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KANSAS 4-H LEADERS NOTEBOOK

Introduction
This notebook is designed to help you as a 4-H rabbit leader do the best job that you can to make the rabbit project a fun, interesting, and valuable experience for the 4-H youth that you teach. The rabbit project is one of several projects within the Animal Sciences 4-H Curriculum Division. The rabbit project becomes the vehicle through which we can teach profitable rabbit production practices and necessary life skills to the youth who enroll. Other 4-H project areas such as meats, veterinary science, marketing, computer, health, and safety are incorporated where appropriate.

OBJECTIVES
The objectives of the rabbit project are as follows:
1. Learn and apply recommended principles of rabbit production.
2. Demonstrate a knowledge of sound breeding, feeding, and management practices.
3. Identify types and grades of animals and employ efficient marketing methods.
4. Develop integrity, sportsmanship, decision-making capability, and public speaking skills through participation in demonstrations, tours, judging, and/or exhibits.
5. Appreciate the value of rabbits in the scientific research.
6. Practice leadership skills and roles, take part in community affairs, and demonstrate citizenship responsibility.
7. Explore career, job and productive leisure opportunities.
8. Develop skills, knowledge and attitudes for lifelong use.
9. Learn to use accepted practices for mental, physical and emotional health, and to respect yourself and others.

MAJOR CONCEPTS
To help meet the above objectives, 10 general 4-H rabbit project concepts or topics were identified by the Rabbit Design Team. Each of the specific lesson plans falls under one of these major 10 concepts—Feeds and Feeding, Health Practices, Kindling Practices, Records and Recognition, Selection and Judging, Fitting and Showing, Management and Practices, Reproduction and Genetics, Meats/Marketing, and Careers.

LIFE SKILLS
Kansas 4-H life skills have been articulated to help define the youth development outcomes of our 4-H program. It is the goal of 4-H to develop youth who are contributing, productive members of society. Youth may achieve this goal when these five life skills are developed and applied.
1. Positive self-concept
2. Sound decision-making
3. Positive interpersonal relationships
4. Desire for lifelong learning
5. Concern for community

These five life skills are incorporated throughout the lesson plans and in the educational design of the project meetings. The “Dialogue for Critical Thinking” Section leads the group through the experiential learning process.

AGES AND STAGES
Leaders can best achieve these desired outcomes with their members when they have well-prepared leader material and understand how to structure a stimulating learning environment for the age of youth they are leading. We know and believe that each child is unique, yet we also know that there are generalities about certain age groups that help us program more effectively.

These lesson plans have been developed to target four general age groups:
■ Level I—ages 7 and 8
■ Level II—ages 9, 10, 11
■ Level III—ages 12, 13, 14
■ Level IV—ages 15 and older

A review about the physical, mental, social and emotional characteristics of these age groups will prepare the leader for a successful project experience. It should be understood by the leader that the levels are also based on corresponding skill levels of youth. Thus, a 12-year-old youth enrolling in rabbit for the first time should probably begin with lessons in Level I, and not take Level III until the member has mastered some basic knowledge and skills.

Ages 7 and 8
Physical growth can be described as slow and steady. Mastering physical skills is important to self-concept. This includes everything from printing with a pencil to large muscle skills like catching a ball. Activities need to be just that—active! Provide opportunities to practice skills, but use projects that can be completed successfully and quickly by beginners.

Typical second or third graders think in concrete terms. If they have never seen it, heard it, felt it, tasted it, or smelled it, they have a hard time thinking of it. Leaders should show and tell, rather than giving instructions verbally. Early elementary children are learning to sort things into categories. This makes collecting things important and fun at this age. Most are more interested in the “process”—what? why? how?—than in the resulting product.

As children move away from dependence on parents at this age, they need to transfer that dependence to another adult, so the leader may become very important in their eyes. Building friendships occurs easily and generally by the end of this period, boys prefer playing with boys and girls.
with girls. Peer opinion now becomes very important. Small group activities are effective, but children still need an adult to share approval.

Seven and 8-year-olds need and seek the approval of adults, because they are not yet confident enough to set their own standards. Play or making believe is one way they increase their ability to imagine what other people think and feel. Rules and rituals are important, but it is very hard for children this age to lose. This is why success needs to be emphasized, even if it is small. Failures should be minimized. Cooperative games and activities are especially enjoyable. When an activity fails, the leader should help children interpret the reasons behind the failures, which teaches that failing is not always bad. Learning to cope with problems is a skill the 4-H leader can encourage for all members. The usual practice of awarding competitive ribbons should be minimized or avoided for this age.

**Ages 9, 10, 11**

Physically, most children at this age are in a holding pattern, although puberty may be starting for some very early-maturing girls. Activities should encourage physical involvement, because 9- to 11-year-olds are anything but still and quiet.

Hands-on involvement with objects is helpful. Children this age like field trips, but only if they are not expected to stay confined or to do one thing for a long period of time. Upper elementary children need opportunities to share their thoughts and reactions with others. They are still fairly concrete thinkers and will give more attention if they are seeing and doing things.

