MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR ILLINOIS 4-H STATE FAIR EXPERIENCE
Recognition Opportunities at the Illinois State Fair

The Illinois 4-H State Fair General Project Show is an opportunity for youth to be competitively judged on project work, as well as receive valuable feedback from experts which allow them to increase their knowledge and gain mastery in a project area. In order to advance both elements of competition and learning, a new scoring and recognition system will be used at the 2019 Illinois 4-H State Fair Show.

RECOGNITION FOR STATE FAIR SELECTION
- Only youth selected in their county competition advance to the state competition. All qualifying youth attending the fair will receive an exhibitor button and recognition ribbon.

JUDGING AGAINST A COMMON STANDARD
Judging against a standard means that youth earn their rating based solely on how their exhibit and conference interview meets the standard (scoresheet). At this phase, the youth’s award is not affected by any other youth’s exhibit.
- State Fair scoresheets will now reflect a 10-point scale for each element of the project exhibit being evaluated. Those scoresheets are available on the EVENTS > STATE FAIR tab of the Illinois 4-H website @ go.illinois.edu/IL4H.
- Youth who score an 80% or above on the scoresheet will receive an Outstanding Award sticker added to their ribbon. Please note that this will be a difficult mark to reach, and less experienced participants may not reach this accomplishment in their early years of exhibiting.
- Scores in each project class will be sorted, and the first and second place finishers in each CLASS will receive champion and reserve medallions. In case of exact scores, each youth with that score will receive the award.

JUDGING AGAINST A PEER GROUP
Judging against a peer group means that exhibits are placed in competition against other exhibits. The selection is based on other factors, not necessarily reflected by the scoresheets.
- Inspire Awards will be given at the judges’ discretion for work they wish to highlight or acknowledge.

LEARNING FEEDBACK OPPORTUNITY
The State Fair is more than judging; it’s an opportunity for youth to learn from industry experts. Youth are encouraged to receive feedback from judges, both verbal and written, as a means to improve their personal knowledge and mastery of their project. Youth should be fully prepared to discuss their project knowledge (beyond just the exhibit presented) with the judge. Youth should also be prepared to reflect on the quality of the work and share improvements they might have made. Youth should feel comfortable asking questions of judges which will help them learn.

The State Fair is an awesome opportunity for youth to grow from the interaction with peers and industry experts regardless of the award received. Competition is not for all young people and involves risks. Families should carefully consider if they want to engage in competition.