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Texas A&M System

Overview of the 4-H Horse Project

Texas 4-H and Youth Development



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Objectives

- General information
- Western Emphasis
- Hunter
- Drill Team & Precision Riding
- Ownership, Age and Competition Rules
- District-Wide Competitive Activities
- Texas State 4-H Show
- Additional Educational and Competitive Activities and Events
- Educational Support
- Additional Information

Texas 4-H and Youth Development





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General Information


- Opportunities exist at the county, district, and state levels, with additional competitive activities at the Southern Regional, Western and National levels
- Texas has excellent support from volunteers and very active 4-Hers!!
- Major objective of the Texas 4-H horse program is to help initiate, support and promote education via hands-on involvement with horses.


Texas 4-H and Youth Development




General Information 


- 8,000 – 10,000 youth enroll annually in Texas 4-H Horse Project
- Encourages 4-H youth to identify and maintain one or more horses of various ages as a project on or before May 1st of each year.
- Horse project is first and foremost, a horsemanship project area, with additional opportunities present

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Western Emphasis 

- **Judged Western** – Showmanship, trail, western pleasure, western horsemanship, reining, western riding & halter conformation
- **Speed Events** – Pole bending, barrel racing, and stakes racing
- **Cattle-related** – Working cow horse, team penning, cutting, team roping, breakaway roping, and tie-down calf roping
- **Futurity projects** – Reserved for older, more experienced 4-Hers who are ready to accept the (Western Pleasure) or three-year old (Stock Horse)



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Hunter (English Emphasis) 

- Hunter under Saddle
- Equitation
- Hunter Hack
- Working Hunter
- Equitation over Fences
- Jumping
- Hunter Showmanship



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Drill Team & Precision Riding





- Introductory Precision work advancing up to more advanced Mounted Drill Team competition

Ownership, Age and Competition Rules




- Show rules and regulations available on 4-H and animal science web-sites.
- Key points include:
 - 4-H year starts on September 1
 - Horse(s) must be owned by May 1 of the current 4-H year
 - May 1 deadline strictly enforced by countywide Horse Validation process
 - Horse project(s) must be owned by the 4-Her, parent, grandparent, sibling, or legal guardian. Leased, loaned, borrowed or rented horses are not eligible
 - Validated Horses for each 4-Her are maintained in County, District & Statewide databases
 - Only horses owned and validated on or before May 1 each year can be shown in 4-H shows


District-Wide Competitive Activities




- 12 district horse shows across the state in June of each year
- Showcase 20 + counties that come together for competitive activities
- 4-Her must enter and show their district horse to have a chance to qualify for the state show.
- Over 1450 youth participate at the district horse show


Texas State 4-H Horse Show 


- Held last full week of July in Abilene
- Over 800 youth bringing over 1,000 horses in various emphasis areas
- State show culminates a year of activity, progress, and effort with one or more horses

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Additional Educational and Competitive Activities and Events 

- **Horse Judging** – County teams of 3 or 4 members
- **Method Demonstration and Public Speaking** – County teams of 1-5 members, or individuals
- **Horse Quiz Bowl** – County teams
- **Hippology** – County teams of 3 or 4 members
- **Record Books** – Individual record keeping and Record Book Competition

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Educational Support 


- Early summer Horse program assistants trained and sent to 35-40 counties to put on two or three day trainings
- Information about trainings is available in the September and January issues of the CEA Horse Newsletter
- Programs are hands-on, learn-by-doing
- Clinics taught from late May to early July

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Educational Support 


- Specialty Clinics – Offered with emphasis on:
 - Reining – Team Roping – Calf Roping - Working Cow Horse
 - Horse Judging Team Coaches' Clinic – Youth Horse Judging Camps
 - Master Volunteer Leader Training

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Additional Information 

- **CEA Horse Newsletter** – published in January, May & September posted online at <http://animalscience.tamu.edu> – sent to all County Extension Agents electronically
- **Texas 4-H Horse Show Rules and Regulations** – updated annually
- **Texas 4-H Roundup Guide** – Rules and procedures on Horse Judging, Method Demonstration, Public Speaking and Quiz Bowl.
- **Youth & Collegiate Horse Judging Leader Guide** – available in print and DVD.
- **Texas 4-H Horse Quiz Bowl Guide** – available via the 4-H Office
- **Texas Horse Owners' Reference Guide** – available from <http://tcebookstore.org>

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Conclusions 

- There are numerous opportunities available to youth through the 4-H Horse Program.
- Nearly 8-10 thousand youth participate a year in the horse program
- Opportunities other than horse projects are also available
- Youth should be aware of all the rules and regulations in the horse program.

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