

4-H Newsletter Content Guidelines

Revised April 2009

Source: State 4-H Office

4-H newsletters are a useful vehicle for communicating information with 4-H youth and their families. Nevertheless, because they represent the University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension 4-H, and because they are being produced and distributed with tax dollars, it is important to think carefully about their content. Please refer to the following guidelines when compiling information for your 4-H newsletter:

- Information in 4-H newsletters should contribute to the overall educational mission of 4-H, empowering youth to reach their full potential working and learning in partnership with caring adults. It is appropriate to provide information about upcoming UNL Extension 4-H educational programs, events, workshops, etc. It is also appropriate to provide success stories about 4-H youth (example of project successes, recognition received by 4-H youth, etc.).
- Information in 4-H newsletters should focus on educational programs sponsored by the UNL Extension. Additional educational program information supplied by other organizations *may or may not be appropriate*. Consider the organization that is distributing the educational program information when determining its appropriateness for a 4-H newsletter. Educational program information may be supplied by the following organization(s):
 - UNL Extension; other UNL Departments; other Land Grant Universities; and Governmental Agencies, Boards, or Officials (i.e. NRD, HHS, city councils, etc.) – **IS APPROPRIATE** for distribution in 4-H newsletters, if the information contributes to the educational mission of 4-H.
 - UNL Extension co-sponsored with Non-Profit Organizations (i.e. producer associations, commodity organizations) – **IS APPROPRIATE** for distribution in 4-H newsletters, if the information contributes to the educational mission of 4-H.
 - Non-Profit Organizations – **IS APPROPRIATE** for distribution in 4-H newsletters *only if* the information contributes to the educational mission of 4-H; and the organization does not profit financially from hosting the event, does not sell a product or service, and does not solicit funds.
 - For-Profit Organizations, Private Businesses – **IS NOT APPROPRIATE** for distribution in 4-H newsletters. This information appears as an endorsement of a for-profit organization or private business by the UNL Extension and is an inappropriate use of tax dollars.
- Organizations that contribute financial or product donations to the 4-H Program may be recognized in 4-H newsletters. However, it is not appropriate to suggest in the 4-H newsletter that individuals should purchase a product/service specifically from this organization, so that additional donations may be given to the 4-H Program.
- Events sponsored by 4-H Clubs are UNL Extension events. Promotional materials must include appropriate use of the 4-H Clover and UNL Extension logos. Customizable design layouts containing the appropriate use of these graphic elements may be downloaded from <http://4h.unl.edu/staff/designlayouts.htm>.
- Flyers, brochures, and promotional summaries from other businesses should not be included as an attachment to or within the content of the newsletter. For example, it is not appropriate to include flyers on club livestock sales or promotional summaries about fabric sales in 4-H newsletters. Again, this appears as an endorsement of a for-profit organization or private business by UNL Extension and is an inappropriate use of tax dollars.
- Since our mission is education, it is appropriate to put a listing and contact information for scholarships open *specifically* to 4-H youth. However, counties may keep a notebook in their office of additional scholarships available to all youth.
- When youth are being recognized for achievements at Extension sponsored events, it is appropriate to provide a group listing of sponsors of those programs. The goal is to keep the focus on the recognition of the young person.

It would be helpful to send a copy of your newsletter to the 4-H specialist in your district. They can also help you work through decisions related to content. If you have specific questions, please contact Kathleen Lodl at <mailto:klodl1@unl.edu> or Tracy Pracheil at <mailto:tpracheil2@unl.edu>. We would be happy to help you work through the process!