



The Yearly Club Program

If you are planning an extensive trip you wouldn't just start driving, hoping you're going in the right direction and have the things you need. A successful trip takes advance planning. The same thing can be said for 4-H Club work. Planning a yearly program is essential to good monthly meetings. A club that fails to plan, plans to fail.

When to Plan: The 4-H Club year is from September through August. The planning committee should meet following the election of officers and plan the club program for the year.

Who Should Do the Planning? A committee of members and leaders - usually the new officers, past president, any junior leaders and organizational leaders should serve as the planning committee.

At Your Planning Meeting:

- Adopt goals and suggest ways to reach them.
- Suggest ways to improve past programs.
- Decide when and where meetings will be held each month – a regular meeting place needs to be established.
- Make a tentative program outline for each meeting.
- Make tentative plans for other club activities.
- Give every member some responsibility during the year, such as giving a demonstration or project talk at the meeting, serving on committees, etc.
- Help junior leaders (if applicable) define their responsibilities – such as working with Cloverbuds, or younger new members,
- Provide each club family with a copy of the yearly program – **VERY IMPORTANT!**



Goals: Goals are what the club decides to work toward during the year, based on interests and community involvement. Examples might be:

- Give each member an opportunity to be on the program during the year.
- Start meetings on time and end on time.
- Do club recruitment flyers in the community

- Have every member complete and turn in at least one project for recognition at the club and county level.
- Complete at least one planned community service project such as a Habitat for Humanity home, landscape a community building, adopt an elderly person in the community, etc.

Demonstrations: This is a show and tell, and should be related to the project the members are enrolled in. Have you ever shown anyone how to tie a knot, lay out a pattern, or identify insects? If so, you have given a demonstration. Members can show and tell about something they enjoy doing in their project. Usually 3 – 7 minutes is sufficient. Having members do a demonstration at the club level is a great experience for them before going to County Events. It also give you, the leader, a great way to critique them on ways to improve.



Project Talks: This is a good way for members to give others in their club first- hand experience as to what their project is all about. A member could talk about what it is like to raise a steer – some of the positive experiences as well as what they have learned.

Outside Speakers: Encourage your club to have outside speakers from the community. Your planning committee can probably think of a number of people in the community who have interesting things to talk about. Be sure to give them a topic you want them to speak on. You may want to invite other clubs to join you for this guest speaker. Some ideas might be:

- Local veterinarian – health care for dogs/cats
- Supervisor of Elections – the importance of voting
- Chef – how to make simple, healthy snacks
- Master Gardner – how to plant a vegetable/flower garden

Ideas for Roll Call: Spice up your roll call by using something different than just answering “here” or “present”. Add variety by assigning a different theme each month. Some example might be:

- Why I joined 4-H
- Favorite food

- Favorite animal
- Project enrolled in
- Favorite holiday

Other Program Features During the Year:

- **Club Recognition Events:** Never miss the opportunity to recognize your club member at a club meeting – it could be the last meeting of the year, or a end of year club party. You could give recognition for perfect attendance, those who participated in County Events, club officers, etc. Be creative when recognizing the accomplishments of your club members.
- **Ideas for Club Recognition Program:**
 - Have each member exhibit something he or she made related to their project.
 - Review of highlights of club year in a skit format
 - Presentation of club awards – be creative
 - Entertainment from club members
 - Recognition of Cloverbuds – small graduation ceremony for those “moving up.”
- **Parent Night:** We know most parents are involved in 4-H as a volunteer and attend most of the club meetings – but take an extra step and ask them to do a skit or a demonstration – could be a lot of fun. Think outside the box. Have a parent do a cake decorating lesson for the club.
- **Club Exchange:** Ask another club to share what they do - if they are a livestock club – your members would learn more about animals, and if your club is a foods club – you can share some of the things your club is doing – what a great way to learn what others in 4-H are doing – right in your own community.
- **Educational Tours:** The University of Florida has great tours in their Animal Science Dept – just call and make arrangements. Visit a local supermarket for a behind the scenes tour, the same goes for restaurants . If you have industries in your community, most are more than happy to give tours to youth groups.



Where To Get Help: Your County Extension Agents are your best resources for any information you might need for your club's projects and to help members with theirs. They can also provide you additional help in managing your club. No one wants club leaders to fail – we want you to have a successful and rewarding experience with 4-H. Planning is essential to make that happen as well as knowing where to go for resources. You can also visit www.florida4h.org for more information on club planning and management.

Adapted from 4-H Leaders' Handbook, University of Florida (date unknown), revised by Judy Butterfield, Central District Regional Specialized 4-H Agent IV, University of Florida/IFAS, Gainesville, FL, July, 2009.