2019 Illinois State Fair 4-H Exhibitor Guide

You’ve been selected at the County 4-H Show to bring your 4-H exhibit to the Illinois State Fair. Congratulations! This document provides answers to some of the basic questions you and your family may have about exhibiting at the Illinois State Fair. It’s important you read all this information carefully BEFORE YOU HEAD OUT FOR THE FAIR. Much of what you need to know is available online @ go.illinois.edu/4Hstatefair.

Before the Fair

- Confirm your entry with the local Extension office by our stated deadline. The office must pre-register you for the state fair. You cannot just show up at the state fair.

- Check with the local Extension office to see if we have discounted entry tickets. Do this early! Families who do not order advanced tickets can still purchase tickets at the gate. Youth 12 & under are free.

- Verify your exhibit qualifications with the State Fair exhibit classes. Some counties, due to space or other reasons do not use the same exhibit requirements on the local level as required at State Fair. You may need to make some modifications to your exhibit in order to meet SF requirements. The exhibit requirements for each project can be found online @ go.illinois.edu/4Hstatefair.

- Verify the day our county will be judged at the State Fair by looking online @ go.illinois.edu/4Hstatefair.

- Included in this packet is an exhibit tag to attach to your exhibit. You may tie it on or tape it on, but it must be firmly attached. Remove any local tags or ribbons.

- If you need accommodations to make your exhibit experience accessible (i.e. wheelchair accessibility, ASL interpreter, etc.), please contact your local Extension staff or the State 4-H Office at least two weeks in advance of the fair so we may assist you.

Parking on the Fairgrounds

- NEW IN 2019. Advance auto parking passes will not be sold this year. Families should plan to purchase parking when they arrive. Please know there are several options: Public parking on the fairgrounds is Gate 6, Lot 18. Many times, non-profits sell parking around the right side of the fairgrounds. These are all viable options and priced comparably. Wherever you park, expect to walk. Allow a few extra minutes to make the walk.

- Maps are available on our website: go.illinois.edu/4Hstatefair.

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University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment. If you need a reasonable accommodation to attend, call the registration office.
Your Day at the Fair! Project Exhibit Drop Off

- **LOCATION:** All 4-H general project exhibits will be in the Orr Building. The Orr Building is located in the far northwest section of the fairgrounds, west of the 4-H livestock beef arena & stalls. Once you are parked, make your way to the Orr Building.

- **LOAD/UNLOAD PASSES AVAILABLE:** A limited number of load/unload passes may be available at the Extension office. This allows you to enter through Gate 8 (or any other gate if Gate 8 is closed) to quickly drop off an exhibit or family members. You must show the unload pass AND provide an entry ticket for each person in the car. Once you unload the car, you MUST exit via Gate 9 and re-enter the fairgrounds after parking. Be sure to have your hand stamped when you exit Gate 9 so that you don’t have to re-visit. When it’s time to leave, you may use the pass to re-enter Gate 8 and load the car. PLEASE respect the instructions of the person at the gate. **NO ONE IS ALLOWED TO PARK NEAR THE BUILDING WITH ONLY AN UNLOAD PASS.**

- **FOLLOW ALONG @illinois4H ON FACEBOOK:** In recent years, flooding and unexpected events at the state fair have caused traffic problems. We will post updates on Facebook of any delays we are aware of. The most important thing is to relax! Enjoy the day and your accomplishments. Do your best to arrive as soon as possible. DO NOT have your children leave your car and walk unaccompanied to the Orr Building.

- **PROJECT DROP-OFF TIMES:** ALL exhibitors should set up their exhibit in the designated area at the Orr Building anytime from 8 to 9:30 AM. **There is no need to arrive before 8 AM since your drop off time will not determine your judging time.** Hopefully, this will allow many of our families traveling a long distance to arrive a bit later in the day, and it will allow us to spread out check-in over a longer period to ease up congestion. **If traffic gets backed up, please don’t worry. Although we want everyone checked in by 9:30, we understand that we can’t control the traffic. Smile. Relax. It will be all right.**

- **WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU COME IN THE ORR BUILDING:** There will be large signs and helpers directing you to the judging area for your project category. LOOK FOR THESE SIGNS!

- When you find the judging area for your project, set up your exhibit. Please be respectful of other exhibits which are also being displayed.

- **TEAR OFF the claim ticket** attached to your exhibit tag. You will need that to claim your project at the end of the day.

