

4-H Animal Science Proficiency Program A Member's Guide

OVERVIEW

The **4-H Animal Science Proficiency program** helps you learn what you need to know about your 4-H project. Your project leader will assist you in setting and achieving your goals. Through your project, you will learn animal care basics, good management practices and record keeping. You will also learn about the size and scope of the animal industry as it relates to your project.

There are many resources to help you learn more about your project:

- ◆ The *4-H Publications Catalog* lists a variety of project materials and resources recommended for use in your project.
- ◆ The *4-H Educational Resources Lending Library* at your county 4-H office includes other books, videos and reference materials that can be checked out by members and leaders.
- ◆ Check to see if there is a breeders organization in your community that conducts educational activities and shows. Local breeders are excellent sources of help and information.

There are five levels in the Project Proficiency Program. You may choose how many levels you wish to complete:

- **Level I – “Explorer”**, you begin to learn about many different aspects of raising animals.
- **Level II – “Producer”**, you practice and refine the many skills involved in learning about and raising animals.
- **Level III – “Consumer”**, you become an experienced animal raiser.
- **Level IV – “Leader”**, allows you to show your own leadership potential.
- **Level V – “Researcher”**, you carry out a demonstration or experiment on some aspect of Animal Science, and prepare a paper or portfolio.

As you work through the proficiency program, your leader will date each skill item as you complete it. When all items in a proficiency level are completed, your leader will sign the Certificate of Achievement and notify your 4-H office.

Projects to be completed through this Animal Science Proficiency include: Cavies, Pets and Small Animals, Pygmy Goats, Angora Goats, Beef Cattle, Dairy Cattle, Horse Sciences, Poultry and Game Birds, Rabbits, Sheep, Swine and Companion Pets.

ANIMAL SCIENCE

Level I – Explorer

Date _____
Completed _____

- _____ 1. Identify and describe three breeds or species for your project.
- _____ 2. Identify the parts of your animal from a diagram or live animal.
- _____ 3. Demonstrate (show & tell) how to handle your animal properly.
- _____ 4. Describe the basic housing and equipment that a beginner needs for the health, care, and safety of your animal.
- _____ 5. Explain the nutritional requirements of your animal at each development stage, (how, when, what, how much to feed).
- _____ 6. Explain how to tell when your animal is ill and when to call for assistance.
- _____ 7. State the normal range of weight for the age and breed/species of your animal.
- _____ 8. Explain or demonstrate how to tell the sex of your animal.
- _____ 9. Explain how to permanently tattoo, mark or tag your animal for identification.
- _____ 10. Submit management records for a minimum of 90 days that indicate how often you provide fresh water, clean feed, clean housing, and general care to your animal.
- _____ 11. Demonstrate basic grooming techniques and equipment necessary for your animal.
- _____ 12. Define fifteen important, basic terms used in your project area.
- _____ 13. Find out the regulations related to raising/keeping animals where you live.
- _____ 14. Describe three safety issues related to your animal project.
- _____ 15. Share one aspect of your project with other project members.

Member's Name: _____ Date: _____

Project Leader's Signature: _____ Date: _____

KEEP IN YOUR RECORD BOOK WITH YOUR PROJECT RECORDS.

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ANIMAL SCIENCE

Level II – Producer

Date _____
Completed _____

- _____ 1. Identify and describe six breeds or species for your project.
- _____ 2. Describe which breeds of your animal are used for different purposes (example: food, fiber, show, breeding, working, etc.).
- _____ 3. Describe the desirable characteristics in the conformation of your animal.
- _____ 4. Participate in the preparation and maintenance of facilities for your animal during production, breeding, or birthing.
- _____ 5. Describe the stages and length of gestation for your animal.
- _____ 6. Describe or demonstrate how to sanitize your animal's equipment.
- _____ 7. Describe or demonstrate what you can do to protect your animal during hot and cold weather.
- _____ 8. Describe control measures for at least three diseases or problem conditions for your animal.
- _____ 9. Demonstrate competency in showmanship for your animal.
- _____ 10. Describe some textural differences between species. Identify how/why color is important in the standards of your breed.
- _____ 11. Keep an account of cash expenses for equipment and materials and at the end of your year compare your cost to the value of your project.
- _____ 12. Display your animal outside of your project group.
- _____ 13. Help someone else by sharing your knowledge or by giving away a product from your project to demonstrate positive citizenship.

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Project Leader's Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Level III – Consumer

Date _____
Completed _____

- _____ 1. Demonstrate how to complete one of the management records required in your species or breed operation (example: pedigree, registration, production record, etc.).
- _____ 2. Contact a local, state, or national association related to your animal breed and report to your group what the association has to offer to its members and other interested individuals.
- _____ 3. Report on the history of your breed or species to your project group or club.
- _____ 4. Make a chart that explains how good selection can improve your stock. Explain in-breeding, line-breeding, out-breeding, and the advantages and disadvantages of each.
- _____ 5. Invite a guest speaker to one of your meetings and introduce them to the group.
- _____ 6. Describe the digestive system anatomy and physiology for your animal species and how it differs from other species.
- _____ 7. Explain the different types of feeds/diets and their nutritional components (fats, carbohydrates, protein, minerals, vitamins, water) and nutritional values.
- _____ 8. Explain three diseases or health conditions and their treatment and/or preventions not covered in Level II.
- _____ 9. Give a talk on a secondary aspect or by-product of your project industry.
- _____ 10. Keep a personal reference library of literature that will be helpful in your project.
- _____ 11. Demonstrate at least three methods of administering medications.
- _____ 12. State the normal vital signs (temperature, respiration, heart rate, etc.) for your animal species.
- _____ 13. Describe five ways to save money and be economical in raising your animal.
- _____ 14. Design an advertisement or a marketing strategy for your animal or animal by-product.
- _____ 15. Alone or with your group, plan and complete a community service activity related to your project.

