



Highlands County 4-H

A guide for member and volunteer engagement

#4HGrowsHere



4-H Project Areas:

- Animal and Agricultural Science
- ATV Safety
- Business and Citizenship
- Clothing and Textile Science
- Communication and Expressive Arts
- Community Action
- Creative Arts
- Engineering and Technology
- Environmental Science
- Food and Nutrition
- Healthy Living
- Leadership
- Natural Resources
- Personal Development
- Practical Skills
- Robotics
- Shooting Sports
- Workforce Preparation



Who We Are

4-H is a national non-profit organization that helps youth develop knowledge and skills necessary to become productive members of society. Highlands County 4-H teaches youth about leadership, responsibility, citizenship and communication through fun, educational programs. 4-H has something for everyone and is open to youth between the ages of 5 to 18 years of age, as of September 1 of the current school year.

About Us

The 4-H Pledge

I pledge my head to clearer thinking, my heart to greater loyalty, my hands to larger service, and my health to better living, for my club, my community, my country and my world.

The 4-H Motto

“To make the best better”

The 4-H Slogan

“Learn by doing”

4-H Emblem



Understanding 4-H Projects

Project: A series of six or more hours of learning experiences within an area of interest. Members learn and then share what they've learned. A 4-H project is what a 4-Her learns, creates, or acts out (example: learning to grow a garden, making a dress, or training a dog). 4-H members should work on at least one project each year and complete the record book for that project.

Large Animal Project : An animal project that requires the 4-Hers involvement or ownership and care of a large animal (i.e. sheep, goat, swine, beef, dairy or horse). This would include any supporting events and activities in the large animal projects.

Project Work Through 4-H

Each project book contains a wealth of information and activities for planning and conducting a project. The projects can be completed by participating in activities through organized project groups or by carrying out the activities individually under the guidance of a parent or other adult.

Frequently Asked Questions

Does a 4-H member have to select a project?

Yes. However, there are two ways to select a project, either as an individual project or as a group project.

How does a member select a project?

When choosing a project, consider your interests, background, what is necessary to start your project, and what is available to help you complete it.

County fairs and the state fair often have age requirements different than those for project enrollment. When participating in a fair event, be sure to review the related guidelines.

Once you've selected your project(s) for the year, request the project book(s) from your 4-H club leader. Look to see if the project you selected needs an additional resource book. If you would like to purchase a project book(s), you can do so online at: <https://shop4-h.org/>



Membership

Eligibility

In order to join the Highlands County 4-H program, youth must either live in Highlands County or attend a Highlands County school. If there is a specialty club in Highlands County that is not offered in the home county, then the youth must ask the county they would like to participate in if they may participate in that county instead of in their county of residence.

4-H Membership Expectations

The expectations for 4-H membership include a balance of 4-H project work, active participation in monthly 4-H club meetings, participation in 4-H activities and events, and working towards improving one's personal growth.

4-H Age Categories (As of September 1st)

Cloverbuds: 5-7 Years of Age

Junior Participants: 8-10 Years of Age

Intermediate Participants: 11-13 Years of Age

Senior Participants: 14-18 Years of Age

Restrictions for Cloverbuds

- Project/Program participation restrictions for this age group are due to safety, insurance, and developmental capabilities. Children 5-7 years old will not be allowed to enroll in any large animal projects (i.e. sheep, goat, swine, beef, dairy or horse) or participate in any livestock, horse shows or shooting sports programs.
- Competitive Event Participation 4-Hers who are 5-7 years of age are ineligible to participate in competitive activities at any level (club, county, district, state, national, or international). However, they may exhibit or share project activities at a participation level for feedback. "Participation" ribbons/ awards will be given to this age group.

Membership Fee

There is an annual \$20.00 per person membership fee for community club members. Once a member is registered through 4honline.com, a link will be sent to the family with payment instructions. There is no charge for Cloverbuds or school programs. If you have concerns about payment of the fee, please contact our office at 863-402-6540.

