



More than you ever imagined...

# Alberta 4-H Marketing and Media Pack

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## Why Should Your Club Promote 4-H?

Your club may want to:

- Retain current members
- Recruit new members, leaders and families
- Recruit presenters and resource people
- Increase your standing in the community
- Promote your club to potential sponsors and partners

Promoting your 4-H club will help you communicate the value of 4-H to potential members while continually reminding current ones of the opportunities available to them. Ongoing and open communication within your 4-H club is also essential to ensuring positive community awareness. A well informed 4-H member will create the best impression of your club and 4-H during every public encounter.

A good promotion strategy starts with your club setting some goals and priorities, and then developing the details and a budget. Once started, you will be on the way to a successful promotion and thriving 4-H club.

## What Should You Promote?

4-H has many unique features that make it the incredible program that it is. Some reasons are listed below, but you may also want to generate some of your own that are specific to your club. Full descriptions of each activity given can be obtained by visiting the Alberta 4-H website ( [HYPERLINK "http://www.4h.ab.ca" www.4h.ab.ca](http://www.4h.ab.ca)). Keep in mind that not all age groups will be interested in the same activities and programs, so you must promote different activities to each of the age group(s) you are targeting.

### Fun, Family and Friendships

Meet other 4-H members, leaders and families from Alberta and beyond. (E.g. Club activities, district fun days, winter and summer camps, exchange programs, etc). 4-H is for everyone, and the whole family is encouraged to become involved.

### Personal Development

Explore career options and gain leadership, communication, teamwork and life skills. (E.g. People Developing People, Leader's Conference, Club Week, Ambassador Program)

## Knowledge and Experience

Polish your skills through training events, workshops, and regional and provincial programs. (E.g. Selections, Senior Members Conference, Horse Classic, Provincial Judging, Leader Training)

## Scholarship and Travel Opportunities

Reap the benefits of being a member by earning scholarships, bursaries and award trips. (E.g. Awards and scholarships, leader and member travel programs)

## Projects

Choose from over 30 projects or create your own. (E.g. Canine, photography, shooting sports, theatre arts, beef, horse and welding)

## Affordability

Join Canada's longest running rural-youth program for as little as \$30 per year.

## Image and Branding

Although 4-H is located in over 70% of rural communities, many people are still unaware of what the 4-H program is about and what it has to offer. Most that do know about the organization associate it with beef and horses. However, 4-H is anything a member wants it to be. It is important that clubs promote not only what their club offers, but also what 4-H offers as a whole.

4-H clubs are known for their social responsibility and community involvement. Therefore, it is vital to the success of individual clubs and the 4-H organization that clubs leave this impression on their community. Projecting a positive image by volunteering to help at a community event, participating in highway clean up or hosting a charity fundraiser are a few examples how clubs demonstrate 4-H values of the 4-H organization.

By reviewing and understanding the 4-H opportunities available, members, parents, and potential members and volunteers will gain insight into the benefits of being involved in the program. Remember that demonstrating genuine excitement about 4-H and your club is the best promotion of all.

## How Can You Market Your Club?

Once you have reviewed the material your club wishes to promote and whom you want to promote it to, set the club goals and strategies. Doing this will allow you to choose the best method to inform others about 4-H and the opportunities available within your club.

By collecting group ideas you can personalize your promotional plan to highlight your club members' talents and skills. New ideas and projects also give your club an opportunity to develop other skills in areas such as marketing and promotion.

### Promotional Ideas

There are many options available to help clubs meet promotional goals. Below are some common marketing strategies that can help you create a promotional plan that best suits your club.

### Word of Mouth

Word of mouth is the most effective technique for promoting and marketing your club. By formally promoting your club in parent council meetings, schools, or local events your club can ensure that club members are prepared to discuss the opportunities available in your club. Formal events may also be the time to hand out brochures that outline the 4-H program and the details of you specific club (location, major events, meeting dates and times).

### Public Displays and Posters

Setting up displays at local venues, community events, parades, high traffic areas or popular areas for families can be an excellent promotional technique. Banners, murals, and displays in a variety of designs are a great way to get noticed by your target audience.

Posters use the imagination and skills that your club has to offer to create a cost effective way of promoting 4-H. Display posters in a public place so that many people can view them, and gain interest in your club. Posters can be kept and used at future 4-H events and local venues as part of your clubs public displays.

### Website

A club website is a great way to reach even people far away and let them know about your club. By designing a club website, using the 4-H Web Project Manual, available through 4-H club supplies, your club can highlight its unique events and opportunities for everyone to see. In addition, you can direct interested youth or adults to the Alberta 4-H website ([www.4h.ab.ca](http://www.4h.ab.ca)) for more information.

