

The 4-H Motto: "To Make the Best Better"

4-H is the nation's largest positive youth development organization, empowering six million young people across America, supported by a collaborative effort of the USDA, the Cooperative Extension System, land grant universities and local government entities. The VA 4-H Horse Program accounts for approximately 3,000 members, supported by our committed adult volunteers and Extension agents in 95 counties. The horse program is self-supported by sponsorships, grants and fund raising efforts. Visit our website to find a club near you by contacting your local Extension Agent.



Virginia 4-H State Horse Program

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An educational organization for youth, ages 5-19, for those who love horses. Horse ownership not required!



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Virginia 4-H Horse Program



Horse Shows

State 4-H Championship Show

Held annually in September at the VA Horse Center in Lexington, VA the 4-H State Championship show hosts approximately 450 qualified riders, ages 10-19.

- **The variety of disciplines** supported include Western, Hunters, Dressage, Driving, Gymkhana, and Gaited Horses. This is the qualifying event for the Southern Regionals 4-H Horse Show. Prize money is awarded in Showmanship classes.
- **Horseless contests** are Hippology, Horse Bowl, Art and Photography Contests and Portfolio and Project Book Contests. Prize money is awarded in the Portfolio and Project Book competitions.
- **Also offered** are scholarship opportunities, awards for stall decorations, Cloverbud camp, a drill team exhibition, a silent auction, and an ice cream social.

State Fair 4-H Horse Show

- **The Ranch Riding Show** is a popular event with 4-Hers demonstrating their skills with working cattle horses. This is an exciting spectator event as well. Riders have opportunities for state fair scholarships.
- **The Drill Team Competition** is made up of a team of riders in a variety of prescribed and freestyle classes all ridden to music. Riders have opportunities for state fair scholarships and perpetual trophies.



Educational Contests

We offer horseless educational contests, including **EquiSmartz™**, a three-day state event for ages 9-19, held annually in the spring at The Meadow Event Park in Doswell. Top teams and individuals move forward to represent Virginia at Southern Regionals and Eastern Nationals.



Hippology

Hippology

This is a multi-phase contest where teams of three or four club members or individuals are tested with a multiple choice written exam, stations exam, slideshow exam and a team problem, plus judge four classes of live horses.



Communications

Club members may compete in Individual Presentations, Public Speaking or Two-person Team Presentations.

Horse Bowl

Two teams of four or five club members compete in quiz rounds with another team, answering equine questions, buzzing in with the fastest and correct response.



Horse Bowl

Horse Judging

Teams and individuals place classes of four horses according to a learned standard. Winning individuals have the opportunity to travel and compete nationally with the Virginia State 4-H Horse Judging Team.



Horse Judging

Horse Camps

Camps are held throughout the state at 4-H centers and on the campus of Virginia Tech in the summer months.



Horse camps are a great way to learn more about daily horse care and improve on riding skills. Plus 4-Hers are exposed to a great concentration of hands-on experiential equine lessons.

Future Leaders

The 4-H program trains and mentors leaders for future generations. While **Cloverbuds (ages 5-8)** are not allowed to be in sole control of the horse, we encourage our teens to teach these aspiring young horse lovers with adult leader supervision. Our online resources offer leaders Cloverbud Curricula, a Horse Leaders Survival Guide and more.

More than just horses...

The 4-H program proves to be incredibly valuable to 4-Hers that have invested years in their club and community. We encourage 4-Hers to diversify and expand upon their own personal growth, exploring all of their gifts and passions beyond excellence with horsemanship. Our program grows industry leaders through additional program opportunities which teach life skills, community service and leadership, making the best better!

- **Becoming an All-Star** is the highest state level recognition awarded to teens, ages 15 and older, who have had a well rounded 4-H career through the state and national level programs.
- **Teen Ambassadors** tour and speak on behalf of the 4-H program with an exceptional sense of confidence, drawing from their lifelong successful 4-H career and experience.

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."

