

New  
Jersey **4-H**

# Leader Training Series



## What is 4-H?

4-H is the youth development program of Rutgers Cooperative Extension. As a 4-H volunteer and part of the county volunteer Extension staff, you represent Rutgers University. The county 4-H agent is a Rutgers faculty member and the program associate is a Rutgers University staff member. Some counties have paid staff called program assistants.

## The 4-H Mission

The Rutgers Cooperative Extension 4-H Youth Development program uses a learn-by-doing approach to enable youth to develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills they need to become competent, caring and contributing citizens of the world.

This mission is accomplished by using the knowledge and resources of the land grant university system, along with the involvement of caring adults.

## Life Skills

4-H members have the opportunity to learn life skills through all 4-H activities. Life skills are those abilities youth need to develop into responsible adults. They include:

- enhancing learning skills
- strengthening and using decision-making skills
- developing a positive self-concept
- communicating with and relating to other people
- responding to the needs of others and of the community

## 4-H Emblem

The emblem is a four-leaf clover with a capital H in each leaf, standing for Head, Heart, Hands, and Health. To use the 4-H name and official 4-H emblem, federal law requires approval by the county 4-H office.



*Written by: Ginny Powell,  
Regional 4-H Agent, North,  
1994, Revised 2000*

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## 4-H Pledge

4-H members recite this pledge at each meeting or event:

I pledge: My Head to clearer thinking,  
My heart to greater loyalty,  
My Hands to larger service, and  
My Health to better living, for my club, my  
community, my country, and my world.

## 4-H Motto

The 4-H motto is: To Make the Best Better.

## Volunteers

4-H has a responsibility to provide a safe and healthy environment for youth. All 4-H volunteers are appointed by the county 4-H agent after completing a screening process (see *Becoming a 4-H Volunteer Leader*). All potential volunteers complete a *New Jersey 4-H Volunteer Application*, which includes a request for references. All volunteers then participate in an orientation. When all requirements are satisfied, volunteers complete the *4-H Volunteer Registration Form* and the *4-H Volunteer Appointment Agreement*. Sample copies of these forms are available in the *Appendix*.

There are several ways in which you can serve as an adult volunteer (minimum age: 18 years).

You can be a:

- Club leader
- Resource person
- Judge
- Member of an advisory group
- Key leader for a project area or special event

For more information about volunteer positions, see *Selecting The 4-H Volunteer Role Right for You*.

## Policy of Inclusion

4-H Youth Development programs are offered to all youth, kindergarten through grade 13, without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or handicap, on an age appropriate basis. All possible effort will be made to include rather than exclude youth in events conducted by the 4-H Youth Development program.

## Club Membership

1st to 3rd graders participate in 4-H Prep clubs, an exploratory program designed to help young people explore various project activities in a noncompetitive environment.

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## **Clubs & Groups**

4th to 13th graders may belong to a standard 4-H club. Clubs may be organized by projects or within the community in which they live.

4-H reaches youth through a variety of methods:

- Organized 4-H clubs
- 4-H school enrichment programs
- 4-H special interest/short term programs/day camps
- 4-H school age child care education programs
- 4-H overnight camping programs
- 4-H individual study/mentoring/family learning programs
- 4-H instructional TV/video programs

For more information on any of these, see *There's More to 4-H Than Clubs: 7 Ways 4-H Reaches Youth*.

## **Fees**

There are no county, state, or national dues or membership fees. However, club members may decide to collect money from members to cover the costs of club activities. They may also vote to collect dues to cover minor costs. See *Fund Raising and 4-H Club Treasuries*.

## **Uniforms**

Uniforms are not required for membership in 4-H, or for participation in 4-H activities. Fairs and shows may require livestock exhibitors to wear special clothing. Check with your county 4-H staff.

## **Club Policies**

All clubs should develop a constitution to fit their needs and to help the club run more smoothly. See *Devising a 4-H Club Constitution*.

## **Liability of Volunteers**

Under New Jersey Public Law and the Federal Volunteer Protection Act of 1997, volunteers are granted some immunity from civil liability. Additionally, while in the course of approved activities and while under the direct supervision and control of University employees, the university's insurance policies will provide coverage for claims brought against volunteers for negligent acts. Ask your county 4-H staff if accident insurance coverage is provided for 4-H members. See *Liability of 4-H Volunteers*.

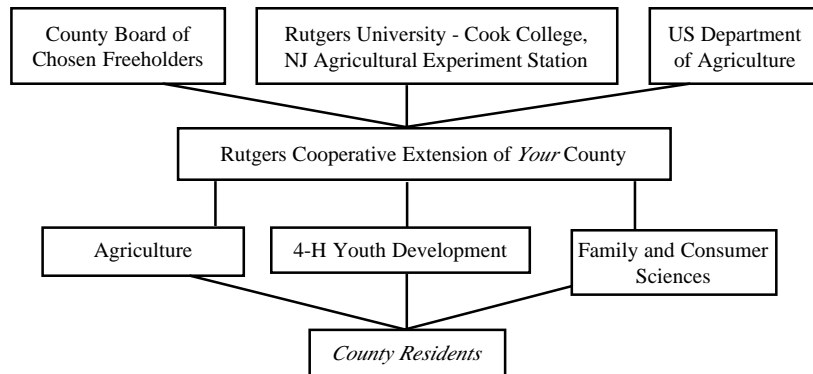
## Educational Materials

There is a state approved curriculum list available from the county office. Contact the county 4-H staff to discuss age appropriate curriculum.

Volunteers who are responsible for teaching others as part of the 4-H Youth Development program are not charged for publications used in their teaching.

## How Does 4-H Fit in With the University?

In 1914, Congress passed the Smith-Lever Act that created the Cooperative Extension Service. The purpose of this act was to enable the land-grant university to extend research and practical education to people where they live. New Jersey's land-grant institution is Rutgers University. Funding for Rutgers Cooperative Extension is provided by federal, state, and county governments. Special programs may receive private funding.



The New Jersey Department of 4-H Youth Development encourages the teamwork of faculty, staff, and volunteers as we offer youth and adults high-quality personal growth opportunities. Faculty and staff concentrate on involving volunteers as stakeholders in 4-H at all levels and educating the public about 4-H/Extension. Volunteers, as full partners in 4-H, contribute their unique talents, skills, and knowledge of our communities to provide personalized leadership with youth and adults.

## For More Information

For more information about 4-H, see *Appendix D - Answers to Questions You Want to Know About 4-H*. Copies of this publication are available from your county 4-H office.

**RUTGERS COOPERATIVE EXTENSION  
N.J. AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION  
RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY  
NEW BRUNSWICK**

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