4-H Specialty Clubs in Highlands County

- Shooting Sports & Outdoor Adventures:
 - Shotgun
 - Archery
 - Fishing & more...
- Robotics
- Citrus

These specialty clubs participate in various 4-H competitions and shows. If interested in joining one of these clubs please contact the Highlands County 4-H office or visit <http://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/highlands/4h/clubs/>. You will be provided with the club leader's information and will contact them to learn more about their club requirements.



Selecting a 4-H Club

There are numerous community clubs as well as school based clubs throughout Highlands County that have various areas of interest. To select a 4-H club, log on to the club page at <http://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/highlands/4h/clubs/> or call the 4-H office to find a club in your area. Once you have a club in mind you will then contact the club leader directly to determine if that club best meets your needs and if space is available. After you select a club, you will then log on to 4honline.com to create a family profile and complete your enrollment process. If you do not have internet access or are experiencing issues with the system, please contact the 4-H office to guide you through the enrollment process. Members are expected to attend monthly meetings, complete projects and other club activities. Youth are required to attend 75% of their club meetings to be considered a bonafide 4-H member. Youth that wish to show in the Highlands County Fair are required to be bonafide 4-H or FFA members in order to show. Clubs are required to submit monthly attendance sheets and annual club secretary and treasurer books to the 4-H office for review.

Becoming a Volunteer

Highlands County 4-H depends on the service of well-trained volunteers and professionals to help us better serve the youth in our county. If you have a special skill, area of expertise or just want to lend a helping hand, please contact the Highlands County 4-H office to see where you fit in o this wonderful organization. All volunteers are expected to pass the volunteer screening process and trainings. If you wish to become a club leader, additional trainings and meetings are required. All club leaders and volunteers must complete the University of Florida , Florida 4-H volunteer application packet and pass the background screening process.

4-H County Council

County Council is an elite group of youth that have demonstrated skills in leadership, citizenship, communication and responsibility. These members help aid the Highlands County 4-H program in their decision making process. The 4-H County Council works to complete community service projects and other 4-H community activities as well as attend monthly meetings. Highlands County 4-H youth must be nominated to join County Council by their club leader or 4-H agent. The council is composed of representatives from clubs throughout the county.

District Council

Highlands County is a part of the District X Council along with Hardee, Okeechobee, Glades, and Desoto counties. To become a member of District Council, you must first be an active member of County Council.

State Council

Youth have the opportunity to run for office at the state level. Highlands County has had many youth run and become a 4-H state officer. Being a state officer requires additional expenses and attendance at various state events.



4-H School Enrichment

Coloring Contest– The Highlands County 4-H Coloring Contest is open to all Highlands County second grade students, including private and homeschooled students. Each year a coloring sheet is selected and provided to participants to color. Coloring sheets are then submitted back to the 4-H office where they will be judged and then displayed at the Highlands County Fair. For more questions and information, contact the Highlands County 4-H office at 863-402-6540.

Tropicana Public Speaking Contest– The Tropicana Speech Contest is available to fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students from public, private, or homeschool. Students whom compete in this contest start off by presenting 2-3 minute speech in their classroom and winners have the opportunity to compete at the school level. Winners of the school competitions will move on to compete at the County wide contest and have the chance to win a 4-H camp scholarship.

4-H School Clubs– There are many schools starting 4-H clubs in the classroom around Highlands County. For more information about how you can get a 4-H club started at your public or private school, contact the 4-H office.

4-H School Programming- The 4-H staff offer programs and workshops to classroom teachers and after school programs in a variety of subject areas such as; robotics, rocketry, agriculture, embryology, healthy living, and financial literacy. To schedule a STEM program for your school, contact the 4-H office.

Special Interest Clubs

Highlands County Shooting Sports & Outdoor Adventures Club– This club focuses on shooting sports and outdoor education projects such as fishing and ATV safety. This club offers practices and participates in local and state 4-H shooting sports competitions in the archery and shotgun disciplines.

Highlands Youth Citrus Project– Highlands County Youth ages 8-18 can participate in this citrus project. This is a special interest club based project and participants must enroll in 4-H and select HYCP as a club and attend meetings. Citrus trees will be purchased from the Highlands County 4-H Office in April prior to the year of show. Youth must complete a Citrus Illustrated Talk, Exhibit Citrus Tree at the Highlands County Fair, and submit the Citrus Tree Record Book and Thank You Letters. Trees will be auctioned off during the Highlands County Fair with proceeds going to the program participants.

