

WELCOME 4-H HORSE PARENTS!

So your horse crazy son or daughter talked you into getting them a horse or pony. Congratulations! They will be learning responsibility and love for their animal. They will learn a lot about horses while enrolled in the 4-H Horse Project. We 4-H horse parents have teamed up to give you a list of helpful instructions on beginning a successful 4-H Horse Project. Don't hesitate to ask any time you have questions. We can't help if you don't ask.

1. **What is required for the horse & rider?** You do not need fancy equipment. You do need to get a correctly fitted SEI approved equestrian safety helmet (required), boots with heels, saddle, bridle and halter. If you have any questions on these items, please contact one of the 4-H Horse project members. We are always glad to help out.
2. **Where can I find tack and show clothes?** There are many catalogs available, local places include Rose Ranch, Horse & Hound in La Crosse, Stockman's in Osseo, Bonnie Brae's in Eau Claire and many others. Another good place to find these items are tack swaps. These are usually held in the early spring months. Check your local papers especially the Tradin' Post, Buyer's Express or Country Today. These all contain ads for horse items. The 4-H Horse project holds new and used tack sale in February.
3. **What is required to show the horse at the Fair?** The horse must be registered with the University Extension Office before May 1st of each year. The form can be obtained from the office. Also required is a current year Coggins test. Your local vet can perform this test. The horse should also be up to date on his vaccine shots. You may register more than one horse, in case something happens to the first one. It is a good idea to register all horses at your home.
4. **What are the Horse Clinics?** The 4-H Horse project holds clinics Wednesday evenings during the months of June and July. All 4-H Horse project members are expected to attend these clinics. To be eligible to show at the Jackson County Fair, members must attend at least three clinics. They are also required to bring their horse and Coggins papers to at least one of these clinics. If these requirements are not met, the horse and member may not show at the fair. The first clinic covers safety and rules. Other clinics show members how to do Showmanship, Western Pleasure and English classes. The safety clinic is a very good clinic for parents and members to attend together. Clinics usually start at 7:00 p.m. Wednesday evenings. The schedule will be gone over at the spring horse meetings. 4-H Horse meetings are held at the Extension Office the third Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. beginning in January.
5. **How do I get my horse to the clinics?** Find someone who can haul the horse to the clinics or buy/lease a trailer. This must be done ahead of time. Do not wait until the last minute to find a way to get your horse to the clinics and fair. Do not forget your Coggins test paper and copy. This must be given to the 4-H board member present before the horse is unloaded from the trailer.
6. **Other horse shows to attend in the area?** The 4-H horse project holds a fun show in the spring at the Jackson County Fairgrounds. The Wazee Riders club also holds shows in the spring and summer at the Jackson County Fairgrounds. Other local clubs such as the Neillsville Saddle Tramps and Trempealeau County 4-H also hold local shows. These may

be announced in the local newspapers or at club meetings.

7. **Which items should I bring to the Fair?** Bring water bucket, feed bucket and hay and feed along with grooming equipment. A list of items is given on the last page of this report as a reminder. Do not forget to bring the Coggins paper and copy and extra lead ropes along with the horse. The horse may not be unloaded until the gate attendant has checked these papers. The horse must be at the Fair grounds by 4:30 p.m. on Thursday of the Fair. Bring your horse in to the fair as early as possible. It gets very busy later in the day with all the other animals coming in also. Stay with your animal while it gets used to all the noise and commotion. It is very important that the 4-H child does the work. The parent can supervise and should stay close until the horse is used to the noise and rides at the fair.
8. **What else can be done before the Fair?** Think about stall decorations before the fair. Stall dimensions are usually 8' x 10' with some stalls being 10' x 10'. Some ideas used over the years are: Red, White & Blue, Stars with photos in them, Cowboy themes, etc. Staples, wire or tape may be used to put up the decorations. Some people put up short curtains also. Be sure the decorations won't harm or scare the horse. Also show clothes and tack should be tried on to be sure they fit properly. A poster needs to be made showing the name of the horse, 4-H member, feeding information and classes. Pictures are also a great addition. The back of the poster must list emergency phone numbers for adults available both day and night. The horse may be bathed and trimmed at home also. Some people trim the bridle path behind the ears and ear hairs and feathers down by the hoof of the horse. They may also shave the muzzle of the horse. Have some one who has done this before help you the first time. Have the horses hooves trimmed about two weeks before the fair also.
9. **What other stall area items are needed?** It is very handy to have a plastic container for feed, grooming items, etc. in front of the stall area. Chairs can also be placed in front of the stall. Just be sure they do not take up too much room. Horses and people have to move freely through the aisle between the stalls.
10. **What to do on Fair work night?** The Wednesday before Fair is Fair work night. This is the night stalls are up and need to be cleaned. Bedding is spread in the stalls and general clean up is done. Stalls may also be decorated at this time. Be aware that it gets very dusty in the stall area. Bring brooms, wheelbarrows, shovels, buckets for cleaning, sponges and brushes to clean stalls.
11. **Okay, we are at the Fair, now what?** Get your stall number from the Horse leader if you haven't already. Put your horse in the stall along with a bucket of water and some hay to keep him busy. Use an extra lead rope to secure the stall door. Ask one of the older youth to show you how. Stay near your horse for the first few hours to be sure he is settling in okay. Now is the time to chat with your stall neighbors and put the finishing touches on your stall decorations. The manure pit is located between the draft horse stalls and the outdoor arena. The wheelbarrows and pitchforks are located in the hallway next to the outdoor arena. These are available for use if you didn't bring your own. The bedding is kept in a large grain wagon. You need to load a wheelbarrow full of bedding and place it in your horse's stall. The stall must be kept clean all the time. This means cleaning it several times a day. Leave your feed and hay in your trailer or truck. Just bring in enough for each feeding. Tack can be placed in the locker room located in the back hallway between the overhead doors. This room is kept locked at night. You can park your trailer next to the

outdoor arena or in the field across from the fairgrounds in front of Pine View nursing home. It is handy to have the trailer available for feed and hay storage.

