

Tips for 4-H Natural Resources Day Judging

Welcome and thank you for volunteering your time! We like to think of state fair judging as more than an evaluation—it is a continuation of the project learning experience. Our goal within 4-H is to develop knowledge AND life skills such as communication, problem solving, decision making, and leadership.

The 4-H members you meet today were selected by their counties for state fair. They are already winners! Each one should arrive with **a completed project book and a display** representing some aspect of their learning experience over the past year. The display should be their own work and should be the one that was used at county-level judging.

Please follow these guidelines:

1. Conduct a similar interview of similar length with each participant.
 - Smile, introduce yourself, and, if the youth doesn't introduce him or herself, ask his or her name. Do your best to put the youth at ease.
 - Begin by asking for a description of the project and display. Feel free to ask questions.
 - Ask to see his or her project book and take a moment or two to page through it. Pay close attention to the member project guide. Is it complete? Every project requires completion of a leadership/citizen activity.
 - Ask questions related to content. Consider asking a difficult bonus or “tie-breaker” question.

The Judge's Dilemma

How can you possibly pick one inner from all these amazing entries? It's sometimes very hard. Avoid raising expectations by following the suggestions to the left.



2. Complete an evaluation sheet for each participant.
 - Evaluation is based on knowledge (30%), communication (20%), quality of the work in the project book (20%), quality of the display (20%), and leadership and citizenship (10%). See the evaluation sheet for more explanation.
 - DO make comments on each project. Note the strengths and *at least one* area for improvement.
 - AVOID making or writing comments such as “top of the day,” which might be misinterpreted by participants.
3. Conclude the interview by offering a positive comment and by handing the youth a participation ribbon and a copy of the evaluation sheet.
 - DO make personal notes on your copy of the evaluation sheet after the youth has left. Comments that help you remember the 4-H member and the project come in handy later when you select winners.
4. Select winners.
 - At the end of the day, each judge selects *up to 20%* of the participants as Outstanding of the Day. For example, if you judge 20 entries, up to 4 can be selected to receive Outstanding of the Day ribbons ($20 \times .2 = 4$). When there is not an even split, it is all right to round up. For example, if you judge 22 entries, 5 can be selected ($22 \times .2 = 4.4 \rightarrow 5$).
 - From those 20%, each judge or judging team selects ONE overall winner who receives a trophy. Judging team members must agree on only one winner. No ties!
 - Occasionally a participant who is not eligible comes to state fair. If this is the case with one of your participants, you will be alerted not to select him or her.

Make Your Job Easier

If you write a note about each person, even something as simple as what he or she is wearing, you'll have an easier time remembering them all.

Participants register on the hour beginning at 9 am. Lunch is between noon and 1 pm. (Lunch vouchers are provided for those who are not state employees. Vouchers can be redeemed at the Rhodes Center or at the Gilligan Complex). The last registration time is 2 pm.

You may step away from your table for short breaks as necessary. Drinks and snacks are available in the judges' room all day. **Have a great day!**