others, and their mounts.
- Nurture greater love for animals and a humane attitude toward them.
- Prepare for citizenship responsibilities by working together in groups and supporting community horse projects and activities.
- Promote 4-H in general and promote the state 4-H horse project and program.
- Promote uniformity among county horse projects.
- Promote the goals of the 4-H horse project.
- Promote excellence in horsemanship.
- Encourage individuals to perform to the best of their abilities.
- Encourage and recognize horsemanship ability.
- Set and achieve goals utilizing the best of one's ability.
- Provide a base of uniformity for the horse project.

Getting Started

The five main objectives of the Montana 4-H Horse Program are to:

- Learn what makes a good horse and how to select one
- Learn to properly care for horses
- Learn to safely use your horse
- Learn to train and handle horses
- Enjoy a healthful outdoor recreational lifetime activity

Member Responsibilities & Expectations

When your child joins the Sanders County 4-H Horse Project, as a parent/legal guardian, you become a vital part of our 4-H team.

When you join the horse project, you are part of the team. Each team member has a role to play in order to make a successful year. Below is a list of expectations for your role on the 4-H team. Please read thoroughly, and keep for your reference.

What can parents and members expect from Horse Project Leaders

- Email notices regarding 4-H project meetings, learning opportunities, upcoming deadlines, etc
- Provide hands-on and mind-on learning experiences for members... project work, demonstrations, etc
- Provide opportunity for members to have FUN with friends (new and old) through recreational, social, educational and/or competitive activities
- Provide a welcoming place for members to learn and grow through the 4-H Program and work together to “Make the Best Better”
- Provide encouragement and support to all youth members
- Provide a safe and positive environment for all youth to learn and strengthen their skills
- Help the youth in setting goals and opportunities to achieve and work toward their goals
- Provide structured and semi-structured riding opportunities for members in multiple disciplines
- To know the State and County rules and to guide members and families accordingly
- Provide availability for members and parents to voice questions, comments or concerns
- Promote excellence in horsemanship at all times
- Abide by Code of Conduct and Ethics as set forth by Montana 4-H Extension

What does the 4-H horse project expect from 4-H youth members and their parents?

- Enrollment in 4-H by choosing a club, paying all fees and dues required (project, club, etc) prior to participation in any events.
- Enrollment in the 4-H horse project prior to the deadline. (current enrollment deadline is June 1st)
- Turn in a filled out Horse ID card to the County Project Superintendent or the Extension Office no later than June 1st.
- Read the monthly 4-H newsletter, project emails and the 4-H Horse Project Policy Manual.
- Encouragement of ALL youth members as they participate in project sponsored events (clinics, mini rides, workshops, etc)

- Active participation in club and project activities
- Participation in assessments for placement in the correct riding level
- Adult encouragement of the youth to keep up-to-date records on their project animals
- Support and guidance of your youth in their project work but not do their work for them
- Ensure all project animals receive the required vaccinations by the required deadlines
- Active participation in project fundraisers and community service projects
- When available, help as needed with activities: project meetings, fundraisers, special activities, community service, horse events and refreshments and meals
- Support of horse project by cooperating with project leaders and exhibiting a positive attitude towards your child's personal goals and their 4-H club and project goals
- Serve as a positive role model for all youth members
- Teach and exhibit good sportsmanship, respect, and cooperation
- Encouragement to take advantage of the many opportunities the 4-H Horse Project has to offer such as: project meetings, workshops, clinics, Sanders County Fair, etc
- Abide by the guidelines and rules set forth by 4-H Extension and the Sanders County 4-H Horse Project
- Support other community horse related organizations
- Promote and support 4-H and the 4-H horse project at the County and State Level
- All family members and project members to abide by the Code of Conduct as set forth by Montana 4-H Extension and Sanders County 4-H
- Participation in the County Fair. Although participation is not required, we strongly encourage all youth in the project to participate in some fashion.
- Participation in the County Fair is required for members to compete at the State 4-H Horse Show
- Participation in a Helmet Safety Workshop as required by our County. (See Helmet Policy for Details)

Code of Ethical Conduct

You are representing your county. What others think of you is often based upon first impressions of behavior and dress. It is not possible to anticipate every potential situation, therefore in the absence of a rule regarding a specific activity or situation, common sense and ethics should prevail.