Robowolves Robotics– This robotics club is open to youth ages 8-18. This club participates in the First Lego League and Sea Perch ROV competitions. For more information, contact the 4-H office.



Highlands County Events

National 4-H Week-

Every year during the first full week in October, 4-H members, alumni, volunteers, and their families celebrate National 4-H Week all around the country. In Highlands County, we have several events that promote 4-H to our community as well as to promote critical life skills such as responsible citizenship, teamwork, healthy lifestyle choices, and service learning, amongst our members.

Commissioner Breakfast- Every year Highlands County 4-H hosts a breakfast for County Commissioners, prior to the first scheduled commission meeting during the month of October. This breakfast is to thank them for their continued support of the Highlands County 4-H program. Invitations are extended to community stakeholders such as city officials, school board members, first responders, and 4-H families. During the event our youth have the opportunity to sit and have breakfast with some of Highlands County's finest to learn from them as well as to educate them about their own 4-H experience.

4-H Proclamation- This event immediately follows the Commissioner Breakfast. 4-H members head over to the Highlands County Government Center where they watch the commission meeting and are presented with a Proclamation from the commissioners proclaiming that it is National 4-H Week in Highlands County.

4-H Kickball Kickoff- This event is held the Saturday before National 4-H Week begins to kick the week off. This is a time for 4-H clubs from all over the county to come together and participate in a fun event for the whole family. Teams will consist of 8-15 players. Clubs may register more than one team for the event. Participants are encouraged to wear club shirts or matching designs. Event is held at the Highlands County Multi Sports Complex, located in Sebring. This is a fun, 4-H event to promote critical life skills such teamwork, cooperation and healthy lifestyle choices as well as promoting a sense of belonging.

4-H National Youth Science Day (NYSD)- This event is held on the Wednesday of National 4-H week every year. During this time, 4-H members from around the nation participate in the same science experiment. Each year the activity changes, but the focus remains the same, to empower our youth to explore hands-on STEM activities. Previous activities have included exploring geospatial technologies, computer coding, engineering, drones, robotics, and agricultural sciences. This year's challenge is called *Game Changers* and teaches youth about computer science through game play, puzzles, and animation all centered around topics they care passionately about.

Other Events- Each day during the week youth are tasked with doing something special to show their support for 4-H. From pledging to tell people about their 4-H experience, wearing green to school and completing community service and random acts of kindness, 4-H youth are showing our community how 4-H truly makes the best better. For more information about National 4-H Week activities, please contact the 4-H office.

Highlands County Events

ATV Safety– Highlands County offers an ATV Safety program for youth ages 10 and up. This program offers an e-course, curriculum and even a Rider Course Certification. For dates and information contact the 4-H office.

Cloverbud Programs– Highlands County 4-H offers a series of one day workshops and day camps specifically for Cloverbud youth ages 5-7. These programs introduce the youngest 4-H members to the programs and help them explore the many opportunities and projects that 4-H has to offer.

Community Service- Community Service, is an important part of a young person's life. Developing a concern for others, the community, and the area in which we live is something that must be learned. Conducting a 4-H community service project as an individual or within a club will help our young people learn the importance of the responsibility each of us has to HELP make our community a better place in which to live. Please contact the 4-H office about the county wide community service events we are participating in.

Caladium Contest– This contest is open to all Highlands County 4-H youth, ages 5-18. There is a Caladium workshop every December, where youth plant and learn how to care for their caladiums. Caladiums will be cared for by the participants and then will be returned to the 4-H office, where they will be judged and then displayed at the Highlands County 4-H Fair. Participants are required to submit a caladium record book.

Holiday Bakeoff- The purpose of the Holiday Bake-Off is to encourage adults and youth to work together on a project, for the adult to teach the 4-Her how to prepare a family favorite, and for the 4-Her to learn and improve their cooking skills. This is the only county event that includes an adult category where adults are allowed to show off their cooking skills. This event is open to cloverbuds, juniors, intermediates, seniors, and 4-H parents. Youth may enter one entry from one or more categories; breads, brownies/ bars, minis, candy, cookies, or healthy/heathier recipes. Youth are judged by age division in for category winners, then best of show in all categories for their age division and then all best of show winners compete for the overall grand champion award. For more information, contact the 4-H office.

