

# **BUTTE COUNTY 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM**

## **4-H Project Proficiency Program Guidebook**

**Approved September 26, 2013**

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## **Rationale**

The CA 4-H Youth Development Program (YDP) in Butte County has begun a process to develop a 4-H Project Proficiency Program in all 4-H Projects. Using the new program, 4-H Members will be able to demonstrate their proficiency in any 4-H Project they participate in and receive recognition for their efforts and accomplishments. 4-H Project Leaders will plan their 4-H Project activities so 4-H Members gain proficiency in the 4-H Project they choose and acquire skills they will use throughout their life.

### **The 4-H Project Proficiency Program has three purposes:**

1. Provide youth opportunities to become self-directed learners, to sample a broad array of experiences, and to measure personal growth.
2. Provide opportunities for increased learning by giving leaders a variety of methods to broaden project content within a specific curriculum.
3. Provide a standard of excellence so members can be recognized for knowledge and skills they have mastered.

4-H Project Proficiencies are not a test. 4-H Members should not be quizzed at the end of each year to determine how little or how much they have learned. 4-H Project Proficiencies should be given to each 4-H Member as a set of goals that they, as individuals, can work toward over one year or several years. Completion of all levels of a 4-H Project Proficiency indicates “mastery” of a subject.

### **Implementing the 4-H Project Proficiency Program**

4-H Project Proficiencies are designed to begin at about age nine. We encourage you to give the 4-H Project Proficiency to 4-H Members sometime during the first or second year in a 4-H Project. At this point, the 4-H Project Leader stands back and allows the 4-H Member to determine which project skills and/or knowledge areas they feel they have mastered.

When 4-H Members demonstrate knowledge and/or skill in a particular item, the 4-H Project Leader initials and dates each item. In cases, where the parent is the 4-H Project Leader, then the co-Project Leader or Community Club Leader initials each item.

4-H Members may be working on skills in several levels at the same time. This is acceptable. The 4-H Project Leader’s job is to date and initial each item in a level when the 4-H Member has completed it. For example, a 4-H Project Leader can initial items in Level II, even though the 4-H Member has not finished Level I.

## Awards

The 4-H Project Proficiency Program is designed to help 4-H Members measure themselves against ‘standards of excellence.’ Each 4-H Project Proficiency may have four-to-five skill levels designed to build on the scope and difficulty of the previous level. These levels are:

- Level 1 – Explorer
  - The most basic of all the levels. At this level, 4-H Members explore the 4-H Project area, touching on the knowledge and many of the skills that will be expanded on later.
- Level 2 – Producer
  - This level builds and expands on the knowledge and skills learned in Level 1. At this level, 4-H Members learn and demonstrate intermediate knowledge and skills.
- Level 3 – Consumer
  - This level builds and expands on the knowledge and skills learned in Level 2. At this level, 4-H Members continue to learn and demonstrate intermediate knowledge and skills while advancing consumer knowledge.
- Level 4 – Leader
  - This level builds and expands on the knowledge and skills learned in Level 3. At this level, 4-H Members learn and demonstrate advanced knowledge and skills while advancing leadership roles.
- Level 5 – Researcher
  - This level builds and expands on the knowledge and skills learned in Level 4. At this level, 4-H Members continue to learn and demonstrate advanced knowledge and skills while engaged in the scientific method.

Upon completion of a 4-H Project Proficiency level, the 4-H Project Leader will submit a copy of the completed and initialed 4-H Project Proficiency form and leg (if required). The Community Club Leader will then submit to the 4-H Office a copy of the completed and initialed 4-H Project Proficiency form, Year Leg (if required), and the respective award(s) will be processed.

<u>Level</u>	<u>Award</u>
Level 1	Pin plus First Year Leg
Level 2	return First Year Leg required, receive Second Year Leg
Level 3	return Second Year Leg required, receive Third Year Leg
Level 4	return Third Year Leg required, receive Fourth Year Leg
Level 5	return Fourth Year Leg required, receive Fifth Year Leg

All awards will be given each year at the Butte County 4-H Awards Celebration.