Children at this stage are beginning to think logically and symbolically and are beginning to understand abstract ideas. As they consider ideas, they think it is either right or wrong, great or disgusting, fun or boring. There is very little middle ground.

The role of the leader is most crucial at this stage, as these children look to the adult for approval and follow rules primarily out of respect for the adult. Individual evaluation by adults is preferable to group competition where only one can be the best. They want to know how much they have improved and what they should do to be better next time. Encouragement from an adult can have remarkable accomplishments.

This is the age of the “joiners.” They like to be in organized groups of others similar to themselves. If you have both boys and girls of this age in your project groups, you will do best if small group work is done in same-sex groups. They generally are concerned with immediate self-reward; however, the satisfaction of completing a project comes from pleasing the leader or parent rather than from the value of the activity itself.

Toward the end of this age range, children are ready to take responsibility for their own actions. Giving these youth opportunities to make decisions
should be encouraged. Leaders should move from dictating directions to giving reassurance and support for members’ decisions.

Nine, 10- and 11-year-olds have a strong need to feel accepted and worthwhile. School and other pressures become demanding. Successes should continue to be emphasized. Comparison with the success of others is difficult for these children. It erodes self-confidence. Instead of comparing children with each other, build positive self-concepts by comparing present to past performance for the individual.

**Ages 12, 13 and 14**

This is a time of developmental variety among peers. Growth spurts beginning with adolescence occur at a wide range of ages, with girls maturing before boys. These rapid changes in physical appearance may make teens uncomfortable. Slower developing teens may also be uneasy about the lack of changes.

Young teens move from concrete to more abstract thinking. Playing with ideas is as much fun as playing sports. Ready-made solutions from adults often are rejected in favor of finding their own solutions. Leaders who provide supervision without interference will have a great influence on these youth.

Small groups provide the best opportunity for young teens to test ideas. Justice and equality become important issues. Judging of projects is now viewed in terms of what is fair, as well as a reflection of the self-worth of the individual.

These youth enjoy participating in activities away from home as they begin to develop independence. Opinions of peers become more important than opinions of parents or other adults. Close friendships begin to develop, and group experiences provide opportunity for social acceptance.

As puberty approaches, emotions begin a roller coaster ride. Young teens begin to test values and seek adults who are accepting and willing to talk about values and morals. This period seems to present the biggest challenge to a young person’s self-concept. These youngsters face so many changes that they hardly know who they are. Adults can help by providing self-knowledge and self-discovery activities such as the “dialogue for critical thinking” portion of these lesson plans.

Continue to avoid comparing young people with each other, being careful not to embarrass them. They want to be a part of something important that provides opportunity to develop responsibility.

**Ages 15, 16 and 17**

Most teens of this age know their own abilities and talents. In most cases, they have adjusted to the many body changes by now. Many develop athletic talent and devote hours to training and competition. Learning to drive a car further moves the teen from family into the community as independent people.
Mid-teens begin to think about their future and make realistic plans. Their vocational goals influence the activities they select. Teens set goals based on feelings of personal need and priorities. Any goals set by others are generally rejected. As they master abstract thinking, they can imagine new things in ways that sometimes challenge adults.

These teens can initiate and carry out their own tasks without supervision. A leader can be helpful by arranging new experiences in areas of interest to teens, but must be sure to allow for plenty of input from them. Leader-member relations should change from director/follower to that of advisor/independent worker.

Mid-teens tend to be wrapped up in themselves. Relationship skills are usually well-developed. Dating increases and acceptance by members of the opposite sex is now of high importance. Sports and clubs are important, but these teens now want to be recognized as unique individuals within that group.

Two important emotional goals of the middle-teen years are independence and identity. Time is precious. If activities are perceived as busywork, teens soon will lose patience and interest. Middle teens are learning to cooperate with others on an adult level. They will pride themselves on increased ability to be responsible in the eyes of themselves, peers, and adults.

Ages 18 and 19
These young adults are completing their 4-H careers and moving on to college, jobs, marriage, and other adult responsibilities. If continuing involvement at the local level, they will be self-directed learners or assume adult leadership roles.

This information on child development has been taken from the North Central Regional Extension Publication No. 292, *Ages and Stages of Child and Youth Development: A Guide for 4-H Leaders*, written by Jeanne Karns, graduate assistant and Judith Myers-Walls, Extension Specialist, Human Development, Purdue University.

**YOUTH AT RISK**
Some child development specialists and educators have noted every child of the ‘90s is at “some risk” because of the complex social forces affecting our country since the early 1950s. In 1991, The National Commission on Children estimated that fully one-quarter of all children are “at severe risk” in relation to substance abuse, school failure, delinquency, etc., and another quarter are “moderately at risk.” H. Stephen Glenn and Jane Nelsen document these changes in their book, *Raising Self-Reliant Children in a Self-Indulgent World*. Four major factors necessary for the development of capable young people have been identified that are generally missing from our culture—networks, meaningful roles, on-the-job training, and parenting resources. 4-H project meetings can help restore these vital missing pieces.
Glenn’s definition of a network, in the simplest sense, defines the 4-H project meeting: “two or more individuals who engage in dialogue about the world and the life they are living and who occasionally collaborate to achieve some mutually desirable end.” The dialog for critical thinking portion of these lesson plans directly address this definition.