Every 4-H member is expected to observe the following rules:

- Be pleasant and cooperative.
- Respect supervision at all times.
- You are the responsibility to adult leaders while participating in all 4-H activities.
- Discrimination, harassment, and/or physical force of any kind will not be tolerated.
- Respect for facilities, natural surroundings and the property of others is enforced (e.g. project animals and personal possessions included).
- Respect the privacy of others.
- Be punctual for all events and classes.

- If at any 4-H Horse event, clinic or show, the Judge, Clinician or a member of the horse project determines that a 4-H member is not in control of his/her horse and is an endangerment to himself/herself or others, the project superintendent(s) may assist that 4-H member in gaining control of his/her horse. If this is not possible at the time, the 4-H member will be excused from the arena or working area.
- No abuse or unnecessary spurring, jerking or roughness will be allowed.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct, abusive language or actions, and/or abuse to an animal on the part of any 4-H exhibitor, family member, or leader will result in forfeiture of any award received and/or elimination from further competition of the 4-H member or those who engaged in conduct.
- Project members are responsible for the cleanup of any manure left by their horse(s), both inside the facility and at their trailer, at ALL 4-H events.
- No riding double at any 4-H sponsored event.
- Shoes/boots without heels or boots that fit snugly in the stirrups are not allowed under any circumstances.
- ALL project members will follow the safety guidelines set forth in the Montana 4-H Horse Safety Guidelines.
- The basis of any horse safety program is a common sense approach to horse handling.
- Unsafe conduct in any 4-H class, clinic or event, will be reason for dismissal from that event.

Violation of any of these rules may be grounds for the dismissal of individuals or groups. Infractions will be dealt with through the Horse Leaders Committee, Livestock Leaders Committee and/or 4-H Council.

Project Superintendent(s)

The role of the Horse Project Superintendent(s) is to head up the Horse Project by holding project related business meetings on a regular basis, represent the Horse Project by attending the Livestock Leaders Committee meetings, assist Horse Leaders Committee to provide education to the 4-H project members by holding indoor workshops as well as riding workshops/clinics, ensure that the rules set forth by the Montana 4-H Horse Project are followed by all 4-H members participating in the Sanders County Horse Project. The project superintendent(s), along with the 4-H Livestock Leaders Committee and 4-H Council serve as arbitrators in the case of a dispute involving a member, leader and/or parent.

Definition of a Project Horse

A project horse is any horse registered with the county extension office with a Horse ID Card on file by the County deadline (June 1) and enrolled in any established County recognized horse

project. The horse must be assessed in the current year in the declared project(s). Assessment is the evaluation process used to keep participants progressing in their horsemanship and ensures that it is an educational project. Each project must have only 1 project horse enrolled.

OWNERSHIP:

All horsemanship level project animals shown by 4-H members in 4-H classes must be owned by the member or in partnership with his or her immediate family, or the member must have access to the project horse(s). All 4-H project animals must be in the continual care of the 4-H member from **June 1st through the Sanders County Fair and State 4-H Horse Show** (if attending). If you are leasing a horse, the member must have access to the horse and be knowledgeable and responsible for its care. A housing request form must be on file. If a horse must be stabled, the member needs to communicate with the project Superintendent their role in the horse's feed and care. The horse(s) must reside in Sanders County from June 1st through the Sanders County Fair and State 4-H Horse Show (if attending).

TRAINING:

From June 1st through the State 4-H Horse Show, a project animal may not receive professional training. This is to allow the member to gain every skill possible in all levels of horsemanship and Colt to Maturity Project through "learning by doing". The Sanders County Horse project encourages members to assume sole responsibility for training the animal and encourage members to go to trainers for advice when needed to further either horsemanship or training skills, and discourage the use of trainers actually riding/training the project horse except in a case where the trainer/parents deem the safety of the member is threatened. Immediate family members may continue to ride the horse as long as training/schooling is not taking place. No Exceptions will be made! Violation may cause for disqualification of the exhibitor.

Horse Assessments:

Assessment is the evaluation to keep the member progressing and ensures that it is an educational project.

- Each member may progress at their own rate according to their ability and interest.
- To pass a horsemanship level the member must complete the project book for that level, be evaluated and passed by the project leader who will then sign the project assessment for the level in the project book, and show successfully at the County Fair Horse Show. After doing this the member is then ready to continue to the next level for the following 4-H year.
- One Level Assessment: A member may assess up one level for the current year to meet riding ability. In order to do this, the member must complete the project book to the level they want to compete at, be evaluated and passed by the project leader who will then sign the project assessment for the correct level in the project book. The member may enroll in the level of choosing by the July 1st drop/add deadline.