## Instructions

The 4-H Project Proficiency Program assesses not only a 4-H Member's knowledge of a particular subject, but also Leadership and Thriving Indicators. Since 4-H Members learn-by-doing, 4-H Project Proficiencies allow 4-H Members to demonstrate what they know, as well as, Life Skills developed.

4-H Project Proficiencies are consistent with the CA 4-H YDP's Mission: to engage youth to reach their fullest potential while advancing the field of youth development; and [CA 4-H YDP's Program Criteria](#). Key criteria are that each 4-H Project must incorporate Healthy Living, Science, Engineering, and Technology, and/or Citizenship supported by experiential-learning, developmentally appropriate, and is accessible and open to diverse audiences. The CA 4-H YDP's Program Criteria are listed below:

- The 4-H YDP is aligned with statewide 4-H program priorities and goals.
- The 4-H YDP is consistent with the [UC 4-H Youth Development Framework](#).
- The 4-H YDP is focused on addressing significant environmental, economic and social issues affecting California's youth, families and communities.
- The 4-H YDP is [developmentally appropriate](#).
- The 4-H YDP incorporates all three major [learning styles](#): visual, auditory and kinesthetic/tactile.
- The 4-H YDP provides [inclusive and diverse learning experiences](#) through inclusive and diverse programming and diverse membership.
- The 4-H YDP is based on a proven [experiential education model](#) that creates an educational climate through planned learning by exploring, doing and receiving feedback.
- The 4-H YDP engages youth through [inquiry-based learning methods](#).
- The 4-H YDP is consistent with research in youth development, education or other appropriate fields.
- The 4-H YDP is a contributor to research and/or the extension of knowledge in youth development.
- The 4-H YDP is able to demonstrate, or likely to demonstrate, through research and/or evaluative data, a positive impact on youth served.
- The 4-H YDP is connected to, or has the potential to connect to, UC campus-based faculty, programs and/or resources.
- The 4-H YDP is accessible and open to diverse audiences. Barriers to participation are assessed and reduced or eliminated.
- The 4-H YDP is balanced in terms of assessing, managing and monitoring the risk of potential problems to ensure program safety and achievement of key objectives defined by ANR's risk management program.
- The 4-H YDP is balanced so as to optimize the impact for clientele and the field of youth development. The impact achieved will be weighed against the resources invested at the statewide and local level.

## **Leader Tips**

### **Implementing the 4-H Project Proficiency Program**

The 4-H Project Proficiency Program is designed to begin at about age nine. We encourage 4-H Project Leaders to give 4-H Project Proficiencies to 4-H Members sometime during the first or second year in a 4-H Project. At this point, the 4-H Leader stands back and allows the 4-H Member to determine which skills and/or knowledge areas they feel they have mastered. When the 4-H Member demonstrates knowledge and/or skill in a particular item, the 4-H Project Leader initials and dates each item. In cases, where the parent is the 4-H Project Leader, then the co-Project Leader or Community Club Leader initials each item.

Over the year or years, 4-H Members continue to identify subsequent items on the 4-H Project Proficiency to research, practice and learn well enough to demonstrate their mastery. Additionally, some items will be learned through participation in the 4-H Project meetings and events outside of meetings.

4-H Members may be working on skills in several levels at the same time. This is acceptable. The 4-H Project Leader's job is to date and initial each item in a level when the 4-H Member has completed it. For example, a youth can initial items in Level II, even though he/she has not finished Level I.

### **Reward Personal Progress**

The 4-H Project Proficiency Program is not designed to be an award or a prize for the best in a competition. Instead, 4-H Members are rewarded for their personal progress. The intent of the 4-H Project Proficiency Program is to increase performance while allowing 4-H Members to take risks, be creative and learn self-motivation.

### **4-H Members Set Goals**

The 4-H Project Proficiencies are not a test. Youth should not be quizzed at the end of each 4-H year to determine how little or how much they have learned. The 4-H Project Proficiencies should be given to each 4-H Member as a set of goals that they, as individuals, can work toward over one or more years. Completion of a 4-H Project Proficiency level indicates 'mastery' towards a subject.