Many youth today are growing up in families and communities without any significant role to play. They just don’t seem needed until they become an adult. Research indicates that a primary cause of decline in motivation, discipline, and achievement is this perceived lack of need or value. Glenn and Nelsen challenge us to deal with youth actively in ways that affirm their contributions. **We must treat youth as contributors and assets rather than passive objects to be done for or to.** As 4-H project leaders, when we listen to members, we must take them seriously and treat them as significant, we will begin to restore the dialogue and collaboration necessary to link youth with the larger society.

On-the-job training with “hands-on” involvement has been the cornerstone of 4-H project work. It is important for youth to have this opportunity because that is where they learn patience, personal initiative, hard work, and deferred gratification. If they don’t learn about real life in this way, they receive its impressions passively from the media, generally through five hours of television each day.

“Learning by doing” is one of the primary reasons why 4-H has been recognized in the field of informal education. If we, as parents or leaders, think we are helping when we do their work for them, we need to stop and consider that, “The best way to destroy self-esteem and a sense of worth in young people is to do too much for them. This robs them of a sense of personal capability. The greatest gift of all is to help them validate themselves as agents in their own lives.” (Glenn and Nelsen, pg. 47)

Today’s parents need all the help they can get. According to the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation report, *Reweaving the Tattered Web—Socializing and Enculturating our Children*, by Basil J. Whiting in June 1993, “Three generations and extended families in the same house are not so common. Grandparents and aunts and uncles live longer distances away, and often alone (only five percent of American children now see a grandparent regularly)…. Divorce is common. Half of those who remarry will experience a second divorce. Half of all children will spend some of their childhood with a divorced parent.” As a 4-H project leader, you become a parent resource, both to the child and the child’s parent.

Today’s parents are concerned and fearful for their children. Why? Dr. Bruce Baldwin, nationally known psychologist and author says, “They wonder if their kids have what it takes to succeed as they have. Parents know that in the future, even menial positions will require well-developed cognitive skills: reading, writing, math, computer literacy, and the ability to process information quickly and efficiently.” (*TEAM, The Early Adolescence Magazine*, Vol. IV, No. 5, May-June 1990)
The same magazine noted that a large metropolitan education trust reported the types of requirements for employees comparing the past with the future:

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<td>Thinkers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single repetitive functions</td>
<td>Quality circle approach</td>
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<td>Individual piecework</td>
<td>Team centered</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autocratic</td>
<td>Participatory</td>
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<tr>
<td>Single job in lifetime</td>
<td>Flexible learners</td>
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<tr>
<td>Familiar with simple machines</td>
<td>Technology knowledgeable</td>
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<td>Single task orientation</td>
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The January 1990, issue of *Prevention Forum* magazine offers hope for today’s youth when it reports that research on youth who have become healthy adults in spite of adversity have had the opportunity, somewhere in their lives, to experience a caring, nurturing environment that encourages their active participation in problem-solving, decision-making, planning, goal-setting, and helping others in meaningful activities.

According to the Kauffman Foundation report, “child and youth development by natural osmosis is no longer an effective strategy. We can rely no longer on child development to occur as a natural by-product of family and community functioning because too many families and communities no longer function the way they used to.

This means reweaving the web to do what the family and community no longer do, and perhaps no longer can do adequately. It means constructing new institutions and new ways for children and youth to sustain relationships with a variety of caring adults…. Yet this must be supplementation, not replacement. We dare not leave out strands of parent-strengthening services in the many ways and places where traditional parenting is, at bottom, the still-to-be-preferred approach.”

The project lesson plans contained in this leader’s notebook have been designed to incorporate the components critical to the development of capable, contributing young people. By following these plans, leaders will help prepare their members to function and live productively in the world which they will soon inherit and direct. They are also designed to help you, as the leader, quickly and easily prepare for the lesson, conduct the activity, and facilitate the discussion and dialogue.
**EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING MODEL**

1. **Experience**
   - the activity; perform, do it

2. **Share**
   - the results, reactions, observations publicly

3. **Process**
   - discuss, look at the experience; analyse, reflect

4. **Generalize**
   - to connect the experience to real-world examples

5. **Apply**
   - what was learned to a similar or different situation: practice

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**Example questions used to complete the Experiential Learning Model**

**A. Share—What Happened?**
1. What did you do?
2. What happened? What did you see? Hear? Touch? Taste?
3. How did you feel?
4. How did it feel to . . . ?
5. What was most difficult? Easiest?

**B. Process—What’s Important?**
1. What problems or issues seemed to occur over and over?
2. What similar experiences have you had?
3. What was most important?
4. Why was that significant?
5. Why do you think it happened?

**C. Generalize—So What?**
1. What did you learn about yourself through this activity?
2. What did you learn about a life skill?
3. How do the major themes or ideas relate to real life and not just the activity?
4. How did you go about making your decision?

