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**Maine Beginner 4-H Project Record: A How-To Guide**

**Deciding to use a Beginner 4-H Project Record with your 4-H’er:**

Use this record with youth that have not previously completed a project record and are at least 9 years old. This record is meant as an entry into project records, regardless of age; this is a good introduction to the process without being overwhelming.

**Why is Record Keeping Important?**

4-H project records are an important summary of what young people have learned and the skills they gained within their 4-H work as well as other parts of their lives. Over a period of years 4-H records will show young people their own learning and progression. The information collected in these records will be helpful to young peple as they fill out other forms such as resumes, job applications and college applications.

**How to use this Project Record:**

In total, there are 8 pages of record keeping, not including any supplements, with pages 2-5 used as an individual Project Record that can be copied for multiple projects. For example, if you complete a dairy project with one club and a robotics project in a different club, you would do two separate Annual Project Reports- each report being four pages long, pages 2-5. To submit that record, you would complete 1 Cover page, both the Dairy and Robotics Project Records, 1 Community service, citizenship and leadership page and 1 My Life skills comparison. Beginners do not need to complete an Expression page.

This record can be presented in a way to best meets the young persons needs. It can be handwritten, typed, video taped, blogged, vlogged etc. The possibilities are endless.

**Putting the record together:**

This record is also judged on presentation. Choose a format that will allows a final product which is legible or easily understood.

**What is the Scoring Rubric?**

The expectation for this project record is not to be ‘proficient’ and ‘distinguished’ in all areas the first time using it. We expect that over time and practice youth will move from ‘developing’ and ‘emerging’ communication skills to ‘proficient’ and ‘distinguished’ skills. The goal is to reach proficiency. If a young person is reaching proficiency and distinguished, it means they can move on to the higher level Project Record, to continue challenging themselves. This is not meant to be a point system.

**How to complete a Beginner 4-H Project Record:**

COVER PAGE

**When to complete this page:** Club meeting attendance and signatures should be done at the end of the 4-H year.

* **Club Name:** List any and all clubs you attend and are an enrolled member.
* **Club Meeting Attendance**: Club meetings are sometimes held separately from project related meetings, these club meetings bring all projects together to discuss club related business. To find the %, take the number of meetings attended, divided by the total number of meetings held, then multiply by 100. For example, if there were 10 meetings and you attended 8 meetings, it would 8 /10 =0.8, then 0.8 X 100 = 80%. Include all clubs you are enrolled in this year in this section.
* **4-H Meetings and Events**: Check off any that you participated in and add anything not listed! We want to know all the ways you were in 4-H this year.
* **Member’s Signature**: We understand that some youth may need assistance from adults in completion of this project and the record, and that’s ok! We just want the member to acknowledge that this is their work and they are responsible for it.
* **4-H Adult Partner’s Signature:** This should be the signature of the 4-H Volunteer that either helped develop or review this project record, sometimes that is the club leader or sometimes it’s another 4-H Volunteer in the club, it may also be a parent 4-H Volunteer if they are working in this capacity with 4-H members.

ANNUAL PROJECT REPORT- pages 2-5 of this document. These four pages can be copied for multiple projects.

**Section 1: Goals and Planning for my Project**

**When to fill this page out**: This page should be completed at the start of the 4-H year or the start of your project.

* **Club Name**: This might feel redundant, but some 4-H’ers are members of several clubs, where they complete different projects in different clubs.
* **Goal Setting:** Using the Life Skills wheel on page 7, you can set personal development goals to reach through your 4-H project. You can also set project knowledge or technical goals. The best tool to use for setting these goals, and making sure you are challenging yourself, is to check out the 4-H curriculum for your project and ask your leader.
* **Learning Plan**: By thinking through how you will reach your goals, this helps create concrete steps you are hoping to take. You should do research into your project, and consult adult volunteers in how to plan your year to reach your goals.

**Section 2: My 4-H Project Activities**

**When to fill this page out**: This page should be completed while you are working on your project. This is where you can keep track of everything you do.

* **Project:** This is so you can track of which project you are doing!
* **Your Learning Experiences**: This is where you can list everything you do for your project. It's about the process, not the product. Demonstrating mastery: It takes time and practice to learn a skill and get good at it. It's there multiple times. You can summarize what you have done using the table.
* Learning is a progression of skills. Make sure to take the time to reflect on how you were able to learn and grow.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Number of Frequency | List things made, raised, grown or improved through this project | Life skills or knowledge skills gained, or if there were any awards of honors earned |
| 47 | Whip Stitches | I practiced this skill until I was able to get it right. I had to use self motivation to keep working on this. I was resilient because I did not quit. |
| 7 | Banana Bread | I had to change my recipe for the farmers market. My loaves were not rising enough. I learned problem solving.  |
| 15 | Walks in the woods | I am trying to learn how to ID trees. I went to the library to get a book and called an extension expert to find out how they learned about trees. I used learning to learn and problem solving. |

* ANIMAL PROJECTS: Make sure while you are filling this out that you record and list, probably by week or month, any barn records which means all feedings and all care for animals, any vet visits.