## School Promotion

Promoting your club in schools can be as simple as wearing your 4-H club gear, making a presentation to classmates on 4-H or projects, or placing 4-H bookmarks (free to order from the 4-H office) in the school library.

## News media

News media includes newspapers, radio and television stations. Local print gives your 4-H club a positive public image in your community. Letters to the editor, community listings for club events, and even writing your own column are all great ways to let the community know of the 4-H opportunities awaiting them in your club.

Local radio and television stations may have time reserved for community announcements and event listings. Such an opportunity would give your club the chance to advertise club events, registration, and information on how people can learn more about your club.

Things to remember when working with news media:

- Provide adequate notice of your event
- Always choose a spokesperson that best understands the project or event
- Cover the 5W's (who, what, when, where and why)
- The media may not always cover your story

## Incentives

It is also important to promote and market within your club. Incentives for long-term members for each additional year of participation in the club (movie passes, gift certificates etc.) can be a great way to keep club members excited about 4-H. It is the positive attitudes of club members that will keep your club exciting while helping maintain a strong public image. Remember that different age groups may require different incentives.

Other options for your club may include the nomination of a member or a committee within the club to ensure that promotional strategies are implemented, club goals are being achieved and upcoming events are continually promoted to all club members. A member may also do this as a Creative Options project.

## Promotional Kit

It may then be helpful for your club to keep track of all your promotional materials as well as any resources that may aid in future promotions in a 'Promotional Kit'. This kit can then serve as an easy access of information and resources for future promotional events for your club. Some ideas of what to include are: club contact names, phone numbers, brochures, photos, press releases, giveaways and information regarding your promotional plan.

## Follow up

Review the success or failure of all promotion activities. Even if there is a specific club member or committee in charge of promotion and marketing, it is key that feedback is taken from the entire club. By reviewing all club attempts at promotions new ideas can be developed based on the practical experiences of your club members. The follow up can be as simple as a few questions discussed by your club and recorded for future reference in your clubs promotional kit.

Sample questions:

- Which parts of the promotional program worked and which ones didn't?
- What are club member suggestions for future improvement?
- Why would this be a good promotional idea for the future?

As a member, parent or leader, it is your participation that makes 4-H clubs one of the best youth programs available. By continually promoting your club within your community and keeping current members educated, you are creating a club that will be strong for many years to come. We encourage you to always remember the 4-H motto and to help others receive the great experiences and knowledge that you have through 4-H.

## Marketing 4-H to Local Sponsors

Some of the most important relationships your club will make within your community are with local sponsors. With the support of local community businesses your club will have the ability to do more and make a larger impact. It is important to help local businesses understand the values of 4-H and why their personal support will help keep the community thriving.

## Working Together

By having sponsors assist in planning events, they will better understand the organization they are supporting, the benefits of sponsorship to the community and the assistance they are providing to local youth. Keeping sponsors involved in all projects, from charity fundraisers to achievement days or even just a club fun day, keeps an open line of communication, which is essential to maintaining the support your club needs.

## Mutual Benefits

If 4-H club sponsors are invited to attend or assist in events they will constantly be reminded of the good that they are doing, and just as it is important for clubs to project a positive image within the community, sponsors too believe strongly in maintaining such an image. A strong partnership will benefit the community, your club and the sponsors who provide support.

## Approaching Sponsors

There are many ways to approach a local business or community group for support with your club's events or activities. However, it is always important to keep the following points in mind:

- 1) Always approach a sponsor with a plan; know what you need sponsorship for and how much sponsorship you will be requesting.
- 2) When approaching a potential sponsor, bring them as much information about 4-H as possible. Help them understand the 4-H program, what your club is about and how you are involved in helping the community.
- 3) Always have an understanding about the business or group you are approaching, know what they are already involved in as a sponsor and if they support 4-H at the regional or provincial level.
- 4) Make sure that funding from a sponsor is local and does not come from a provincial or regional level. This will ensure that your sponsorship does not restrict the potential funding for provincial 4-H programs.
- 5) Always have club members approach sponsors. It is important that sponsors see whom they are supporting. Having a leader accompany the members who are approaching a sponsor is recommended in case the members need assistance.

Following the above points will help your club give the best appearance when approaching a sponsor as well as maintain a positive image with all members of your community.

[www.4h.ab.ca](http://www.4h.ab.ca)



## **Regional Contacts**

If you have any further questions about marketing your club, contact your nearest 4-H specialist.

### **South**

Phone: 403.381.5818

### **Calgary**

Phone: 403.948.8501

### **East Central and West Central**

Phone: 403.742.7547

### **Northeast**

Phone: 780.853.8115

### **Northwest**

Phone: 780.674.8250

### **Peace Region**

Phone: 780.835.7537