Highlands County Fair– Bonafide Highlands County 4-H members can participate in the Highlands County Fair. Members are able to participate in large and small animal projects as well as the 4-H exhibit booth. For a complete list of projects, contests, and deadlines please visit their website www.hcfair.net or call the fair office at 863-382-2255.

County Events- Demonstrations and speeches held in a contest setting for Juniors, Intermediates, and Seniors in various categories. Placing is awarded based on achievement of standards, as evaluated by a panel of judges. Qualifiers for the District level events are selected at the County level. District Events senior level qualifiers move on to compete at 4-H University.



Highlands County Events

4th H for Health Challenge– This challenge is a national initiative to encourage physical activity and healthy eating habits. Every 4-H member is required to submit a project or record book to be a bonafide 4-H member. The 4th H for Health Challenge is a club project that meets this requirement for every member that participates. All clubs have to do to participate is serve fruit(s) or vegetable(s) as a snack a three meetings, serve water as a main beverage at six meetings, and add 15 minutes of physical activity at nine meetings and then submit the challenge tracking sheets with the names of the members that successfully completed the challenge. First time participants will receive a 4th H for Health project pin, and all participants will be recognized with a certificate at the annual award banquet. For more information about the 4th H for Health Challenge log on to: http://florida4h.org/programs_/healthy-living/ or contact the 4-H office.

Pinewood Derby- This event is held at the downtown Fan Festival event held during race week. Participants have the opportunity to design, create, shape, and decorate their own pinewood derby car to race against other participants for a chance to race in the grand finale against a professional race car driver. Youth will race in heats by age division. Each heat will have a winner that competes for the age division champion title. Each age division champion will then move on to the grand finale race. This event is open to youth ages 8-18. All youth must be either active members of 4-H or complete the 4-H enrollment form prior to competing to be considered a short term member. Divisions are broken down by 4-H age divisions for juniors, intermediates, and seniors. For more information, contact the 4-H office.

Soda-licious Showdown -The Sebring Community Redevelopment Agency and the University of Florida /IFAS Extension, Highlands County 4-H have teamed up to host this kid's cooking competition, The Soda-licious Showdown, to add a little friendly fizzy competition amongst our local kid chefs during Friday night's block party. during the Sebring Soda Festival event held in April. The aspiring soda chefs will submit three servings of their fizzy fare to be critiqued by our celebrity panel of judges on their appearance, taste, and display. Kids can submit up to one cola creation in each category for their age group, and each category will be judged and awarded by age group. For more information, contact the 4-H office.

4-H Awards Banquet– Although the 4-H year does not end until August, we hold our annual 4-H awards banquet in May so that we have the opportunity to properly say good bye to our graduating seniors. This event is intended to recognize the accomplishments of our amazing 4-H youth and volunteers for all that they have done throughout the year. This celebration is a completely youth driven event and is organized by the Highlands County 4-H County Council members. The theme, program, events, and menu are all voted on by the youth and carried out by the youth under the supervision of Highlands County 4-H staff and volunteers. This celebration is open to all 4-H members and their immediate family whether or not they are receiving an award. Please refer to the Highlands County 4-H Rules, Requirements, and Expectations guide posted on the 4-H Online dashboard for information about how to apply for awards. For questions, feel free to contact the 4-H office.

4-H Beyond the County Level

South District 4-H Tailgate Competition- The purpose of this contest is to promote the use of animal protein in the diet by teaching the art and science of safely preparing beef, pork, poultry, and seafood in an outdoor setting. Investment in this activity will provide 4-H youth with life skills, including decision making, healthy lifestyle choices, and communication. Participants must be between the ages of 11 and 18 years old by September 1 of the current 4-H year. For more information, contact the 4-H office.