**Section 3: Expenses and Income/Value**:

Keeping track of a project’s expenses and income is one of the most important aspect of record keeping, and a skill that will be exceptionally valuable to a young person as they move into adulthood. These expenses, as well as income, should be summarized in total and listed. Even if a young person did not purchase an item, they should calculate the real world expense of any borrowed materials. Any expenses related to the project, including travel, food, materials should also be calculated as part of the expense of the project. Here is an example using a Poultry project (this is not a complete expense form for a poultry project).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Number** | **Expense** | **Income****or Value** |
| Feed | 12 (for # of Months) | $20 (per month) | $ |
| Fair Ribbons | 3 | $ | $3 (value of each ribbon) |
| Egg Sales | 20 (# of dozens sold) | $ | $4 (Value of each dozen) |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Totals** | $240 (total expense) | $89 (total income) |
| **Total Profit or Loss** | * $151
 |

**Section 4 Reflecting on My Project**

* **Project Advice- What would you tell a friend? What was challenging** The intention of this section is for you to share the value in what you’ve learned through this project, like what you would tell a friend or someone who might not know about your project. This is where you can tell us if you had fun, what was fun about it, and anything unexpected they encountered during the year, challenges and how you would do this project differently now that they’ve lived it. The Rubric does list some specific examples of what the judges will be looking for in the advice you give.
* **Project Plans for the Future:** This reflection is all about applying what you have learned- reflecting on how this project influenced you, and identifying specific goals or steps you will take in the future of this project.

**Section 5: Citizenship, Leadership and Commuity Service.**

Examples in this section do not have to be related to your club work. You are able to duplicate these pages as needed.

***Community Service*** *Community Service is an important part of any 4-H project. Community service activities must benefit people who are not related to you. If you receive any sort of compensation for this activity it becomes a job and not a service activity. Compensation includes money, services or favors such as reduction in board or other fees. Be very specific about activities and results.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Role** | **What did you do? Who did this benefit?** |
| Made Holiday Cards | I represented my club at Joann’s fabric. I taught others how to make a holiday card. As a club we delievered the cards to our local senior housing center.  |

***Citizenship Activities*** *Citizenship is a very important part of your 4-H work. Responsible citizenship is an individual's demonstration of love and devotion in response to duties, rights and privileges as a member of a community or country. It includes loyalty to one's place of residence (city, state, county); the entitlements and privileges of citizenship, including voting, protection, participation in government; obligations of citizenship; and, appreciating and valuing diversity.*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Role** | **What did you do?** |
| learner | I learned how to properly fold a flag. I learned proper care of flags and how to display the 4-H flag during our club meetings. |
| 4-H Page | I was placed at the Maine State Senate. I learned how senators commuinicate during session. I learned how laws and bills are debated. |

***Leadership Activities*** *Leadership is an important part of any 4-H project. Extend your leadership skills to other organizations and groups outside of 4-H. When writing about your leadership experiences, be very specific. It is not enough to say that you are president of your 4-H club. You must say what you did as the president; for example, ran 10 club business meetings, met with leader 6 times to set up yearly program for the club, etc.[[1]](#footnote-1)*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Role** | **What did you do?** |
| Club secretary | I submitted 12 secretary reports to my county office. I wrote a story for inclusion to our county newsletter.  |
|  |  |

**Section 6: My Life Skills**

**Life Skills Wheel**

* This is the Life Skills Wheel, it’s how we connect the skills we practice and learn through our projects and service to the big picture of what 4-H does. Beginners, we want you to look at the big 4 in the middle: Head, Heart, Hands, and Health. There are lots of skills related to that one H! On the next page, the Comparison Matrix we will be talking about the big 4 H’s in the middle, but the life skills listed on the outside of the wheel will also help you when you compare and contrast.

**4-H Life Skills Comparison Matrix**

* If you had more than one project, just choose one project for this comparison.
* This is not scary, we promise! Let’s break it down:
* We will illustrate here how to complete the first two columns (the Head and the Heart) of the matrix, once you get the hang of it, the middle two columns, Hands and Health, are the same.
1. Start with the Head column on the left hand side and use the example of the poultry project (this is an example and not necessarily what should be used on your project record).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Head**  |
| **Tell us how you used this skill.**  | I used my head by seeing there was a problem with my yield, brainstormed how to fix this problem, tried a new feed, and made observations on how this went. It was easy, but happened over a long period of time.  |
| **Why did you do this? What did you learn?** | I did this because if I didn’t think critically, I would not have the best egg production I could. I learned that problem solving takes time with animals.  |
| **Did you have fun? Do you think fellow 4-H members had fun too? Why?** | I did have fun, and I saw other 4-H’ers that worked really hard all year having fun at the fair show.  |

GREAT! Now, let’s move onto the next column, Heart.