**D. Apply—Now What?**
1. How can you apply what you learned (life skill) to a new situation?
2. How will the issues raised by this activity be useful in the future?
3. How will you act differently in the future as a result of this activity?
4. How can you do it differently for different results?
APPLYING THE EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING PROCESS
Hands-on involvement (learning by doing) is the most effective method for learning this material. It helps youth learn personal initiative, hard work, patience and deferred gratification. By doing the work for the youth, parents, teachers and leaders may destroy the young person’s self-esteem and sense of worth. They may rob youth of learning by trial and error, practicing skills and becoming competent and capable. The greatest gift leaders can give is to help youth validate themselves as capable people. These lessons were designed using a model known as the experiential learning process which was adopted as the national curriculum development model for Extension Youth Development in 1992.

Experiential learning takes place when a person is involved in an activity, looks back and evaluates it, determines what was useful or important to remember, and uses this information to perform another activity.

The Experiential Learning process encourages youth involvement through dialogue and strengthens adult-child relationships. To enhance the goal of learning: an atmosphere of friendliness, trust, and unconditional acceptance is required.

In each lesson, the “Dialogue for Critical Thinking” questions help complete the experiential learning steps. Except for the content review questions, most of these leading questions do not have a “right” or “wrong” answer. In addition to providing feedback to the leader, their purpose is to affirm and validate the perceptions of the members.

Take time to begin to feel comfortable with this process. It may seem awkward at first, but remember, Latin for “to teach” means to draw forth through dialogue and understanding. When the Experiential Learning process is used to help youth share the process of discovery, leaders will be developing them as critical thinkers, concerned for others, with the wisdom to function successfully in their future world.

FORMAT OF KANSAS 4-H RABBIT PROJECT
Each lesson plan in this notebook follows the same general outline which includes:

TITLE generally descriptive of the rabbit skill to be learned.

LEVEL describes which age level it is written for.

What Members Will Learn . . .

ABOUT THE PROJECT indicates what rabbit subject matter will be learned.

ABOUT THEMSELVES indicates what personal or life skills will be learned. These specific objectives can be used to evaluate if the lesson was successful and learning goals accomplished by the members.
MATERIALS NEEDED tells the leader what equipment, supplies, visuals or handouts will be needed in preparation for the lesson.

ACTIVITY TIME NEEDED gives the approximate time needed to complete the activity. Most lessons can be completed in 30 to 60 minutes.

ACTIVITY information is what the leader needs to know to teach the activity. This portion can be used as a leader’s script for the leader if necessary.

LEADER NOTES give directions or instructions for the leader which go with the “Activity” information. Space is available for leaders to write their own notes also. Member activity sheets or handouts are provided for the leader to copy and give to members to work on at the meeting or take home so parents can reinforce the learning.

DIALOGUE FOR CRITICAL THINKING questions are provided for the leader to help enhance life skill development and generalize the subject information to the real world of the youth participant.

GOING FURTHER ideas such as tours, demonstrations, handouts, and things to do at home, are for the leader and members to consider if they want to learn more about this particular lesson content.

REFERENCES credit the source used to develop this lesson activity in addition to the author.

AUTHOR is the source of information plus names of Kansas State University faculty who reviewed and adapted this lesson including specific ideas from volunteers.

The rabbit project is one of several Kansas 4-H projects to undergo a major change in the way the project materials have been designed and used. Leaders need to realize that members will no longer receive member resource books or materials through the County Extension Office. Members will receive a “Rabbit Member Guide and Annual Report” which describes the concepts to be learned, suggests where they can find more information, provides space for beginning goals and ending evaluations, and a year-end rabbit summary record. All other printed materials for members will be given to them by their rabbit project leader.

In order for members to have a successful project experience, it is imperative that a leader meet with members. These lessons work best with an adult and/or teen leader working with a small group of members. Several youth in the group will stimulate the discussion and dialogue, which is so important to the success of this process. If members are unable to meet in a group, the parent may serve as a leader to his/her child by requesting copies of the appropriate lesson plans from the Extension office and completing them at home.
The rabbit project has been restructured to feature a series of sequential learning experiences based on members’ age and skill level, which will challenge them with new skills each year they remain in the project. Our goal is to make them knowledgeable of the entire rabbit industry rather than specialize in one type of project exhibit. In fact, owning an animal and exhibiting at a show need not be required. It is possible for a member to participate in the group lessons without owning an animal. Owning, caring for, and exhibiting an animal should be considered a special bonus to the total project experience.

The project exhibit should be decided by the member, parent and leader, based on member’s age, skill level, facility and financial needs, and what local exhibit opportunities have been identified. Most counties provide county fair classes for meat pens and breeding classes for does and bucks. Others may have fur classes. This approach to the rabbit materials provides maximum flexibility for counties to establish exhibits that meet the needs of their rabbit members. Rabbit shows across the state offer all three of these exhibit opportunities.

