



UConn 4-H Fact Sheet



UConn | EXTENSION

4-H County Fairs

The purpose of the county fairs in Connecticut is as follows:

- To provide a way to have each 4-H member present their project for the year, have it evaluated and receive recognition.
- To provide opportunities for youth to learn and practice leadership skills by planning, conducting and evaluating the “county” 4-H Fair under the guidance of trained volunteer adult mentors and UConn 4-H Extension staff members.
- To provide a showcase of the 4-H program for the general public.

Other fair related points of note:

- County 4-H fairs in Connecticut are open to any properly enrolled UConn 4-H youth. For animal projects, youth must have also submitted animal project verification forms for their projects by the required due dates for their species in their county of enrollment.
- Project animals are not required to be purebred and/or registered in a breed organization.
- Sanctioned shows of any purebred species are not allowed to be held at any county 4-H fair held in Connecticut.
- Ages for Juniors will be 7-12 years and Seniors will be 13-18 years. (as of January 1, that year)
- Explorers (youth ages 5-6 years) are encouraged to enter in the Explorer display categories only.
- Adult intervention during the fair is not allowed for handling, fitting, or working directly with animals. However, adults are allowed to supervise project animals for safety of both youth and animals.

- All projects entered and submitted at the fair will be evaluated using the Danish system of awarding ribbons. In this system, the judge does not evaluate one person's work by comparing it to another's. The evaluation is judged against a standard. The judge looks to determine if contest requirements were met. Often a score sheet is used, available from the county 4-H office. If the work meets a high standard, it receives an excellent rating and blue ribbon (score 90- 100 points). A red ribbon is awarded for very good (score 80-89 points). A white ribbon signifies work meets standards well enough to be shown, but is only of fair quality (score of 79 or lower). One advantage of this system is that everyone whose work fulfills the minimum qualifications can receive a ribbon. If all entries are judged to be of the highest quality, all exhibitors in that group would receive blue ribbons. The purpose of using the Danish judging system is to give every 4-H member the recognition deserved for the work they completed. It also helps the youth to recognize the ways in which they can improve over time to expand their skill level to "make the best better".
- 4-H members are expected to enter and exhibit their projects in the primary county in which they are enrolled. However, if the primary county fair does not offer a show for their project, they are allowed to enter and exhibit their project at another county fair with permission from the UConn 4-H Coordinator without penalty.
- If a member is not able to attend and exhibit at their county fair, they can request permission from both county educators to show in another county. However, they would not be eligible for any championship or be allowed to participate in the premier showmanship contest of the out of county 4-H fair.
- A project may only be exhibited at the county 4-H fair that the project is registered in, unless another county's 4-H fair class is open to UConn 4-H members statewide, and the project meets that fair's requirements.
- All 4-H animal exhibits must adhere to the CT Department of Agriculture Animal Health and Rabies Advisory Guidelines. UConn 4-H does not exempt low risk for rabies transmission species. UConn 4-H reserves the right to be more stringent in the event of animal health outbreaks.