Welcome to 4-H! I would like to give you a basic introduction to 4-H in Prairie County. There are lots of great opportunities for 4-H members, parents, and adult volunteer leaders. Like any organization, the more you put into it, the more you get out of it.

4-H Membership
The 4-H year begins on October 1 and ends on September 30 the following year. Youth must be 8 years old or older by October 1 to be a 4-H member or 5 to 7 years old to be a Cloverbud.

4-H Projects
A list of 4-H projects can be found in the 4-H Clover. Members are to be enrolled in their new projects by November 1 or as soon as possible. Projects must be completed by the end of the year or dropped by June 1 (each project has its own requirements for completion). Projects not dropped by June 1 must be completed to receive year discs and recognition for a completed year.

4-H Record Books
Records for each project are to be kept by members. They are to be completed and turned in to the Extension Office by September 15 (or the next working day if the 15th falls on a weekend) each year. Failure to meet the deadline results in an incomplete year and the member will not be eligible for sponsored awards, trips, etc. the next year. Those taking livestock projects will not be able to take a livestock project the next year if records are not turned in.

Basic Organization of 4-H in Prairie County
The Extension Office is the facilitator of 4-H events at the county level. There is a County 4-H Council, made up of 4-H leaders and members that establishes county 4-H policies. Any 4-H member or leader may attend and vote at 4-H Council meetings. The Council meets every other month, usually in November, January, March, May, July, and September. The 4-H Council Constitution and By-Laws are included in your packet.

Club Meetings
There are three organized 4-H clubs in Prairie County - Cabin Creek Caballeros, Cougar Creek and Happy Valley. Joining 4-H is a commitment to attending meetings for your club. This is your chance to help determine your club’s activities.

4-H Fortunes Newsletter
The Extension Office sends out a 4-H newsletter about every other month. This newsletter contains information on upcoming events and information you need to know as a 4-H member. Please read it carefully.
All Events Day
All Events Day is held in the spring. Included in the day’s events are contests for demonstrations, speeches, illustrated talks, stir-ups (cooking contest), fashion revue and quilt revue. All members are encouraged to participate in these contests. Members 13 years and older can win a trip to State 4-H Congress to participate in state contests.

Fund Raising
There are two major fund raisers, fruit sale and the fair food booth, that support the 4-H program for the year. They cover member project materials, leader dues, trips, awards and other expenses associated with the program. Successful fund raisers insure that members do not have to pay dues.

Fruit Sale begins in February. All members are required to sell fruit. Streets in Terry are assigned by club for door-to-door sales for a maximum of two days. After that members may sell anywhere. Sale usually runs for two weeks. Members are required to deliver all fruit they sell immediately after fruit delivery.

Fair Food Booth
Each 4-H family is required to work in the food booth and provide assistance with food preparation during the fair.

4-H Camp and OREO Trip
4-H camp is for members in grades 3 - 6 and runs Tuesday through Thursday mid-June. It is held at Camp Needmore at Ekalaka with 4-H members from surrounding counties in Montana, South and North Dakota. The Council pays registration for members in good standing. Families car pool to get the campers to and from camp. An adult chaperone is needed to attend camp also.

The OREO trip is for grades 7 & 8 and includes members from Prairie County and surrounding counties. The trip is in June or July each year. Yellowstone Park, Bismarck, Cody, WY, Black Hills of South Dakota, and camping in southeastern Montana were visited in the past. The Council pays the registration for members in good standing. Adult chaperones are needed.

State 4-H Congress
Congress is held the second week in July in Bozeman and is for members 13 years and older. County members in good standing can earn an expense paid trip by qualifying at All Events Day contests or by competing in a Congress Contest. The Council pays 1/2 to full registration depending on how they qualify for contest.

Eastern Montana Regional Small Animal Judging
Eastern Montana Regional Small Animal Judging is held in Miles City in late July or early August. 4-H members in dog, cat, poultry and rabbit projects can participate in this contest. Prairie County awards for dog, cat, poultry and rabbit projects are determined at small animal judging. There is no “live show” for these projects at the Prairie County Fair but there is an award ceremony to present awards.

4-H Fair Judging
4-H fair entries can be found in the 4-H fair book. Entry sheets are due in the Extension Office by July 15. Judging of fair entries is at Interview Judging Day and during the Fair.

Interview Judging- 4-H fair entries are interview judged a week before the fair, usually on Tuesday. This includes all entries except foods, vegetables, and livestock which are judged during the fair.
**Fair** - The Prairie County Fair begins the 1st Friday of August each year and runs for three days. All foods, vegetables and livestock projects are judged during the fair.

**Ambassador Program**
The Ambassador Program is a statewide program where 4-H members over the age of 14 apply to be County Ambassador to promote 4-H at the local level and represent Prairie County at the state level. Ambassadors help plan local 4-H events, attend Ambassador Fall Training and Montana State 4-H Congress. Ambassador applications are due by May 1st.

**Achievement Day**
Achievement Day takes place in late October. This is an event that recognizes award winners for the preceding 4-H year. Awards include: 4-H project achievement awards, All Events Day awards, Fruit Sale Top Seller, Carcass Contest Winners, Round Robin Winners, Beef Breeding Awards, Super Steer Award, Top Hand Herdsman, Phil Wilson Memorial Awards, and 4-H Club Work recognition.

**Statewide Events and Opportunities**
Explore all state events and opportunities available to 4-H members on the Montana 4-H Website: [http://montana4h.org](http://montana4h.org).

We are so pleased to have your family as a part of the 4-H program in Prairie County. Please feel free to stop by or call the Extension Office any time you have questions. We are here to help you!

Sincerely,

Sharla Sackman
Prairie County Extension Agent

Included in this folder - Constitution & By-Laws, New 4-H Family Handbook, Fundraising Expectations, 4-H Pledge, Awards Recognition at Achievement Day.