Ideally, members should progress through all levels in order, but it is not necessary. If project members vary in age and skill levels and the group is large enough, splitting into like age groups with additional leaders is recommended. Older members might be used as assistant leaders with beginning levels which then allows teens to be self-directed learners for advanced skills, or teens might meet together as a multi-club or county-wide group.

ROLE OF THE 4-H PROJECT LEADER
Your major roles are that of teacher, facilitator and encourager.

Your Role as Teacher:
- Help members set goals.
- Share your knowledge of the project through meetings, tours and home visits. Having five to 10 meetings works well. Set meeting dates and times with the participants. Remind participants of upcoming meetings.
- Invite and involve parents and other leaders when appropriate.
- Keep your skills current through trainings, consultations, and reading. Ask for help or advice as needed.

Your Role as Facilitator:
- Use techniques to facilitate (assist) learning. See “Teaching with Discussion.”
- Be sensitive and respond to individuals’ needs, beliefs and family circumstances. Do not judge.
- Help members find additional learning opportunities and resources. (Using “Going Further” in the lessons.)
- Relate project to everyday life and career possibilities.
Your Role as Encourager:
• Recognize the personal growth of members and help them celebrate their successes.
• Lead (not push) participants into new skills and new ways of thinking. Encourage and challenge them to become better persons, yet always accept them and love them as they are now.

Your classroom is wherever the member must be in order to learn—in the home, meeting room, or on a field trip. Your subject matter, what you teach, is rabbit and youth development.

TEACHING WITH DISCUSSION
Why Use Discussion?
Discussion is part of every lesson. Discussion questions appear in the “Dialogue for Critical Thinking” section. Discussion is most effective when you want to:
1. Give participants practice thinking in terms of the subject matter.
2. Help participants evaluate their beliefs.
3. Stimulate participants to apply principles.
4. Help participants learn to anticipate or solve problems.
5. Use the resources of the group members.
7. Develop motivation for further learning.
8. Get feedback on how well participants learned the material.

How Can I Get People to Talk?
Discussion can be difficult at first simply because few participate. Sometimes, all that is necessary to improve the situation is time, your smiles and encouragement, and practice. Many participants are used to being talked at, not with in educational situations. The fear of being embarrassed is another major factor. Not knowing the other participants, being unsure of one’s idea, being afraid of sounding silly—these make participants feel that the safest thing to do is remain silent.

How Can I Help Them Overcome Their Fear?
The first step is making sure participants become acquainted with each other and with you. Begin by having get-acquainted activities at the organizational meeting. Continue by providing games, refreshments, time to talk, and other opportunities for friendship building throughout the project meeting period. Get to know each participant personally. Take a special interest in them; they will come to trust you.

When asking a question, call on participants by name. This seems to promote freer communication.

Sitting in a circle also encourages exchange.

Eliminate the fear of being wrong. (This is a tremendous barrier to discussion.) Avoid questions where there is only one right answer. Do not judge participants’ answers about beliefs and preferences. Do not allow any participant to make unkind comments about another’s answer.
At times, give participants opportunities to talk in small groups to work out answers together. If your group seems to have difficulty responding to questions, allow them to write out their answers first. This seems to give them added confidence to share their thoughts with others. As much as possible, ask questions that can have no wrong answers: How do you feel about this? What do you think?

**What if Someone Talks Too Much?**
There are several effective ways to work with a person who monopolizes the discussion. You might ask this person and at least one other to observe the discussion and report their observations to the group; for example: Did we solve the problem? Did everyone get a chance to participate? Another option is to divide into smaller discussion groups. Ask one person from each group to report the results of the discussion. Do not choose the monopolizer to report. You also could talk to this person privately. Explain that you appreciate the participation and insights, but you believe other people also should be given the opportunity to learn how to talk in a group. Ask this participant to help the group by allowing others more time for discussion and perhaps saving personal insights for more difficult questions.


**THE FIRST MEETING OF THE YEAR**
The first meeting is usually an organizational one to plan for the project year. It is a good idea to have parents attend this first meeting with the members. Parents should be encouraged to take part in any or all activities.

As members arrive, plan something for them to do. Perhaps a teen leader can be prepared with a get-acquainted game or activity. Make sure every member knows everyone else. Do not assume this is the case. Taking time now to build group trust will have payoffs later in commitment, discipline and encouraging discussion. Share some of the broad objectives you have for the rabbit project. Set dates with members and parents for future meetings. Schedule any demonstrations with members and discuss other special activities for the entire year. Discuss your expectations for recovering costs of materials, copying, etc.

Young people deserve to be treated as contributors and assets instead of passive objects to be done for or to. Your job is to involve your participants and challenge them toward learning and personal growth. They should be involved in the planning and preparation of meetings. A map helps to give us direction, keep us on track and know when we’ve reached our destination. We’ve designed a MAP—Member Achievement Plan—to help you and your 4-H members plan, as a group and as individuals, what they want to learn, make and do in this project. This is called goal-setting. It also teaches decision making.
Ask members to bring their Rabbit Member Guide and Annual Report to the first meeting along with pocket folder or binder to put it in. They will use it to begin to develop their “MAP” by completing Steps 1-7. The leader and project group decide on four to six lessons they would like to learn about. Provide members a list of lesson titles from the appropriate level and let them choose. There should be plenty of choices to choose from different topics within the same Level if the same members enroll next year. As members get older, it is appropriate for them to choose less from a given list and become skilled at identifying and writing their own learning goals.