- **NEXT, look at your judging area for a schedule of everyone’s estimated judging times** and see what time you are scheduled for judging. Judging times have been randomly assigned prior to the fair. Some judging will happen in the morning, and some in the afternoon. **YOU DO NOT NEED TO CHECK IN WITH ANYONE AT THE TABLE WHEN YOU DROP OFF YOUR PROJECT.**

- **WHAT TO DO IF YOUR NAME ISN’T ON THE LIST:** If your name does not appear on the judging schedule, find an “Assistant” near your judging area. They will assign you a judging time.
• **PROJECT RELEASE TIMES:** All projects must remain on display throughout the full day of judging. All projects will be held and released at 3:30 p.m. (or after the final judging for that area is completed, whichever is later). Please note that you WILL NOT be allowed to remove your project from the building before the 3:30 release time. It’s exciting to have all our exhibit on display all day long.

  • Your exhibit will be seen by at least 4,000 people daily!
  • You can explore all the other project areas 4-H offers and see the exceptional exhibits from everyone across the state.
  • We will impress the many non-4-H visitors to the building with nearly 1,000 exhibits displayed daily... ALL DAY LONG. Think of the impression that will make to the public.
  • You don’t have to limit your fair experience jumping from building to building. Your family can all be in one place.
  • You’ll have more time to explore all the fair has to offer and know that you have one SET TIME to be at your judging area, and all the rest of the time to explore!

• Here is the daily schedule for 4-H activities
  
  8 – 9:30 AM  
  4-H Exhibit Drop Off, Orr Building
  9:30 AM  
  4-H Exhibit Judging Begins & continues through 3:30 PM, Orr Building
  3:30 PM  
  4-H Projects Released
  
  To get through all 1000 projects daily, we will have judging throughout the day. Regardless of when you are judged, everyone still needs to be there by 9:30 AM and leave their project on display until 3:30 daily.

**Judging & Scoring**

• Each exhibitor will be allotted a 10-minute minimum conference judging time. Arrive approximately 10 minutes prior to your scheduled judging time in case the judge is running ahead of schedule. The Judge’s Assistant or Judge will call you by name to come forward. If your exhibit is small, you may need to pick it up and take it to the judge. If the project is large, the judge may come to where your exhibit is displayed. If you have not been called within 15 minutes of your scheduled judging time, check with the assistant helping with that area. Judges and assistants will be wearing a large state fair button.

• Conference Judging involves talking to the judge in a one-on-one conversation about your exhibit. They will ask you questions about your exhibit – what you learned, what you did, how you feel about your work, what you think you could have improved, etc. Then they will critique your display and give you their opinions about your work. Remember, you’ve already been selected as one of the best in your county; don’t worry about your score and use this to learn as much as you can from the judging expert.

• All scoresheets have been revised to reflect a 1-10 point scale. The numerical score will determine the top awards. The score sheets the judges will use to evaluate your project are online @ [go.illinois.edu/4Hstatefair](http://go.illinois.edu/4Hstatefair).
Ribbons and Awards: NEW IN 2019

- **SEE THE ATTACHED DOCUMENT:** All 4-H exhibitors at the State Fair receive a ribbon and a commemorative button. This is your award for being selected as one of the best exhibits in your county.

- The participant with the highest score in each class (averaged for the number of questions asked) will receive a **Champion Medal**; second will receive the **Reserve Champion Medal**.

- Participants who receive 80% or higher on the scoresheet will receive an **Outstanding sticker** applied to their ribbon.

- Judges and staff may also select **Inspire Award** winners.

- Cash premiums may be presented to exhibitors achieving 80% or above. “*The Department of Agriculture shall use its best efforts to secure sufficient appropriations to fund premiums. In any year for which the General Assembly of the State of Illinois fails to make an appropriation sufficient to pay such premiums, premium amounts may not be accurately reflected in this Premium Book.*” Payment of premiums is out of the control of the State 4-H office.

**Picking up Your Exhibit**

- You will need to check-out your exhibit with the appropriate Assistant – they will verify that you are picking up the correct exhibit. You must have the stub from your exhibit tag to pick up your project. If someone else is picking up your exhibit for you, make sure that you give them this tag!

- Exhibits must remain on display until 3:30 p.m. If you can’t stay all day, make arrangements for someone else to pick up your project and give them your claim tag. You may not leave projects after 4 p.m. Illinois 4-H and the State Fair is not responsible for exhibits left after 4 p.m. No projects will be transported back to the state office after Monday. You are responsible for your own exhibit.

**Emergency Correspondence**

We encourage you to ask your local Extension staff questions you may have early. Once judging begins on Friday, it is unlikely staff will be monitoring email. You may send an email to illinois4H@illinois.edu, but there is no guarantee staff will be able to respond promptly.

We look forward to seeing you at the Illinois State Fair.