- Challenge Assessment: This is for a member wishes to complete more than one level in a year in order to show at level 3 or higher. In order to do this the member must complete the project book through to the level they want to compete. The member must meet with three horse leaders; one leader may be the member's current project leader, one leader must be from outside the member's club and one an active member of the Sanders County Horse Committee. The Challenge Assessment will cover 3 areas:
 - Checking the required project book for completion
 - The member demonstrating knowledge of the level requirements verbally
 - The member performing handling and mounted abilities required for the levels being tested out of.
- Challenge Assessments must be done prior to the July 1st add/drop deadline in order for the member to register in the new projects.
- Assessments will be conducted by trained project leaders and will be scheduled in late June to early July, with follow up assessments as needed. A pre-assessment may be requested at any time by a parent or member to help determine appropriate level and progress.

Moving Up In Levels

- For a 4-H member to progress from one level to another within a horse project, it is only considered valid when accompanied by the signature of a leader who has attended the assessment training.
- New members to the Horse project are required to go through the assessment process in order to determine their Horsemanship Level by the July 1st project drop/add deadline.
- Members must move to the next horsemanship level after three years with the same horse regardless of ribbon placement at the fair.
- Assessments may also be required under circumstances which warrant a special assessment. This is at the discretion of the Assessment Team and project superintendent(s).
- Assessment requirements are in your Project Level Workbooks. Members are encouraged to have knowledge of these expectations prior to the assessment.
- Assessments consist of the assessors asking the member to complete the mounted and/or dismounted skills defined in the Project Level Books, answering questions covering the appropriate Project Level Book material, and a review of the member's completed Project Level Book.
- Members will repeat a Level if not completed to the assessment team's satisfaction.
- Members will exhibit at the County Fair in the most advanced level for which they have been assessed. Members must bring their completed project book to the assessments.
- Members must be assessed on the horse(s) they intend to show at the fair.
- All assessments must be complete prior to the project enrollment deadline

Vaccinations and Drug Use for Project Animals

The use of any drug affecting the central nervous system (stimulant or depressant) of a horse is strictly prohibited.

- Vaccinations must be administered at least **two (2) weeks prior to any contact** with other project horses. If you are unable to vaccinate your horse with the required vaccinations, a letter from a certified veterinarian must be submitted.
- Required vaccinations are:
 - 5-Way vaccination [(EEE) Eastern Equine Infectious Encephalomyelitis, (WEE) Western Equine Infectious Encephalomyelitis, Tetanus, Influenza, and Rhino pneumonitis]
 - West Nile, Coggins, Strangles, Rabies and deworming are recommended.

Helmet Policy

- A certified equestrian helmet with safety harness fastened is required in over fence classes and gymkhana events, activities and practice sessions.
- Gymkhana refers to horseback speed events (timed or untimed) that do not use livestock. Events in this category include, but are not limited to: barrel racing, pole bending, keyhole, stake, rescue races, pony express race, etc. Events not included in this policy are calf roping, team roping, goat tying, and team penning that may be timed, but use livestock.
- Participants in the 4-H Horse Project are required to attend a helmet education workshop and/or view the video "Every Time, Every Ride" once as a junior 4-H member (8-13) and once as a senior member (14 & up).

General and Sanders County Horse Fair Rules

- All members are encouraged to sign up for the fair. When participating in the County Fair, members must show in their assessed level. Members must have completed Level 1-3 to compete in Green Horse, Colt to Maturity, and Driving Level 2+.
- Exhibitors may only enter 1 horse per lot number.
- Colt to Maturity and Green Horse horses may not be cross-entered in the Horsemanship Level Classes. The exception to this rule is if the member has been assessed out of Level 6; a colt in the fifth year of colt to maturity may cross enter to Horsemanship Level 7.
- To be in bareback, horses must be 3 years old or older.
- To compete in hunt seat equitation over fences horses must be 4 years old or older.
- Members entering the arena without wearing an exhibitor number or attaching it to their horse or cart will be penalized at the judge's discretion.