Goals may be divided into two groups: short-term and long-term. Short-term goals can be accomplished during the project year, while long-term goals take one or more years. Members will need to work with both types; however, a base for success and confidence will be established quickly with short-term goals.

**Short-term goals:**
- Must be specific and attainable
- Have a measurable outcome
- Specify time of completion
- Often related to long-term goals

**Examples:**
A. By the end of the summer, I will know how to do rabbit showmanship.
B. By May 1, I will know how to carry a rabbit without getting scratched.

**Long-term goals:**
- Must be believable
- Give direction and motivation
- Describe conditions one hopes to achieve

**Examples:**
A. To be the champion rabbit showperson at the county fair.
B. To expand my rabbitry to include five different breeds.

It is easy for a member to list long-term goals. If your members tend to think of only long-term goals, simply ask them, “What will you need to learn or do in order to accomplish this goal? How will you make this happen?” Answering these questions will provide many short-term goals. As a leader, you are aware of many of your members’ capabilities. You can help identify which goals are realistic for this year and which might have to become long-term goals.

After setting goals, review them periodically with members to see what progress is being made or what needs to be altered to reflect current situations. Hearing genuine praise or concern from interested adults is essential in helping members obtain their goals.

Explain other parts of the Member Guide and Annual Report as necessary. Discuss expectation of members and parents. Complete a short lesson activity from the appropriate level.
MAP STEP 1
At the project meeting, or at home with their family, members identify two things they would like to learn in their rabbit project this year.

MAP STEP 2
List three to five steps that will help you complete your first goal.

MAP STEP 3
List a date or deadline that shows when you plan to complete each step toward your goal.

MAP STEP 4
As you complete a step or meet a deadline, give yourself a boost, energizer or reinforcer for your success.

MAP STEP 5
List one energizer for each step accomplished toward a goal. After finishing a step, record the “date completed.”

MAP STEP 6
Repeat Map Steps 2 through 5 for your second goal.

MAP STEP 7
Share with a project friend what you have planned. Talking helps generate new ideas to improve your plans. After explaining your goals ask your friend to sign your plan as well as your leader. This will help confirm your plans and be a source for assistance.

MAP STEP 9
Take notes in the journal to help remember your project experiences. Tell what you did, what you learned, and how you felt about each project activity (meeting, trip, demo, etc.). Note: Leader may want to keep journals and plan for each member to make an entry as part of each activity.

MAP STEP 9
At the end of the year take time to reflect with your project friend and leader. Record your thoughts and ideas. How did the goals work? What was learned? What needs to be accomplished next? Members may not have accomplished what they set out to do, but they may have learned many things in the process. Setting a goal to reach a partial number of total goals isn’t a bad idea, since it enables the younger member to feel successful.

The member and the leader, or in the case of the parent leader, the member and the parent, should complete Step 7 of the MAP as soon as the member has completed his/her short-term plans. All members who complete this step should be given immediate recognition for their project goal-planning accomplishments. Kansas 4-H has created a new recogni-
tion system for recognizing 4-H members for reaching annual project goals. Check with your County Extension Agent to see if this special recognition is offered in your county.

When properly used, incentives can be an effective way to encourage good project work and enhance personal development of the members. One of the strongest human incentives is that inner feeling of accomplishment and achievement.

Public recognition in news articles or at meetings, a word of encouragement or pat on the back from leaders are also effective in promoting desirable performance.

Group recognition should be used at the end of the project to recognize the accomplishments of each member who completed the project, attended a certain number of meetings, demonstrated certain acquired skills, etc. Recognize not only the member who might have won the championship, but use your imagination to recognize the most improved showperson, best caretaker, best records, most improved rabbit judge.

REFERENCES

Portions of this introduction section have been adapted from the Beef Cattle Leader Guide published by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, and from Celebration!, Nebraska Cooperative Extension Service, 4-H publication 262.

Reweaving the Tattered Web—Socializing and Enculturating our Children, by Basil J. Whiting, is published by Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation, 4900 Oak, Kansas City, MO 64112-2776.

Raising Self-Reliant Children in a Self-Indulgent World, by H. Stephen Glenn and Jane Nelsen, Ed. D., is published by Prima Publishing and Communications, P.O. Box 1260SR, Rocklin, CA 95677, (916) 624-5718, and can be ordered from St. Martin’s Press, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010 (212) 674-5151.