Hog 'N Ham- The Florida 4-H Hog and Ham Program is a statewide 4-H program which takes the participant through the total process of pork production from beginning to end. Youth select a feeder pig and grow it to harvesting weight, all while keeping records on feed amounts and costs, health care, expenses, weights, etc. After harvesting the hog and processing it into wholesale or retail cuts, 4-Hers cure the hams and prepare bacon and sausage for smoking. The project concludes by participating in a retail comparison project, completing a record book, and presenting a demonstration or illustrated talk to the other participants. This activity is available to a limited number of senior 4-H members.

District Events- District competitions are in the demonstrations and speech categories as well as Share the Fun. Share the Fun allows members to discover their talents, develop them and have opportunities to share those gifts with others. The objective of the show is to enhance the following areas: appreciation of talent, leadership, confidence, interesting special training and the ability to discover opportunities for wholesome recreation.

4-H University- Hundreds of 4-H teens from throughout the state participate in educational workshops, competitive events, engage in citizenship via community service projects, State Council elections, and healthy lifestyle & social activities at this week long event at the University of Florida. They learn about STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) and other important subjects from University of Florida faculty members, providing an opportunity to spark their interest in possible career interests and, for many youth, to be introduced to a college environment for the very first time. 4-H University also provides an excellent opportunity for youth and adults (staff and volunteers) to build leadership as they work in partnership in planning and implementing the event. 4-H University is open to 4-Hers age 14-18 as of September 1 of the current 4-H year.

Gator Pit-Do you have a passion for an innovative product, service, or idea? The Florida 4-H Youth Development Program is on a statewide search for the most innovative young entrepreneurs, inventors, creators and business people! These participants will demonstrate goal-setting, financial literacy, creativity, communication skills, and effective marketing. The top 5 applicants will be selected to compete in the contest held at 4-H University. Gator Pit is open to 4-Hers ages 14 to 18 as of September 1 of the current 4-H year.

4-H Graphic Design Program- This contest gives 4-H members the opportunity to use their creativity and artistic ability to promote their project areas or 4-H program. 4-Hers are encouraged to develop their visual communication skills by also identifying locations to display their created materials as a means to communicate with external audiences about the 4-H program.



4-H Beyond the County Level

Legislature-Senior 4-Hers come together to develop their skills debating, analyzing legislation, and speaking publicly all while making new friends and having a whole lot of fun. At this civic education event, youth write bills, then act as lobbyists, Representatives, or Senators to pass the bills through committee and then present and debate them on the Capitol House or Senate Floor. Youth have the opportunity to debate issues and experience the legislative process hands-on. Legislature is open to 4-Hers ages 13 to 18 as of September 1 of the current 4-H year.

4-H Month of Service- Florida 4-H is challenging youth from across the state to participate in a community service project during the month of October. We want to show Florida how much 4-H members can accomplish when we work together and give back to the community. We are happy for youth to participate in many types of service projects in October, but we are especially excited to see youth take part in a Clothing the World project. Youth have the opportunity to be recognized for their efforts. For more information about this event visit florida4h.org.

Intermediate State- This event is for youth ages 11-13. During this weekend event, youth will participate in educational workshops along with FUN SHOPS such as Podium Pizzazz, Clothing the World, and shooting sports. Youth will also enjoy relaxation and recreation as they attend a campfire, 4-H dance, sports, and games. For more information about this event visit florida4h.org.

Camp- Highlands County camps one week out of the summer at 4-H Camp Cloverleaf located in Lake Placid FL. Campers must be at least 8 years old by September 1st. Counselors in training must be at least age 13. In order to be a counselor you must be at least 14 years of age, have served at least one year as a CIT and attend all counselor trainings. For more information contact the 4-H office.

Executive Board-The Florida State 4-H Council Executive Board consists of 4 delegates from each of the 13 4-H districts, up to 30 Executive Board Appointees, and the 8 Florida 4-H State Officers. The Executive Board is a group of youth from across the state that represent their county and district. The members attend working committee meetings at Executive Board Weekend Events, during which they offer input into events such as 4-H University, Legislature, 4-H Day at the Capitol, and Intermediate State. Committee members also play a vital role in the implementation of those events. Other committees work on planning and implementing a state-wide community service project, fund raising, entertainment, and communication support. This event happens three times a year. For more information about this event visit florida4h.org.

