

Dear 4-H Members, Leaders, and Families:

I am Henrietta Hen and I belong to Allison, a young 4-H member, who raised me from a chick and today I will compete at the Calumet County Fair. Allison is hoping for a blue ribbon. I look better in yellow, but Allison assures me that blue is the sought-after color in ribbons.



I know when you look at me you see a gorgeous specimen of a chicken delight, but I am more than that. I am the culmination of a year of work and learning for Allison. She has learned important life skills by nurturing me throughout the year. She has learned responsibility. It's hard to head out to the hen house in snow or rain to feed and water me and clean my pen. When I was ill, she nursed me back to health. *She is my hero!*

Allison has improved her communication skills. She taught other 4-H club members how to care for me. Through preparing for poultry showmanship, she has practiced answering questions about my breed and care. She has learned planning and reporting skills as she tracks my feed, medicine, and other expenses related to raising me. I am *not* a cheap bird. It takes money to create this body of perfection.

Yesterday Allison “spiffed” me up for judging at the fair. How I strut my stuff is an important step in Allison’s 4-H project. The judge will give feedback on her project. After the fair I will still be cared for, though I have heard some rumors...something about a “market sale”! Other chickens have been whispering about heads being chopped off. I think I need to learn a bit more about that and have a “squawk” with Allison. I have a mighty fine head and I plan to keep it!

See you at the county fair. Come to see me early...just in case.

Sincerely,

Henrietta Hen

(Written by Merry Klemme, UWEX Calumet County, retired 4-H Youth Development Agent))

SEE YOU AT THE OCONTO COUNTY FAIR!

Exhibiting at the **OCONTO COUNTY** **FAIR**

A Guide for 4-H Youth



What do **YOU** think about when you hear the words “County Fair”? Carnivals? Food? Animals? Youth Exhibits?

For 4-H'ers all over the nation, the County Fair is the showcase event for projects on which they have been working all year. It's the opportunity to communicate the value of their 4-H work and the lessons they have learned along the way.

Paula Rogers Huff, 4-H Youth Development Agent, Oconto County
University of Wisconsin-Extension, 2008

University of Wisconsin, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Wisconsin counties cooperating. An EEO/AA employer, University of Wisconsin Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and American with Disabilities (ADA) requirements.

What will you take to the fair this year?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

NOTE: Check the Premium List carefully for the Fair Dates. Some shows (like Horse, Dog, Cat, Caged Birds and Small Pets) take place on different days than the "regular" fair.



Special Awards at the Oconto County Fair

In addition to Ribbon Awards, there are some other contests that take place at the Fair including the following:

Red Star Yeast Award includes a Top Bread Machine Award, and three age class awards.



State Fair Photos — Each year the photography judge chooses which Oconto County photo winners will be part of the next year's State Fair Photo Exhibit.

Wilton Cake Decorating Award — The Best Overall (of all entries) is chosen to receive this award.

4-H Arts and Crafts Display winning entries head to the 4-H and Youth Conference in Madison, the year following the fair.

Animal Projects

There are special requirements for showing animals at the fair, depending on the species. You can learn more about the specifics for the type of animal you are planning on showing in the Oconto County Fair Premium List, and also by contacting the Agriculture Agent at the UW-Extension office.



The Role of Competition in 4-H

4-H is an **educational** program where youth have the opportunity to learn and practice **life skills**. Life skills are things like decision-making, communication, teamwork, and leadership.



The County Fair is a perfect opportunity for 4-H youth to gain life skills, in a competitive arena. But the type of competition youth experience in 4-H is probably different from other experiences they may have had, where the emphasis was on skill development (like in music contests or baseball leagues).

There is nothing wrong with those types of competition, it's just different than the life-skill emphasis of 4-H. Have you ever heard the old saying that in 4-H, we strive to produce **Blue Ribbon Kids** not Blue Ribbon projects? What that means is that the end product in 4-H isn't the project or even the project skill that a youth gains, but rather the youth himself, and the **life skills** that he gained.

How can you spot a Blue Ribbon Kid? Look for this:

- Last year's Swine Showmanship winner giving a younger exhibitor words of encouragement.
- A 4-H'er working a shift in the food stand for another exhibitor who is "in the ring".
- A youth clearly describing to the judge the steps he used in making his oatmeal cookies.
- A youth who thanks the judge for the suggestions to improving her red ribbon project.

Exhibiting at the Fair

Youth take **EXHIBITS** of their **PROJECT** work to the Fair.

They sign up for their projects each year on their 4-H **ENROLLMENT FORMS**. To see a complete list of 4-H projects, visit <http://4h.uwex.edu/onlinpro/allprojects.cfm> or the 4-H office.



Youth must be enrolled in a project by April 30th in order to take an exhibit in that project area to the Fair. Projects can be added after initial enrollment forms are turned in with a "**Project Change**" form, as long as the form is returned to the UWEX office before April 30th. That form is located at <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/oconto/4h/documents/ProjectChangeForm.pdf> or at the 4-H office. **NOTE:** Exhibits must have be the result of the exhibitor's work in the current 4-H year.

In late spring, club leaders will get **Fair Enrollment Forms** for their members. These come directly from the Fair Board. The form will be printed with the projects in which each youth is entered. Now is the time for 4-H'ers to choose which exhibits they will be taking to the fair!

NOTE: It is helpful to use last year's **Fair PREMIUM LIST** in choosing your exhibits, if the new one isn't out yet: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/oconto/4h/OcontoCountyFairpage.html#JrEntryInfo#JrEntryInfo> The Premium List shows which types of exhibits youth can take to the fair. Remember to double-check when the NEW premium book comes out, just in case there were changes. **HINT:** Nearly every **LOT** has a catch-all category for "Any other...", just in case what you've been working on doesn't fit neatly into any of the lot descriptions.

