

Whether it's your first year in 4-H or your tenth, every season brings new opportunities to support your child's growth—not just in their project, but as a confident, capable young person. Here's a simple behind-the-scenes guide to help you stay organized, stay sane, and enjoy the journey!

Fall: The Fresh Start

- **Get Enrolled** – Make sure your child is enrolled in 4HOnline and projects are selected correctly.
- **Connect with Leaders** – Attend club kick-off meetings and ask questions early.
- **Organize Supplies** – Make a checklist for project supplies, record sheets, and other materials.
- **Mark the Calendar** – Put key deadlines, club meetings, and livestock tag-ins on your family calendar now.
- **Ask About Scholarships or Fundraisers** – Great time to plan ahead for camp or project costs.

Winter: Planning Season

- **Check Project Guidelines** – Review requirements in the handbook or website for each chosen project.
- **Start Small Tasks** – Begin record sheets, make early purchases, and plan learning activities.
- **Livestock Families** – Check housing, feed plans, and make appointments for vaccinations or breeding.
- **Encourage Independence** – Let kids make choices and try things—even if it means mistakes. That's growth!
- **Stay in the Loop** – Follow your Extension office and club's social media or newsletters for updates.

Spring: Crunch Time

- **Watch Deadlines** – FairEntry, YQCA, workshop sign-ups, and project drop/add dates come fast.
- **Check Tags & IDs** – Livestock ID needs to be accurate and submitted on time.
- **Project Progress** – Help your child pace themselves and make to-do lists, but avoid taking over.
- **Practice Showmanship or Public Speaking** – Confidence comes from preparation.

Summer: Showtime!

- **Fair Week Prep** – Pack smart (include extras!), label everything, and print schedules.
- **Keep a Cooler Packed** – Snacks, water, and wipes will save the day more than once.
- **Support, Don't Stress** – The best words on show day? "I'm proud of you no matter what."
- **Celebrate All Successes** – A completed project is an achievement, regardless of the ribbon color.
- **Pitch In Where You Can** – Help at clean-up, volunteer at events, and set a great example.

Year-Round Reminders

- ☒ 4-H is a *youth-led* program. It's okay if the final project isn't perfect.
- ☒ Encouragement matters more than expertise.
- ☒ Your calm presence on the tough days will mean more than the loudest cheering on the good ones.