12. **What are daily items to be done at the fair?** The horse stall must be kept clean at all times. This means several times a day. Also fresh water must be available at all times. The bucket should be clean and filled with water. There are spigots available on the back wall of the arena to fill the buckets. Hay nets may be used to feed hay. However, it is very important that these are tied up high enough that the horse cannot get their hoof in it. Hay can otherwise be fed loose on the stall floor. The hay net must be removed promptly when it is empty. Grain buckets should also be removed when empty. The aisle in front of each horse's stall must also be kept clean and neat. This means throwing away garbage and raking the sand. Points are given for herdsmanship awards for keeping your stall area neat and clean. The herdsmanship judges come through the barn a couple times a day to look at the stall and horse areas. Help keep the whole barn safe by picking up clutter and litter.
13. **When can I exercise my horse?** It is very important to exercise the horse twice a day. The exercise times are posted at the back of the stall area on the arena wall. Be sure to read and follow all rules. The horse may only be exercised by the 4-H member showing the animal. No one else is allowed to ride or exercise the horse!
14. **Friday, Horse show, 3:00 p.m. SHARP: Halter, Showmanship and Trail classes** will be held this afternoon. Use the daytime to bath and prepare your horse. Be sure your show equipment and show clothes are ready and at the Fairgrounds. This is a change from prior years when the horse show was on Saturday only. **DO NOT FORGET!!** Plan ahead now.
15. **Saturday, Horse show day . . . HELP!** Okay take a deep breath. Get up and be at the barn early, like 6:30 a.m. or so. If you did not bath your horse the day before, get in line for a wash stall. The items you will need are listed on the last page of this report. Have a couple helpers available to help control the horse and do the washing and handing out of items. (You may need a shower yourself when it is all over.) Not all horses like to be sprayed with cold water and who can blame them. If you take it slow and easy, most will cooperate. If you cannot spray them, a bucket can always be dumped over them to clean off the suds. Be sure to rinse them clean. Use old towels to dry the horse and lots of brushing. Some people blanket the horse after the bath to keep them clean. Do not let the horse roll. They will want to do this after getting a bath.
16. **Horse show starts Saturday at 8:00 a.m. sharp! All riding classes today.** It is the responsibility of the 4-H member to be at the gate when their class is announced. It is helpful to have extra helpers on the day of the show to listen for class schedules, help with tack changes, etc. Note: Do not spray Show Sheen or similar on the saddle area of the horse. The saddle will slip! The horse show schedule is listed in the Fair book and on the back wall of the stall area. The classes are announced over loud speakers. Be sure to listen for your classes! If you haven't shown before, try not to be first at the gate. Listen to the direction of the judge and follow them closely. Some classes have patterns to follow. These patterns will be placed on the back wall next to the show schedule. Memorize your class pattern. It sometimes helps to walk through the pattern once without your horse. Do not forget to smile!

17. **Sunday, final day of the fair!** This is the day of the 4-H Fun show. The first class is a 4-H costume class. This is a free class for 4-H members to show their creativity on dressing up themselves and their horse. Prior years have seen: Bride & Groom combinations, lions, unicorns and beach day themes. The horse may be ridden or led in the arena during the class. (Parents are allowed to lead the horse with the member riding). Ribbons are given out in all classes. The next class is Bribe-a-Horse. The horse is shown a bucket of feed and let off the lead; the 4-H member has to run around a barrel and back to the gate while getting their horse to follow them. The person with the fastest time wins. The rest of the day is filled with gymkhana events with classes separated by age. There is a fee charged for these classes. Typical events are barrel race, pole bending and others. The money raised by this fun show goes to the 4-H Horse project. Anyone may ride in these classes. So, parents, bring your horses along. There is also a special egg & spoon class for parents only. Parents and members are expected to help out with running the gate, selling concessions, giving out ribbons, etc. A sign-up sheet for these positions will be posted in the back wall of the stall area.

18. **Final hours of the fair.** Release time for fair animals is 4:00 p.m. Stalls must be cleaned out to the bare floor and inspected by the 4-H Horse president before you will be allowed to leave with your animal. All decorations must be removed and the area thoroughly cleaned up. The bedding from the stall may be placed in the center aisle. Stall doors must be facing into the stall, not into the aisle area. All equipment must be packed up and removed to your trailer or vehicle. Be sure to inspect the tack room area so none of your equipment is left behind. **Congratulations, you have just survived your first year of the 4-H Horse project! Be sure to take notes on ideas for next year's fair. Now you are ready to enjoy the fall trail rides.**

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