



INFORMATION SHEET FOR STAFF, VOLUNTEERS AND FAMILIES

4-H Competitive Events: Absentee Judging of Projects

PURPOSE

Minnesota 4-H Youth Development believes that participation in competitive events enhances the depth and breadth of the learning and leading experience. Minnesota 4-H works to provide an equitable and uniform opportunity for participation in competitive events for its members across the state.

This information sheet outlines the process for families, volunteers, and staff to follow to ensure that youth who are unable to attend the judging experience in their county of membership have an opportunity to participate in an experience through which they may be awarded an opportunity to advance to the applicable Minnesota 4-H competitive event.

ABSENTEE JUDGING OF GENERAL PROJECTS

ELIGIBILITY

4-H members who have a conflict with the general project conference judging in their county of membership may be eligible for absentee judging. To be eligible to exhibit a project while being absent from the conference judging process the following must be in place:

- Absence pre-approved with 4-H staff prior to scheduled date of judging (or other county competitive event). The request will be allowed only in extreme situations such as:
 - Death in the family
 - Once in a lifetime educational opportunity
 - Optional event with no flexibility (e.g. wedding of immediate family)
 - Illness/injury
- Exhibit(s) at the county fair (or other county competitive event) within scheduled timelines.

RECOGNITION

These exhibits are eligible for Champion/Reserve Champion placing and state fair line-ups, but may be at a disadvantage (if equal in quality to another exhibit) to a 4-H member who is at the conference judging process.

WAYS/MEANS

Best practices for absentee judging of general exhibits follow. Which of these processes will work best within a county may be determined locally.

- Conference judging with judge at a pre-arranged time by cell phone call or other technology-based option (e.g. Skype, Google Hangout). The 4-H family must make the

arrangements for all connections and technology; staff is not responsible if fairground situation does not allow for connectivity.

- Pre-recorded interview with 4-H member utilizing a standard set of project-based questions. 4-H family must make arrangements for all technology needed; staff is not responsible for technology needed to listen to or view conference judging experience.
- Written story detailing project basis and learning gained. Standard set of project-based questions should be utilized.

LIVESTOCK JUDGING

4-H members who have a conflict with the livestock qualifying show in their county of membership may utilize the following options if they wish to pursue an opportunity to advance to the applicable Minnesota 4-H state show.

- Switch county membership prior to the May 15 membership enrollment deadline allowing for exhibition of livestock with benefit of ability for advancement to state competition.
- Do a livestock demonstration (including the live animal) with the intent to be awarded a trip through the demonstration selection process. Animal used in the demonstration does not need to be the same animal taken to state fair but must be of the same species. Animal exhibited by the 4-H member at the state fair must be on ID sheets prior to ID deadline for that species.
- Do a recorded (video) version of a livestock demonstration (including the live animal) with the intent to be awarded a trip through the demonstration selection process. Animal used in the demonstration does not need to be the same animal taken to state fair but must be of the same species. Animal exhibited by the 4-H member at the state fair must be on ID sheets prior to ID deadline for that species.

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