3.) Starting at the top of the Heart column, we then go down the questions on the left hand side as they refer to how we used our Heart in this project.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Heart** |
| **Tell me how you used this skill.**  | I used my heart in this project because I learned how to care for others all year, day in and day out. It was hard because I did lose a couple chickens and that was really sad. It was hard being so dedicated every day to the chores or feeding, cleaning and collecting.  |
| **Why did you do this? What did you learn?** | I did this because they were my chickens and my project. I felt responsibility to them, they depended all on me. I learned that I can step up, even if I don’t feel like it. I still follow through on I say I’m going to do.  |
| **Did you have fun? Do you think that fellow 4-H members had fun too? Why?** | This was the most fun part of my project because I love my chickens and I see their different personalities. It was not fun when a couple of them died. But when I saw other people showing, they also love their chickens, most of the time.  |

Now let’s focus on the Hands part of your project

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Hands** |
| **Tell me how you used this skill.**  | I used my hands to gather eggs almost every day.  |
| **Why did you do this? What did you learn?** | I had to collect eggs from my chickens each day. I learned that chickens take time and work.  |
| **Did you have fun? Do you think that fellow 4-H members had fun too? Why?** | I did have fun. It was pretty cool seeing how many eggs the hens laid each day. I think that other kids who love chickens like I do would have fun.  |

 And finally health

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Health** |
| **Tell me how you used this skill.**  | I used my health in two ways with this project. First I had to make sure that my chickens were healthy. Secondly I had to make sure that I washed my hands anytime I handled animals.  |
| **Why did you do this? What did you learn?** | I love my chickens and I wanted to make sure they were healthy. That they had all they needed to be great layers. I wanted to protect myself from disease like samonella, that is why I practiced good handwashing skills.  |
| **Did you have fun? Do you think that fellow 4-H members had fun too? Why?** | It was fun to figure out ways to keep my chickens healthy. It wasn’t fun to be reminded all the time to wash my hands, but I got the hang of it over time. I think if you love chickens this is a great project.  |

Now that the matrix is complete, we are going to compare the similarlites and difference. This is tough, we are asking young people to think critically and to evaluate their own learning within these questions.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Head**  | **Heart** | **Hands** | **Health** | **Similarities & Differences** What is similar and what is different between the skills you used in all your 4-H projects this year? |
| **Tell me how you used this life skill.** | I used my head by seeing there was a problem with my yield, brainstormed how to fix this problem, tried a new feed, and made observations on how this went. It was easy, but happened over a long period of time.  | I used my heart in this project because I learned how to care for others all year, day in and day out. It was hard because I did lose a couple chickens and that was really sad. It was hard being so dedicated every day to the chores or feeding, cleaning and collecting.  | I used my hands to gather eggs almost every day.  | I used my health in two ways with this project. First I had to make sure that my chickens were healthy. Second I had to make sure that I washed my hands anytime I handled animals.  | Similarities: The focus was on chickens. In heart and health I also focused on myself. Differences: In some examples I care more about my animal and in others I care more about myself. |
| **Why did you do this? What did you learn?** | I did this because if I didn’t think critically, I would not have the best egg production I could. I learned that problem solving takes time with animals.  | I did this because they were my chickens and my project. I felt responsibility to them, they depended all on me. I learned that I can step up, even if I don’t feel like it. I still follow through on I say I’m going to do.  | I had to collect eggs from my chickens each day. I learned that chickens take time and work.  | I love my chickens and I wanted to make sure they were healthy. That they had all they needed to be great layers. I wanted to protect myself from disease like salmonella, which is why I practiced good hand washing skills.  | Similarities: The focus was on the chickens. I have a responsibility to them. Differences: In some examples I care about my own health. |
| **Did you have fun? Do you think fellow 4-H members had fun? Why?** | I did have fun, and I saw other 4-H’ers that worked really hard all year having fun at the fair show.  | This was the most fun part of my project because I love my chickens and I see their different personalities. It was not fun when a couple of them died. But when I saw other people showing, they also love their chickens, most of the time.  | I did have fun. It was pretty cool seeing how many eggs the hens laid each day. I think that other kids who love chickens like I do would have fun.  | It was fun to figure out ways to keep my chickens healthy. It wasn’t fun to be reminded all the time to wash my hands, but I got the hang of it over time. I think if you love chickens this is a great project.  | Similarities: This project is fun. I love chickens.Differences: It is difficult when an animal dies. I also didn’t like being reminded of tasks. |

1. Definitions adapted from NC State A&T State University Cooperative Extension Service [↑](#footnote-ref-1)