### **4-H Project Proficiency Program is Voluntary**

The 4-H Proficiency Program is voluntary. Not all 4-H Members will find this type of activity rewarding. Many 4-H Members enter projects to learn a specific skill or group of skills, but not to achieve mastery of a subject. In addition, not all 4-H Project Leaders will choose to go into

such depth for each 4-H Project area. Completion of Level 1 may be all that is offered by a particular 4-H Project Leader.

### **4-H Project Leader's Job**

We encourage 4-H Project Leaders to give 4-H Project Proficiencies to 4-H Members sometime during the first or second year in a 4-H Project. At this point the 4-H Project Leader stands back and allows the 4-H Member to determine which skills and/or knowledge areas they feel they have mastered. 4-H Members may be working on skills in several levels at the same time. This is acceptable. The 4-H Project Leader's job is to check each item in a level when the 4-H Member has completed it.

### **Demonstrations are Flexible**

For the skill areas that require demonstration, allow the 4-H Member to demonstrate individually to the 4-H Project Leader (adult & teen), to the 4-H Project group, or to the 4-H Club at a monthly meeting. Never force a 4-H Member to demonstrate in front of any group. We are measuring mastery of a subject, not bravery. Some 4-H Project Leaders leave time at the end of each 4-H Project meeting for 4-H Members to work on their 4-H Project Proficiencies. This gives the 4-H Member some one-on-one time with their 4-H Project Leaders (adult & teen) as they demonstrate acquired knowledge and skill mastery.

### **Allow Time to Practice**

Allow a significant amount of time (i.e., one month) to lapse between the time you teach a skill or subject and the 4-H Member demonstrates mastery. This allows 4-H Members time to practice and achieve mastery, not merely mirror a newly learned skill.

### **Use 'Teachable Moments'**

Never accept a questionable answer. This indicates incomplete mastery of the particular skill or body of knowledge. If the 4-H Member is unsure of the correct method or term, use this time for review and allow the 4-H Member a month to think about it and practice. The 4-H Member can then return with the knowledge learned and present it with confidence. In other words, they 'earn' their reward.

### **Reward Immediately**

Recognition is most meaningful when it is presented immediately following a learning experience. The 4-H Project Leader checks a completed item by writing their initials and date in

the space provided. 4-H Project Leaders are encouraged to make project/club announcements to increase the feeling of success.

## **Requirements**

For 4-H Members to qualify for 4-H Project Proficiency Awards, they must complete all the requirements below and give a 4-H Presentation during the 4-H year.

- Have up-to-date and complete enrollment packet and enrollment fees on file at the 4-H office.
- Attend 80% of 4-H Club and Project meetings.
- Must provide 4-H Records to the 4-H Project Leader, Community Club Leader, and 4-H Office for project completion verification.
- Records must include Personal Development Report and Annual Project Report forms for each 4-H Project a 4-H Member is applying for a 4-H Project Proficiency Award and the completed 4-H Project Proficiency form.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

*What does a 4-H Project Leader do if their 4-H Project Proficiency isn't published or available yet?* We have over 50 4-H Projects and not all of them have 4-H Project Proficiencies developed yet. If your 4-H Project does not have a 4-H Project Proficiency you are strongly encouraged to develop one in collaboration with other 4-H Project Leaders who teach the same 4-H Project. First, contact your 4-H Community Club Leader and read the instructions for 4-H Project Proficiencies. Second: Contact the Butte County 4-H staff to seek guidance on the 4-H Project Proficiencies and the process to follow.

*What if the 4-H Project Proficiency isn't available and the 4-H Member will be aging out of the 4-H YD Program in December of this year?* If the 4-H Project Proficiency isn't available, then 4-H Project Leaders are strongly encouraged to develop one. Read the answer to the question above. All 4-H Project Proficiencies must be approved by the Butte County 4-H Livestock Committee, County Council, and 4-H Office.



