
JUDGING 4-H PROJECT EXHIBITS

A MESSAGE TO SUPERINTENDENTS ABOUT CONSULTATIVE JUDGING...



Consultative judging brings 4-H members and judges together to evaluate project exhibits. It provides a unique opportunity for 4-H exhibitors to learn from the experiences and knowledge of the judge. Conference judging involves one-to-one communication in which judge and exhibitor talk directly with each other.

A good Superintendent sets the mood for the entire show. The Superintendent is knowledgeable about the area they are working in and conducts the show in a positive supportive manner. A sense of humor also helps! Don't forget what your first judging experience was like when you were 8 years old.

Remember that projects are evaluated, not people. All completed project exhibits meeting the show requirements should receive a Purple, Blue, Red or White rating. Projects are evaluated individually, not compared.

WHITE: Fair, denotes much improvement needed.

Fails to meet minimum standards.

RED: Good, some improvements needed.

Meets minimum standards.

BLUE: Excellent, minor improvements needed.

Exceeds minimum standards.

PURPLE: Superior, outstanding on all standards.

(In some cases, this means an exhibit is selected for the state fair.)

A CHECKLIST FOR SUPERINTENDENTS

Before the fair:

1. Help County Agent recruit youth and other adults to sign up to assist superintendents.
2. At least 2 months ahead of time check with the County 4-H Agent to discuss judges for your area.
3. Make sure judges are familiar with the consultative judging process. Also send a copy of the score sheets, pages from project manuals and/or show requirements for particular area so judge is familiar with standards, techniques, and the criteria they are to use when judging. (Extension Office takes care of this in many counties.)
4. As a superintendent you may be responsible for securing and organizing supplies and/or ribbons and trophies needed for your project at the Extension office ahead of time.

The day of the judging:

1. Make sure judges have all supplies needed for judging – ribbons, pencils, scorecards, copies of project manuals, when needed and a glass of water – especially if judging foods.
2. Watch for the judge and welcome to the county. Show them the judging station. (Another volunteer may be assigned this task.)
3. Make sure judges know any special awards and the criteria they are to use.
4. Monitor judging stations to see if judges are:
 - Moving along, not being too critical
 - Being positive to the 4-H'ers
 - Adequately questioning 4-H'ers
5. Verify the completeness of all judge's ratings and awards. Ribbon placing for each exhibit should be carefully recorded for awarding of premiums. (Another volunteer adult or youth may do this, then the superintendent can be free to handle problems or situations that arise.)

When judging is finished:

1. Ask if judges had general comments for improvements – to pass along to 4-H'ers about their projects or about the way the show was organized.
2. Be sure to thank the judges for their time.
3. Escort judges back to the Fair Office so they may collect their check from Fairboard. Again, thank them for their time and expertise, and encourage them to enjoy the other aspects of the fair.
4. Put exhibits in an orderly and attractive display for public viewing.
5. Turn all books and supplies into the Fair Office.
6. Listen to comments and complaints in a courteous and positive manner. If decisions must be made, a consultation with the County Agent may be appropriate.
7. Fill out the superintendent's evaluation form in its entirety and turn in to the Fair Office so improvements may be made for future years.

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