

## Tips for Oregon 4-H Judges

### Be informed:

- Be familiar with the **total project area** including goals, purposes, objectives, activities, materials, and the requirements for the projects. Feel free to check in with the fair management to clarify your understanding of project requirements.
- Keep up to date on changes that have been made in project requirements.
- Recognize the developmental level of the different aged youth. Comment on achievement and successes relative to their developmental stage
- Ask if any exhibitors may have disabilities and know what that means for your judging.
- Give clear explanations and factual statements for decisions made, not opinions.
- Give personalized remarks on each exhibit rather than saying the same thing to all exhibitors. Exhibitors will compare comments and confidence in the judge and judging system can be affected.
- In most cases fair management is open to suggestions for improvements in the judging process. If you have feedback, please share with fair management and be open to their comments.

### Be professional:

- Remember, youth development is the primary purpose of a 4-H project participation.
- Recognize the child's investment and effort no matter how small. Emphasize their stronger points and abilities demonstrated. Praise the completion of the project and taking the risk to show their work. Offer constructive comments on ways they can improve their skills. Help them to see the growth opportunity through project participation.
- Maintain a good, modest appearance and be well groomed. Dress in the "business casual" level even in hot temperatures (modest, nice looking skirts, pants and shorts, tops with some sleeve and modest neck-line).
- Remember you are representing the Oregon 4-H Judging system and are a role model for youth. If you smoke, be discrete and ensure your cigarettes are not visible to youth.
- In order to concentrate on the job, be rested, alert and not impaired.
- Be prompt. If an issue has arisen to cause tardiness, contact fair management as soon as possible. Be sure to have appropriate contact information with you at all times.
- Judging times can vary. The best scheduling plan can be destroyed by an unforeseen circumstance. Stay flexible and willing to stay later than expected.
- Attitude is everything. Delays and scheduling problems can be frustrating; remember to keep a good attitude.
- Have a sense of humor while remembering judging is to be taken seriously.
- The educational value for the exhibitor always comes first.
- Judge the project and the member's performance; not the member.
- Be tactful and mindful of the exhibitor's feelings.
- Be consistent, fair and honest in your scoring standards. Avoid personal preferences and biases.
- Make decisions quickly and firmly. Be fair. Be firm. Be friendly. Be consistent.



### Questions to ask before agreeing to judge:

- What will I be responsible for judging? (4-H, FFA, Open class) Will I receive a copy of the fair book/classes for the classes I will be judging?
- Do you use the Danish Merit judging system or another version? Are there any special awards of which I need to be aware? Are there any special considerations I need to know for this project area/county?
- Will there be someone there to help as a clerk or will I be my own clerk?
- Is there a judge and clerk training prior to the judging?
- What are the expectations of me following the judging?
- What compensation and accommodations are offered?
  - Who makes the arrangements for the hotel?
  - How are meals handled?
  - If documentation for travel is required, what is needed and where do I turn it in?
- Will I receive a written contract? Is there other paperwork I should be expecting?
- When, where and with whom do I check in with upon arriving?
- Where will the judging take place?
- Is there anything specific I need to bring?
- Will I pick up a check after judging or will it be sent?