## Templates

**Level 1 – Explorer:** The most basic of all the levels. At this level, 4-H Members explore the 4-H Project area, touching on the knowledge and many of the skills that will be expanded on later. For proficiency at this level, the 4-H Member will:

- Describe/demonstrate the basic knowledge and skills needed for the 4-H Project.
- Describe/demonstrate the equipment and materials that are usually associated with the 4-H Project.
- Explain the basic vocabulary associated with the 4-H Project.
- Explore shape, form, and/or patterns as it relates to the 4-H Project area.
- Describe basic nutrition needs (animal projects only).
- Learn to follow directions.
- Learn to do basic analysis/decision-making.
- Develop basic record keeping skills.
- Set goals related to the 4-H Project.
- Demonstrate/perform basic safety or sanitation practices.
- Communicate the 4-H Project to others. This is the first step toward learning public speaking skills. (i.e., give a 4-H Project report at a 4-H Club meeting)
- Present one demonstration related to the 4-H Project in a non-threatening environment.
- Participate in a community service/citizenship activity related to the 4-H Project.
- Attend a county, sectional or state 4-H event.

*Upon completion of Level 1, a 4-H Project Proficiency Pin and First Year Leg will be awarded.*

**Level 2 – Producer:** This level builds and expands on the knowledge and skills learned in Level 1. At this level, 4-H Members learn and demonstrate intermediate knowledge and skills. For proficiency at this level, the 4-H Member will:

- Demonstrate the intermediate knowledge and skills needed for the 4-H Project. Demonstrate intermediate level skill with the equipment and materials that are usually associated with 4-H Project.
- Compare/contrast texture, color, structure as it relates to the 4-H Project area.
- Compare/contrast nutrition needs to market/breeding projects (animal projects only).
- Maintain intermediate records.
- Explain/demonstrate sportsmanship through competition.
- Demonstrate problem solving as it relates to the 4-H Project.
- Demonstrate/perform intermediate safety practices or sanitation issues.
- Demonstrate creativity in the 4-H Project area.
- Communicate/display some aspect of the 4-H Project outside of the immediate group.
- Participate in a community service/citizenship activity related to the project.
- Compile a list of new resources (i.e., Associations, breeders, clubs) in the community to create a network related to the 4-H Project.
- Participate in a county, sectional or state 4-H event.

*Upon completion of Level 2, a 4-H Project Proficiency Second Year Leg will be awarded.*

**Level 3 – Consumer:** This level builds and expands on the knowledge and skills learned in Level 2. At this level, 4-H Members continue to learn and demonstrate intermediate knowledge and skills while advancing consumer knowledge. For proficiency at this level, the 4-H Member will:

- Demonstrate intermediate knowledge and skills in the project area.
- Prepare teaching materials to be used in the project.
- Assist younger members in the design of materials and/or equipment needed for the project.
- Compare/contrast feed rations for market/breeding projects (animal projects only).
- Assist younger members in learning a specific, project related topic.
- Prepare and give a speech (talk) outside the project group.
- Gather resources by starting a reference library (books, magazines, etc.) related to the project.
- Demonstrate/perform advanced safety practices or sanitation issues.
- Create, analyze and/or evaluate as it relates to the 4-H Project area.
- Complete one year as a Junior Leader in any project.
- Explore local, state and/or national affiliations/opportunities associated with the project.
- Keep records demonstrating advanced record-keeping skills.
- Organize a community service/citizenship activity related to the project.
- Assist in organizing a county, sectional or state 4-H event. The focus here is on learning the process of organization.

*Upon completion of Level 3, a 4-H Project Proficiency Third Year Leg will be awarded.*

**Level 4 – Leader:** This level builds and expands on the knowledge and skills learned in Level 3. At this level, 4-H Members learn and demonstrate advanced knowledge and skills while advancing leadership roles. For proficiency at this level, the 4-H Member will:

- Demonstrate advanced knowledge and skills in the project area.
- Evaluate texture, color, structure as it relates to the 4-H Project area.
- Research some aspect of the project through the historical perspective.
- Create feed rations for market/breeding projects (animal projects only).
- Explore career and industry related issues.
- Explore the science of the project.
- Explore the economics and consumer impact of the project.
- Speak in public, outside 4-H, about your project.
- Learn courtesy and appropriate etiquette by inviting and introducing a speaker on a project related subject.
- Design or improve some aspect related to the project (marketing, equipment, materials, etc.).
- Complete one year of Junior or Teen Leadership in your project.