Member's name: _____ Date: _____

Project Leader's Signature: _____ Date: _____

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ANIMAL SCIENCE

Level IV – Leader

Date _____
Completed _____

- _____ 1. Serve as Junior or Teen leader in this project for one year.
- _____ 2. Assist younger members in designing and constructing needed equipment.
- _____ 3. Prepare teaching materials for use at project meetings.
- _____ 4. Develop and put on a demonstration or judging event or train a junior team for a judging activity.
- _____ 5. Speak on a project-based subject before an organization other than your 4-H group.
- _____ 6. Assist at a show as a clerk, secretary, recorder, assistant to the judge, ring master or with set-up, registration, etc.
- _____ 7. Teach younger members about learning a specific topic in the project.
- _____ 8. Develop your own special project related activity. Chart your own progress, plan the activities, analyze successes and problems, and report on your accomplishments to your club.

Member's name: _____ Date: _____

Project Leader's Signature: _____ Date: _____

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ANIMAL SCIENCE

Level V – Researcher

Date _____
Completed _____

- _____ 1. Report on the results of a demonstration comparing measurable differences in management procedure. (experiment)
- _____ 2. Prepare a paper of 300 words or more on one of the following topics:
- Management of animal.
 - Feeds, feeding, and nutrition.
 - Diseases, prevention and control, and general sanitation.
 - Markets and methods of marketing.
 - Reproduction, breeding, and genetics.
 - By-product preparation for market, how marketed, and used.
 - Keeping and using records as a basis for improving your animal project.
 - Other
- _____ 3. Prepare a speech or illustrated talk to orally summarize your findings and present at a club, project meeting or other educational event.

Member's name: _____ Date: _____

Project Leader's Signature: _____ Date: _____

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Leader Tips for Utilizing the 4-H Project Proficiency Program

The goal of the Lake County 4-H Proficiency program is to give members recognition and rewards in a timely manner and in a variety of ways to meet the diverse needs of today's youth.

It is also designed to assist youth in measuring themselves against 'standards of excellence' Each proficiency is comprised of five skill levels and should be designed to increase in scope and difficulty. The levels are:

- ◆ Level I – Explorer
- ◆ Level II – Producer
- ◆ Level III – Consumer
- ◆ Level IV – Leader
- ◆ Level V – Researcher

The proficiencies are three-fold in purpose:

- 1) To provide youth opportunities to sample abroad array of experiences, measure personal progress, and become self-directed learners.
- 2) To provide a standard of excellence where members are recognized for knowledge and skills they have mastered.
- 3) To provide guidelines for leaders to enhance and expand project content and experiences.

The Proficiency program is **not** designed to be an award, or a prize for the best in competition. Instead, members are **rewarded** for their personal progress. The intent of the proficiency program is to increase performance, while allowing members to be motivated, to be creative and to take risks.

The proficiencies are not a test. Youth should not be quizzed at the end of each 4-H year to determine how much they have learned. The proficiencies should be given to each youth member as a set of goals that they, as individuals, can work toward over one or more years. Completion of all five levels of a proficiency indicates "mastery of a subject.

The proficiency program is voluntary. Not all youth will find this type of activity rewarding. Many youth enter projects with their own goals. They join to learn a specific skill or group of skills, but not to achieve mastery of a subject. Additionally, not all project leaders will choose to go into such depth for each subject area. Completion of Level I – **Explorer**, may be all that is offered by a particular project leader.

We encourage leaders to give proficiency guides to members sometime during the first or second year in a project. At this point, the leader allows the member to determine which skills and/or knowledge areas he or she wants to master. Youth members can work on skills in several levels at the same time. The leader's job is to check each item in a level when the member has completed it.

For the skill areas which require demonstration, youth members may demonstrate individually to the leader (project or teen), the group, or the club at a local meeting. Members are not required to demonstrate in front of a group as we are measuring mastery of a subject, not public speaking ability. Some leaders leave time at the end of each project meeting for members to work on their proficiencies.

Leaders are cautioned not to accept a questionable answer. This indicates an incomplete mastery of the particular skill or body of knowledge. If the youth member is unsure of the correct method or term, use this time to teach the individual and allow member a month to think about it and review. The youth member will return with the knowledge learned and present it with confidence.

Allow a significant amount of time (one month) to lapse between the time a skill is taught and a member demonstrates mastery. This allows time to practice and achieve mastery, not merely reflect on a newly learned skill.

Reward immediately! Recognition is most meaningful when it is presented immediately following a learning experience. Initial and date each item as the member completes the skill. When all items in a level are completed, sign the Certificate of Achievement and notify your County 4-H Office.

A Proficiency medal, will be sponsored by the Lake County Council and awarded at the county achievement program when a skill level is completed. Youth may receive more than one medal per year. They may do this by completing two or more consecutive levels in one project area, or by completing one level in two or more projects.

For members to qualify for 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 club and project meetings.
- ❖ Members must provide 4-H Records to the club leader for project completion verification. Records must include **Personal Development Report** and **Annual Project Report** form for each project a member is applying for a Proficiency Award, and the completed Proficiency Form.