If you have not taken the opportunity to explore the new Illinois 4-H website, you might want to spend some time checking out the many project resources you will find there. Start by clicking on the Members button and then click on 4-H Projects. At the top of the page under Related Resources, you will find links to the 2009-10 Illinois 4-H Clover, 4-H Project Plans, and National 4-H Curriculum. A full list of 4-H projects, both individual and group, is provided. Scroll down to a project category of interest and click on the name. The next page provides a listing of all the project manuals for the category, a description of some of the activities for each manual, and the suggested age.

Scroll down to the bottom of the page for additional project Related Resources. You will find a list of publications that are available by special order; links to other youth-friendly educational websites or available National 4-H Projects Online; and links for livestock records and Quality Assurance and Ethics Training (if applicable). As soon as details are finalized, information by project areas will be available on upcoming 2010 statewide 4-H activities and events. Exploring some of the Related Resources on each project listing is an easy way to find additional activities for club meetings, rev up youth’s interest in a project, or gather ideas for project exhibits. It’s all just a few clicks away at http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/state4h/

The next 4-H Science Excited experiment – Generating Electricity from Wind Energy will be released in February. This experiment follows the Biofuel Blast conducted by 2,300 youth in 16 counties last fall. Science Excited is a new program emphasis geared to get youth excited about science and potential careers in this expanding field. Be sure to contact your local Extension Office to find out how your club can participate in this activity.

Japanese Exchange Program: The summer 4-H exchange program involves Japanese youth (ages 12-16) living with a family for approximately one month from July 21 through August 20, 2010. Families have opportunities to learn about Japanese life and culture and share their own culture. For more information about the Japanese and other hosting opportunities, contact your local Extension office.

This statewide robotics event is an opportunity for youth enrolled in 4-H robotics to demonstrate their learning, celebrate their accomplishments, and interact with others who share an interest in robotics. This is a team event. Participants do not have to be selected by their county to participate. There is no registration fee but teams are responsible for their own travel expenses. Time: 12:00 noon - 4:00 p.m. Location: Activities and Recreation Center, University of Illinois, Champaign, IL. More details on event will be posted to the State 4-H Website on Feb. 1st.

Electricity and Welding Skill-a-thons will be held the same day but at a different location on campus. More details later.
Changes for 2010
State Fair Announced

The state budget situation and school schedules influence our preparations for the 2010 4-H judging schedule. Counties have been assigned to one of four judging dates: **Friday through Monday, August 13-16.** Check-in and judging times will be staggered throughout the day and projects will remain on display for a period of time each day. Your local Extension office will have your assigned date for judging. Judging times will be announced later in the year.

Due to lower enrollments and in an effort to save on some judging costs, judging for three projects will only be offered on one day, Saturday, **August 14: Electronics, Geospatial, and Welding.** This is the ONLY day judging will be available for these areas. **Performance Showcase** performers will practice on Saturday, August 13 and perform on Sunday, August 14.

Several changes were also made to some specific project area exhibit classes. Refer to your local Extension office for specifics, but major changes have been noted in **Bicycle** (Rodeo will NOT be held; exhibit classes are offered instead); **Foods & Nutrition, Crops, and Horticulture.** New classes are offered in **Welding, Video (4), Cooking 301,** and in the **Clover Challenge** classes in **Robotics and Health.**

We will be maintaining a 4-H presence in the Exposition Building from Friday, August 13 through Tuesday, August 17. Clubs will have the opportunity to apply for **Club Action Presentations** and provide learning opportunities for fairgoers for a 5-hour period during the hours of 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. each day, August 13-17. Applications are available from your local Extension office and are due by **May 1.** Clubs may earn up to $100 in premiums for each day they provide a presentation.

Other changes that may be of interest…

- **The Jr. Department Dormitory will be closed as of 10:00 a.m. on Monday, August 16.**
- The **Meat Goat Wether** classes will be judged on Thursday, August 12; the **Breeding Meat Goats** will be judged on Friday, August 13.
- For all applicable livestock, **the use of spiked leads/chains in the ring is prohibited.**
- The minimum Rate of Gain for on-foot steers has been removed. Therefore **on-foot steers do not need to be weighed, only tattooed and tagged, for State Fair. (County shows may still require the weigh-in – check with your local Extension office. Jr. Premiere Steers are still required to weigh.)**
- Two new classes have been added for the 4-H Dog Show – Pre-Open and Pre-Utility. The Dog Show is scheduled for **Sunday, August 29.**
- **Weight limit for Crossbred Gilts** has been increased from 330 to 350 lbs.

Illinois 4-H members will be lending a helping hand to youth of military families as 4-H clubs across Illinois participate in the “4-H Adopt-An-Armory” program being launched during April – the **Month of the Military Child.** When soldiers deploy, their entire family answers the call to serve our nation. This new statewide community service initiative will connect 4-H clubs with the nearly 60 armories located in Illinois. 4-H’ers will be reaching out to over 30,000 school-age youth of military families to build relationships, share 4-H interests, help with home projects, or provide leadership to a communitywide project to support local military families. Check with your local Extension office for more details on how your club can get involved in the “4-H Adopt-An-Armory” program.

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