The Face-to Face Judging Experience, cont.

Tips for Parents

- **Remember: It's all about the youth.**

Help your child process what the judge has told them, in a positive way. The judging experience can be a very good one **EVEN** if they don't get a **BLUE**. Learning to accept feedback is a valuable life skill and you can help your child learn to do it in a safe environment.

- **Ask your child questions.**

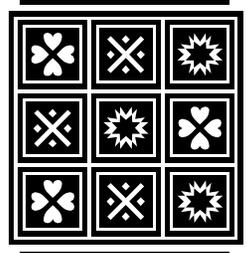
Help the youth process what they have been told by the judge. Did the judge make suggestions for improvement? How will those suggestions affect next year's exhibit?

- **Recognize that your standards may differ from those that the judge has.**

A few years ago at a nearby County Fair, my daughter and I were examining a beautiful hand-made quilt on exhibit. We loved the bright colors and the fancy quilting stitches.

We were shocked that the quilt had a 3rd place ribbon on it— we were sure it deserved a 1st!

We didn't know it, but the judge was standing **RIGHT** behind us, and she heard us discussing the quilts. She came over and very patiently explained to us just what she looked for when judging. When she had finished, we understood a lot more about how quilts are judged, and agreed that she had done a good job in judging!



The Face-to Face Judging Experience

Tips for Youth

As you prepare for your face-to-face judging experience...

Think about your goals in preparing your exhibit. Did you meet your goals?

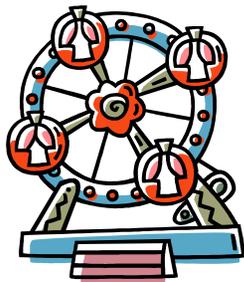
What steps did you take in preparing your exhibit?

Were there things that went really well? Things that didn't go so well?

What is the one thing that you really want the judge to know? Plan on working that into the conversation!

HINT: Check on-line project information at <http://4h.uwex.edu/onlinpro/allprojects.cfm> Click on a project, and scroll down to "Tips for County Fair Exhibitors".

For many projects, you will also see "Tips for County Fair Judges". Read those, too! It's nice to know what the judge MAY be looking at.



Exhibiting at the Fair, cont.

Note that each DEPARTMENT has a listing of which projects (by number) to exhibit in that department. The numbers for the projects are found directly beneath the Department number and name.

When signing up to "show" at the fair, youth will need to put down the following information for each exhibit:

- **Department Number**
- **Class** — This often separates youth into GRADES
- **Lot Number** — This describes the specific exhibit

For example, if a third grader would like to take a plate of cookies to the fair, he would enter in Department 25 (Foods and Nutrition); Class A (grades 3–5); Lot 52 (chocolate cookies, drop). He would also bring THREE cookies as indicated by the "3" after the description of the cookies. *Please note that this is an example and that lot numbers may change from year to year.*



HINT: Carefully read through the "Requirements" section at the beginning of each Department. This section contains important information about exhibiting in the particular department.

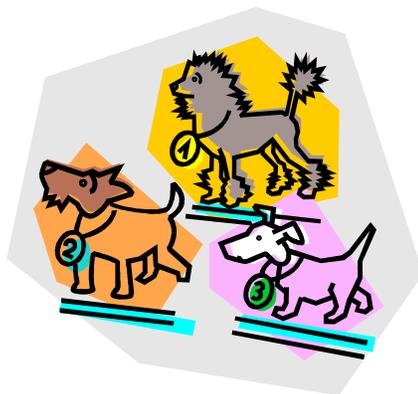
Types of Judging*

Judging for youth projects at the Oconto County Fair falls into one of two basic types: **Danish** or **Face-to-Face**

Danish System

This is the "traditional" judging system where all exhibits in a class are brought before the judge at the same time. There is little or no interaction between the judge and the exhibitor, so the exhibit is judged based only on what the judge sees.

In Danish judging, ribbons are awarded on a percentage basis, so the judge is limited as to how many of each type of ribbon he or she can award.



Face-to-Face

Face-to-Face is a style of judging in which each project is judged based on its own merits. With this type of judging, the judge is able to interview the exhibitor and talk about the project. A judge may consider a youth's age and ability level when awarding ribbons. In Oconto County, exhibitors must be present at Face-to-Face judging, or they are penalized one place. NOTE: There is no penalty for absences approved in advance by the club leader and 4-H Youth Development Agent. Please check with the Extension Office PRIOR to the fair.

*Prepared using materials from Dept of Ag. Development

Cloverbuds at the Fair

4-H Cloverbud members (5K through second grade of the previous school year) have their own department at the fair. They are judged face-to-face, but non-competitively. Each cloverbud exhibitor gets a participation ribbon.

NOTE: Cloverbud exhibitors can take up to three exhibits to the fair. See the Fair Premium Book for details. Check under Department 17.

Fair Ribbons

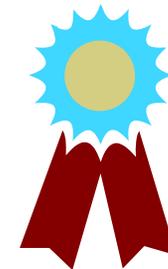
Judges award ribbons to exhibits at the fair. But what do those ribbons mean? Here are general guidelines:

Blue ribbon = Excellent

Red Ribbon = Very good

White ribbon = Good

Pink Ribbon = Fair



In addition, at our fair, the judge is allowed to award one **Merit Award** winner for each 25 entries. These are the awards that the judge thinks were the most deserving in that department.

Also, the judge can give one **Best of Show** ribbon in each non-animal department (except Cultural Arts where there are three). Best of Show is the top award in the department.