A video presentation by Stephen Glenn, which summarizes much of Raising Self-Reliant Children in a Self-Indulgent World, can be requested through your county Extension office. Ask for the video, Developing Capable Young People, available from Kansas State University, Department of Communications, Production Services/Instructional Media.
PLANNING HELPS
The following forms may be used by the leader to help in planning for their rabbit project experience.
  - Project Member Enrollment Record
  - Project Leader Meeting Record
  - List of Members and Their Goals
  - Volunteer Support Form
  - Project Meeting Checklist
# PROJECT MEMBER ENROLLMENT RECORD

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<th>Age Jan. 1</th>
<th>Yrs. in Project</th>
<th>Parents’ Name(s)</th>
<th>Address</th>
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PROJECT MEMBERS

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LIST OF MEMBERS AND THEIR GOALS

1. NAME: ____________________________
   Plans or wants to do: ____________________________
   Assistance, resources, or materials needed: ____________________________

2. NAME: ____________________________
   Plans or wants to do: ____________________________
   Assistance, resources, or materials needed: ____________________________

3. NAME: ____________________________
   Plans or wants to do: ____________________________
   Assistance, resources, or materials needed: ____________________________

4. NAME: ____________________________
   Plans or wants to do: ____________________________
   Assistance, resources, or materials needed: ____________________________

5. NAME: ____________________________
   Plans or wants to do: ____________________________
   Assistance, resources, or materials needed: ____________________________

6. NAME: ____________________________
   Plans or wants to do: ____________________________
   Assistance, resources, or materials needed: ____________________________

7. NAME: ____________________________
   Plans or wants to do: ____________________________
   Assistance, resources, or materials needed: ____________________________
I would be willing to assist the 4-H program by:

Volunteer I  Volunteer II

☐ ☐ Helping members with demonstrations.
☐ ☐ Helping members with project talks or public speaking.
☐ ☐ Helping provide transportation to project meetings.
☐ ☐ Assisting members with project records.
☐ ☐ Helping provide transportation for project tours or field trips.
☐ ☐ Assisting with project meetings when needed. Special skills I have:____________________
☐ ☐ Help bring refreshments.
☐ ☐ Developing a “calling tree” for meeting reminders.
☐ ☐ Making my home available for a project meeting if needed.
☐ ☐ Helping provide special supplies if needed.
☐ ☐ Others, please explain:__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

I would be willing to assist the 4-H program by:

Volunteer I  Volunteer II

☐ ☐ Helping members with demonstrations.
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☐ ☐ Making my home available for a project meeting if needed.
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☐ ☐ Others, please explain:__________________________________________________________

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☐ ☐ Help bring refreshments.
☐ ☐ Developing a “calling tree” for meeting reminders.
☐ ☐ Making my home available for a project meeting if needed.
☐ ☐ Helping provide special supplies if needed.
☐ ☐ Others, please explain:__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
## PROJECT MEETING CHECKLIST

### A MEETING EVALUATION INSTRUMENT

After your project meeting, take a few minutes to consider each of the following questions. This checklist should also serve as a reminder of ideas to incorporate in future project meetings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Were the objectives of the meeting clear to members?</td>
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<td>2. Did I give each member a chance to actively participate?</td>
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<td>(sharing ideas, assisting, presentations)</td>
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<td>3. Did I commend or encourage each youth in some way?</td>
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<td>4. Did I plan for differences in ages, abilities, and interests of members?</td>
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<td>5. Did I observe progress of individual members?</td>
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<td>6. Did I involve other volunteers in some way?</td>
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<td>7. Did I give members a chance to assume responsibility when it was appropriate?</td>
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<td>8. Did I incorporate some fun activity or game into the project meeting?</td>
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<td>9. Did I summarize the new information shared and skills learned at the close of the meeting?</td>
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<td>10. Most of all, did I enjoy working with the young people involved?</td>
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*Seven or more positive responses denotes an excellent meeting rating!*
Welcome to the 4-H Rabbit Project! The purpose of this Rabbit Member Guide and Annual Report is to help you journey through your Rabbit Project. This guide will:

- Identify how to set goals on things to learn and begin your rabbit project,
- Identify 4-H learning opportunities,
- Identify 4-H recognition system,
- Provide you with an annual summary for your Kansas 4-H Rabbit Project.

**EXAMPLES OF GOALS ON THINGS TO LEARN**

- **Level I**
  - Identify 10 parts of a rabbit
  - How to show a rabbit

- **Level II**
  - How to make a nest box
  - How to judge rabbits

- **Level III**
  - How to give medicines
  - How rabbits digest their food

- **Level IV**
  - How to conduct a skillathon
  - How to balance a ration

In addition, there is a note to your parents/guardian at the bottom of this page, so that they can help you with your rabbit project.

**LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES IN 4-H**

- Attending project meetings with your friends
- Learn record keeping skills
- Giving rabbit presentations at club and county 4-H Days, State Fair, school or civic groups
- Attending judging clinics and contests to observe, evaluate and make decisions
- Exhibiting at local, county, state or at American Rabbit Breeders Association (ARBA) sanctioned shows.

