

## Creating A Positive Experience for 4-H Youth at the County Fair

Thank you for agreeing to judge the 4-H division of our county fair. Judging is a vital part of the county fair educational process. As a judge, you are part of a teaching team of volunteer leaders, parents and Extension staff. You are the link between the 4-H project, the 4-H member and a standard of performance.

The evaluation of an exhibit should be a positive and exciting part of the total 4-H experience. We appreciate your efforts in providing the best experience possible. You're helping support and reinforce the learning that occurs during the project year. 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.

Please take a time to review the information provided to help "make the best better" for our youth during this year's fair.

Four important words in judging philosophy: Fair, Firm, Friendly, and Consistent.



### Focus on Youth

Suggestions to help you focus the judging process on youth.

- Youth development is the purpose of 4-H project work.
- Judge the exhibit - - not the child.

Interact with the child whenever possible through conference judging. Discuss the standards you are using, the rationale for your standards, and the relation the standards you are using has to real life participation. Explain the value (weight) you are placing on various aspects of the project display.

Judge the exhibit as an illustration of a 4-H member's achievements toward project goals and objectives. Based on county rules, a judge may want to discuss with a 4-H member his/her understanding of the project goals, objectives, activities, and exhibit development.

### Award the Ribbon That Is Earned

It's important that the appropriate ribbon be awarded to the participant based on the evaluation of the exhibit using an accepted standard or scorecard.

### What are Standards?

The standards of excellence are printed on a judge's score sheet. Ideally, standards are derived from research - primarily from land-grant universities - and are the same standards used by adults. Avoid using personal preferences.

Be familiar with the standard or scorecard that you will be using while judging. If scorecards are not sent to you, ask the person who recruited you to judge, what scorecard you will be using.

A list of Official Kansas 4-H Project Judging Standards can be found at:  
<http://www.kansas4-h.org/Projects/JudgingStandards/>

Standards should not be changed because of problems or situations with which the 4-H'er lives and works.

**Judging essentials: a standard score card, positive, constructive, and relevant comments. Whenever possible, use conference judging to discuss the exhibit with the 4-H member, if not use written comments.**