- No stallions allowed in any class including yearlings in the Colt to Maturity project.
- All classes will follow the rules and guidelines in the Horsemanship Levels books. A criteria list for each horsemanship level is in the Horsemanship Levels books. The Colt to Maturity and Green Horse classes will follow the guidelines and rules in the Colt to Maturity and Green Horse project books respectively. However, it should be noted that the project book states that County Fair rules on exhibiting will be followed.
- Project animals may not be trained/schooled by outside sources after June 1st unless the member is directly involved in the training/schooling. See above section on Training.
- All project horses must have a Horse ID Card on file by June 1st.
- Any project horse may compete in Showmanship.
- Patterns will be available at Fair Readiness Day and will be posted the day of the show at least one hour prior to class time.
- Yearling at halter is open to two year olds not mature enough to be ridden. Any two year old in this class may not receive Grand or Reserve Champion.
- Un-sportsman-like conduct, abusive language or actions and/or abuse of any animal on the part of any 4-H exhibitor, parent, family member or leaders may be penalized by forfeiture of any award received and/or elimination from further competition of the 4-H member or those culpable. Also refer to Code of Ethical Conduct.
- Jumping Classes: Members must have completed English horsemanship level 3 to compete in Hunter Hack. The horse must be 4 years old or older.
- Members in walk/trot classes cannot compete in cantering and loping classes within the same discipline.
- No person other than the exhibitors and show officials will be allowed in the ring while the show is in progress.
- Horses must enter the arena in a controlled forward motion for ALL classes.
- A horse enrolled as a 4-H project may be shown by more than one member of the immediate family in any one year at the County and State Horse Show, provided that neither the horse nor the member competes against himself or herself. If there is a conflict in schedules for any reason, the exhibitor will have to determine which class to participate and scratch the other.
- Members may ride only one English Level and one Western Level. If riding both Western and English, levels ridden can be the same level or only one level above or below.
- Members enrolled in the Horsemanship projects will have an interview in addition to the riding portion of their project. Questions will come from your project book. Horse interviews are scheduled for Wednesday evening
- All project horses must pass the health inspection by the Fair Veterinarian on entry day. Following the Sanders County 4-H/FFA Animal Health Schedule is required. Any horse not passing the health inspection must be removed immediately from the fairgrounds.
- The Sanders County County Fair will be the qualifying show for the State 4-H Horse Show.

Dress Code for All Classes

Western classes, showmanship and yearlings at halter:

- Long sleeved, western type shirt
- Western type pants
- Western boots
- Vests, sweaters, jackets, ties, gloves, and chaps are optional.
- Spurs are optional unless otherwise prohibited. Spurs must be worn properly.
- Hair that is shoulder length or longer must be contained in a net or braid while showing the project or showmanship classes
- Protective headgear is encouraged in all 4-H horse activities. State helmet policy will be enforced.

English- Hunt Type:

- Hunt coat (red, pink, scarlet coats are prohibited unless exhibitor has earned them as a member of a recognized hunt).
- Breeches
- English style blouse or shirt
- Hunt boots •
- Hard hat meeting ASTM and SEI standards with harness that is hooked properly
- Stocks, chokers, or ties are required
- Gloves, unroweled spurs and crop or bat are optional
- Hair that is shoulder length or longer must be contained in a net or braid

Bareback Equitation:

- Western or English attire is allowed
- Prohibited attire are the following: chaps, spurs, crops, and bats

For ALL riding classes: Unless otherwise specified, curb bits must be ridden with one hand and snaffle bits must be direct reined with two hands. See your specific levels to determine allowable bits. In classes where spurs are allowed, they must be worn and used properly. Equipment steward or judge may prohibit use of any equipment deemed severe or inhumane.

Acknowledgment of Horse Policy Manual

We, member and legal guardian, acknowledge that we have received a copy of the Sanders County 4-H Horse Policy Manual. As an enrolled member in a 4-H Horse Project and as legal guardians of the member, we agree to abide by the policies and procedures outlined within this manual.

Printed 4-H Member Name: _____ DOB: _____

Signature of 4-H Member: _____ Date: _____

Printed 4-H Member Name: _____ DOB: _____

Signature of 4-H Member: _____ Date: _____

Printed 4-H Member Name: _____ DOB: _____

Signature of 4-H Member: _____ Date: _____

Printed 4-H Member Name: _____ DOB: _____

Signature of 4-H Member: _____ Date: _____

Printed Guardian Name: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Guardian: _____