**4-H RECOGNITION SYSTEM**

4-H’s Recognition System is diverse and provides you with many learning opportunities:

- Participation: attending project meetings, helping others at project meetings, show and share at State Fair
- Progress toward goals: meeting deadline you set on MAP sheet (see page 2)
- Standards of excellence: meeting a high percentage of learning goals for each level of the project
- Peer competition: judging and showmanship contests at rabbit shows and fairs
- Team/cooperative efforts: community service activities

**NOTES TO PARENTS/GUARDIANS:**

The Rabbit Project is one of several projects in the Animal Sciences Division of Kansas 4-H projects. It is an ideal project for both rural and urban youth, as well as all age groups. Rabbits are a good beginning project because they adapt to many different environments, require minimal investment and teach responsibility.

If your youth does not have a group leader, check with your Extension Office to see if your youth can participate in a neighboring club. If this is not available, you will need to act as the leader or helper. The Extension Office has a copy of the “Rabbit Leader’s Notebook” that you may wish to use.

Insert all member handouts and activity sheets in the 4-H Record Book after this Rabbit Member Guide and Annual Report. These “records” are a recording of what was done. List costs, hours spent, etc. on your journal page created in MAP STEP 8. Financial and performance records may be found in: Level II pages 27 to 30; Level III pages 51 to 62 and 95 to 98; Level IV pages 51 to 60. Using records before the youth is capable of understanding the concept or doing the math computations is strongly discouraged!
HOW TO SET GOALS AND BEGIN YOUR RABBIT PROJECT USING THE MEMBER ACHIEVEMENT PLAN—MAP

This is your Member Achievement Plan—MAP. This plan will help you begin to decide what goals, deadlines, and energizers you want to use for the upcoming year.

MAP STEP 1
Identify as goals two things you would like to learn this year. Your leader will give you a list that might help you think about what you want to learn in your rabbit project.

Goal 1: ____________________________________________
Goal 2: ____________________________________________

MAP STEP 2
After you identify each goal, let’s break them into steps. You can list 3 to 5 steps for each one of your goals.

Steps for Goal 1:                                             MAP STEP 3  MAP STEP 4  MAP STEP 5
                                                             Deadline   Energizer   Date Completed
1st ___________________________________ _____________ ____________ ___________
2nd ___________________________________ _____________ ____________ ___________
3rd ___________________________________ _____________ ____________ ___________
4th ___________________________________ _____________ ____________ ___________
5th ___________________________________ _____________ ____________ ___________

MAP STEP 3
Now that you’ve put Goal 1 into steps, go back and put a deadline next to each step. The deadline shows when you plan to complete the step. Every step should have a different deadline or date.

MAP STEP 4
Sometimes goals are hard to stick to. It takes a long time to see results. So as you complete a step and meet a deadline you need to give yourself a boost. Let’s call this boost an energizer or reinforcer. An energizer can be anything that you like and enjoy: going to a movie with a friend, talking on the phone, listening to a CD, taking your dog for a walk, eating a healthy snack, playing ball, etc.

What are other things that you might use as energizers? List them here: ____________________________________________

Now, place one energizer for each step under the column marked, “Energizer.”

MAP STEP 5
When you’ve finished a step in your goal, place the date completed in the column marked, “Date Completed.”
MAP STEP 6
Now that you’ve identified your steps, deadlines, and energizers, do the same for Goal 2.

Steps for Goal 2:  

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MAP STEP 7
Your goals, steps, deadlines, and energizers are written. It’s time to share with one of your project members. When we talk to others about our goals, it helps us get a better idea of what we are going to do. Sometimes talking will help us get a better idea, so don’t worry about changing any part of your MAP if you want to. After you’ve explained your goal to a project friend, have them sign and date it in the space provided below.

Project Friend’s Signature __________________________ Date ________________

Have your project leader sign below:

Project Leader’s Signature __________________________ Date ________________

MAP STEP 8
Keep a journal of everything you do in the project to help you remember these experiences. (Create a page with these headings and add it to this record.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>What you did, learned, how you felt, costs, time spent, etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov 5</td>
<td>Attended a project meeting and learned parts of a rabbit. Now I know why a rabbit hops instead of walks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 6</td>
<td>Spent 5 hours building a nest box at a cost of $10.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

MAP STEP 9
You’ve spent a whole year on your rabbit project. You should have learned many new things. Take some time to think back and review your journal (STEP 8). Write one or two main things you learned about rabbits. What is something you learned about yourself while studying rabbits? (Add a page if you need more space.)
**Kansas 4-H Rabbit Summary**

(If you have more than one animal, change answers to totals or averages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of project</th>
<th>Type of animal to exhibit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Club</td>
<td>County</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Breed(s)  
2. Date project started  
3. Date project ended  
4. Total value or money received (column 2) $  
5. Value of rabbits at beginning (column 1) $  
6. Total feed cost $  
7. Other expenses $  
8. Total expenses (add lines 5, 6, 7) $  
9. Net income from project (line 4 minus line 8) $  
10. Number of litters kindled  
11. Total rabbits kindled  
12. Total rabbits weaned  

### Rabbits at Beginning of 4-H Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old does</td>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old bucks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young does (under 6 months)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young bucks (under 6 months)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Rabbits at Close of 4-H Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Old does</td>
<td></td>
<td>$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old bucks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young rabbits</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TOTAL $  
Total $  

(column number) (1) (2)