



Making Memories at the Fair



Credit: Alyssa Zirbel

Going to and exhibiting at the fair is often a major highlight for 4-H youth. For some youth, that may be participating in their community, county, or regional fair. For others, that may mean exhibiting at the Wisconsin State Fair. No two fairs are the same, but they do share the opportunity for 4-H members to show their accomplishments.

Who organizes the fair?

The Wisconsin Association of Fairs and DATCP (Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection), gives leadership to county fair boards and associations. Those local entities are responsible for organizing the fair. Most fairs have volunteers who serve in roles called superintendents. They serve as a valuable link between the fair and the exhibitors to make sure judging goes smoothly and answer questions related to exhibit scoring. Please be kind to the superintendent—they freely give their time to help the fair and your child.

How to help your 4-H member find success

- Be **prepared**. Read the premium book and get to know fair entry rules for your 4-H member's exhibits. Check with your local fair for their premium book and exhibitor rules.
- Make it **educational**. Ask your 4-H member questions about their project(s). Helping youth reflect on their work can also help them prepare to exhibit.
- Keep everything in **perspective** and be **supportive**. Even if the color of the ribbon wasn't what your exhibitor was looking for, you can help them focus on what they learned in the process.
- Have **fun** and **make memories!** The fair is full of opportunities that will stick with your family for a long time. Adults can help make sure that it is a positive experience for youth.



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Fairs and exhibits may use different kinds of judging to assess exhibits. Becoming familiar with these types of judging can help your youth have a more positive experience. Learn more: [How Fair Entries are Judged](#)





Show What You Know

The fair is your time to show off your hard work! In your first year, try to only enter one to three exhibits at the fair. Answer these questions to create a plan for one exhibit you want to enter at your fair this year!

Pick one project: _____

What exhibit are you entering under this project? _____
If you are exhibiting a rabbit project, you could be showing your rabbit, or you may be entering an animal science poster about your rabbit.

What will make you feel successful?

This might mean a specific goal, or this might also be how you feel after the fair is done. What will make you feel good about what you did?

What do you need to get done to be ready for the fair?

Create a list of steps you need to get done to be ready to show your exhibit. Think about requirements the fair might have or finishing touches your exhibit needs to be “show ready.” If you’re not sure what the fair requirements are, have an adult help you look through your fair’s premium book!

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



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Judges might ask you questions about your project. Start thinking about your answers!

- Why did you select this project?
- Who helped you along the way?
- What did you do to prepare from start to finish?
- What challenges did you face? What was the hardest part?
- What did you learn while doing this project?
- How can you use what you learned to help you in everyday life?

Adapted from “4-H exhibitor judging tips” by Gary Wyatt, University of Minnesota Extension, 2016.

Remember to have fun!

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