- Participate in local, state and/or national affiliations/opportunities associated with the project.
- Develop a special activity related to the project area – create a plan, chart progress, analyze successes and problems.
- Prepare an aspect of your project and contribute it to the county resources for others to use (CD, record keeping forms, etc.).
- Be active in the project at the county-wide level, e.g. organize a county-wide event in your project, serve as county council Project Chairman for this project, etc.
- Participate in planning a county, sectional or state 4-H event, e.g. a leadership conference.
- Lead or organize a community service/citizenship activity related to your project.

*Upon completion of Level 4, a 4-H Project Proficiency Fourth Year Leg will be awarded.*

**Level 5 – Researcher:** This level builds and expands on the knowledge and skills learned in Level 4. At this level, 4-H Members continue to learn and demonstrate advanced knowledge and skills while engaged in the scientific method. For proficiency at this level, the 4-H Member will:

- Demonstrate further advanced knowledge and skills in the project area.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge of conformation.
- Explore some aspect of the project through the historical perspective.
- Research career and industry related issues.
- Create feed rations for market/breeding projects (animal projects only).
- Explore the science of the project.
- Explore the economics and consumer impact of the project.
- Speak in public, outside 4-H, about your project.
- Learn courtesy and appropriate etiquette by inviting and introducing a speaker on a project related subject.
- Design or improve some aspect related to the project (marketing, equipment, materials, etc.).
- Complete one year of Junior or Teen Leadership in your project.
- Develop a special activity related to the project area – create a plan, chart progress, analyze successes and problems and report results.
- Participate in local, state and/or national affiliations/opportunities associated with the project.
- Prepare an aspect of your project and contribute it to the county resources for others to use (CD, record keeping forms, etc.).
- Be active in the project at the county-wide level, e.g. organize a county-wide event in your project, serve as county council Project Chairman for this project, etc.
- Participate in planning a county, sectional or state 4-H event, e.g. a leadership conference.
- Organize a community service/citizenship activity related to your project.

*Upon completion of Level 5, a 4-H Project Proficiency Fifth Year Leg will be awarded.*

## Letter to 4-H Project Leaders

Dear 4-H Project Leader:

The Butte County 4-H Project Proficiency Program is a new look at Incentives and Recognition. The California 4-H Youth Development Program (YDP) has adopted the National 4-H Recognition Model and is requesting that county 4-H YDPs work to revise their recognition programs to fit this model.

The purpose of the National 4-H Incentives and Recognition Model is to encourage and support the efforts of 4-H Members to increase their knowledge and develop life skills. The model emphasizes five areas:

- Participation
- Progress toward self-set goals
- Achievement of standards of excellence
- Peer competition
- Cooperation

The Butte County 4-H YDP's Project Proficiency Program assists 4-H Members to measure themselves against "standards of excellence" in a project area. Each 4-H Project Proficiency meets the criteria for the 4-H Project as described in the California 4-H YDP's Program Criteria. The 4-H Project Proficiency Program does not replace Record Books.

As adults, we have the responsibility and the privilege of providing the human element in this process. At no time can a certificate or medal compare with the inspiration that understanding, patience, love and respect provide to encourage exploring the unknown and aspiring to learn.

Each person develops at different rates and times. If we accept this fact, and we take the time to get to know each member's individual needs, we will be prepared to influence more natural and graceful growth of each one's potential and responsible achievement.

4-H Project Leaders are encouraged to:

- View all recognition as a means to an end, not the ultimate goal
- Be familiar with the objectives of each 4-H Project
- Be familiar with the recognition that is available and understand the guidelines governing eligibility for recognition
- Provide instruction in completing each level

4-H Members are not the only ones who benefit from this program. The 4-H Project Proficiency Program can help you as 4-H Project Leader to organize your 4-H Project material. It also encourages you to infuse new ideas in a sequential manner into your curriculum.

Good Luck with your project!

### Approved 4-H Project Proficiencies

<u>4-H Project Proficiency</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>	<u>4-H Project Proficiency</u>	<u>Date Approved</u>
Beef	9/26//2013		
Sheep	9/26//2013		
Swine	9/26//2013		
Rabbit	9/26//2013		
Horse	9/26//2013		
Goat	9/26//2013		
Poultry	9/26//2013		

*Developed by the Butte County 4-H YDP Livestock Committee (9/2013). Adapted from Santa Clara County 4-H.*