Leadership Adventure Weekend- This weekend will focus on a train-the-trainer type event for teen leaders. We will touch on club, county, & district officer responsibilities, team building, district & county council, communication and leadership skills along with being an ambassador for 4-H among other topics. The goal is to train participants to go back and repeat these trainings at a district, county, and club level. For more information about this event visit florida4h.org.

Florida State Fair Showcase-Florida 4-H showcases talented 4-H performers at the Florida 4-H Showcase during the Florida State Fair. For more information about this event visit florida4h.org.



4-H Beyond the County Level

Day at the Capitol– This educational event provides hands-on “learn by doing” experiences for youth. 4-H youth learn about the legislative and governmental processes and Florida’s significant “firsts” in the foundation of the United States as they participate in workshops, tours and observations of our government at work. This will provide youth the opportunity to develop knowledge and skills to become more informed citizens. 4-H youth also have the chance to come together and share the positive impacts of the Florida 4-H Program. Participants meet and hear from their elected officials.

4-H Day at Gator Football- The Gator Ticket Office offers a special discounted ticket for all 4-H members, employees, alumni, as well as their family and friends during the 4-H Day at Gator Football game. For more information about this event visit the florida4h.org website.

4-H Day at Legoland- This event is an opportunity for 4-H members and their families to explore the LEGOLAND theme park at a deep discount, while raising funds for 4-H clubs, camps, and other educational programs. LEGOLAND is a great way to have fun with the entire family and learn about science, engineering, and technology. Tickets are sold at a discounted price. For more information about this event visit the florida4h.org website.

South Area, State and Southern Regional 4-H Horse Championships– Youth with 4-H horse projects can participate in the South Area 4-H Horse Show. Qualifiers can then move on the State Horse Show in Tampa for a chance to compete at the Southern Regional 4-H Horse Championships in Perry, Georgia. For more information about horse shows and competitive horse events, please contact the 4-H office.

Southern Region Teen Leadership Conference- SRTLTC is a first-of-its-kind, multi-state 4-H conference created to bring together 4-H teens and adults to empower & inspire them to make a positive change across the southern region through youth-adult partnerships. For more information visit florida4h.org



4-H National Trips

Leadership Washington Focus- This leadership program is for youth entering grades 7 through 9. The program will take place at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center, just one mile from the Washington, D.C. border. Middle school 4-H delegates will build confidence in their ability to motivate and direct others in meaningful action. For more information visit florida4h.org

Citizenship Washington Focus– This leadership program is for high school youth. Delegations from across the country attend this 6 day program at the National 4-H Youth Conference Center, located just outside Washington, D.C. The program is aimed at enriching young people’s lives by broadening their appreciation and respect for themselves and others in the world. Participants attend workshops, committees, field trips and social events, giving them hands-on opportunities to learn and grow. Participants learn and practice skills that will make them better citizens and more successful individuals. For more information visit florida4h.org

National 4-H Conference- Held in Washington D.C. this event focuses on leadership, youth empowerment, community service, career development, and cultural diversity. There are many outstanding workshops along with keynote addresses that round out the experience. It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for 4-H members. Youth must be selected for this trip. For more information visit florida4h.org

National 4-H Congress- Held in Atlanta, Georgia, this event focuses on leadership, youth empowerment, community service, career development, and cultural diversity. There are many outstanding workshops along with keynote addresses that round out the experience. It is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for 4-H members. Youth must be selected for this trip. For more information visit florida4h.org

*For additional information and other available opportunities visit florida4h.org.



Senior Portfolio Awards

Completing a Senior Portfolio will allow you to compete for national award trips and scholarships. The process will improve your skills of marketing yourself. You will complete an application, create a resume, write a narrative about yourself, and submit the information as a packet to be eligible for an interview.

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<http://www.facebook.com/HighlandsCounty4-H>

#TrueLeaders

For more information visit the sources
below:

www.4-h.org

www.florida4h.org

<http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu>

<http://ifasbooks.ifas.ufl.edu>

www.eXtension.org

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