

Trainer's Guide to Providing Merit Badge Support



As a Trainer you have the opportunity to help your fellow 4-H'ers earn their **Written, Field & Class** and **Project Badges**. Here are some things you can do to provide them with support as they work for each badge:

Written Badge

This badge is earned by completing the required activities in the *4-H'ers for Clean Water Manual* and the *4-H'ers for Clean Water Checklist*. If you are interested in making the manual part of your club curriculum, you can do a number of the activities as a group. This is a great way to help 4-H'ers get closer to earning their Written Badge and it also increases their understanding of the concepts covered in the manual. If you decide to work through the manual as a club, you can use the *4-H'ers for Clean Water Teaching Outline* as a guide, but feel free to get creative and design your own curriculum!

Regardless of whether you plan to go through the manual as a club, here are some things you can do to provide support to 4-H'ers working for their Written Badge:

- Point out page 8 in the manual and make sure they understand the number of activities required in each chapter. This information is located beneath each chapter title starting on page 8.
- You may want to help 4-H'ers choose the activities that are most appropriate for their situation. For example, if a 4-H member boards at a stable instead of keeping their horse on their own property, some activities may be more suitable than others.
- Check answers and verify each completed activity. Provide support and guidance for activities not completed correctly. Once an activity has been completed correctly and verified, put your initials in the space provided on pages 8 through 10 in the manual.
- Once a 4-H member has completed the required activities in a chapter, provide them with a seal to put on their certificate in the manual on page 11. Do this for each of the chapters.
- When the required activities in ALL of the chapters have been completed and initialed, have your 4-H'er fill out the *4-H'ers for Clean Water Checklist* and return it to you for your verification and signature.
- Once the required activities and the checklist have been completed and signed, fill out the **Merit Badge Application Form** and send it to Bonnie Davis. Bonnie will send you the Written Badge to be awarded to your 4-H club member.

The Field & Class Badge

To earn this badge, a 4-H'er needs to attend workshops in Mud, Manure, and Pasture Management and attend at least one farm tour. To help a 4-H'er earn their Field & Class Badge, make sure they take a **Merit Badge Application Form** with them to each event and tell them have the class instructor or tour host sign their form! Mail the completed forms (all at once) to Bonnie Davis and she will send you the Field and Class Badge.

You can also help 4-H'ers earn the Field & Class Badge by making sure they are aware of upcoming workshops and farm tours. These events are published on the Snohomish County 4-H List Serve: snohomishcounty4-hHorses@yahogroups.com

You can also contact the Snohomish Conservation District or Horses for Clean Water for the latest scheduled events:

Snohomish Conservation District

Phone: (425) 335-5634 extension 4
www.snohomishcd.org

Horses for Clean Water

Phone: (425) 432-6116
E-mail: alayne@horsesforcleanwater.com
www.horsesforcleanwater.com

The Project Badge

After a 4-H'er has earned their Field & Class and Written Badge, they can earn the Project Badge by giving a presentation on one of the Healthy HorseKeeping practices they've learned about in the process. This presentation can be given at a club meeting or other suitable 4-H venue where a 4-H Leader, Trainer or Officer is available to observe. The presentation is meant to be similar in style to the Demonstration required in order to attend the County Fair and the required length is also the same (Juniors: 3-8 minutes, Intermediates: 5-15 minutes, Seniors: 8-20 minutes).

You can assist 4-H'ers as they work for this badge by helping them to come up with a topic for their project and reviewing a written outline for their presentation. Many of the activities in the manual could be expanded into a project presentation, so you may want to use them as a guide when choosing a project. Here are just a few project ideas:

- Horse health problems associated with living in mud and eating near manure. How mud and manure can also cause water pollution.
- Wood pellets: Take what you learned from doing Activity 2-3 and share your experience with other 4-H members.
- Composting: Explain the steps on page 36-37. Relate your experience building a compost pile and taking the temperature (Activity 2-8).
- Winter paddocks: Why they are important and how to create one.
- Footing: Advantages and disadvantages of gravel and hogfuel.
- Native plants: What they are, why to plant them, and where to get them.
- The Golden Rule of Grazing and how to use rotational grazing.
- Pasture maintenance: mowing, harrowing, and spreading compost.
- Poisonous plants: Which ones are toxic to horses and how to identify them.
- Healthy streams: Why trees and shrubs along streambanks are so important. Share your experience participating in a stream-planting project (Activity 5-3).
- Building and putting up bird and bat houses.
- Building brush piles and rock piles. Why snags are important to wildlife.
- How to prevent pests like rats and mice.
- Fly predators: What they are and what they do.

The Trainer Badge

If funding allows, we hope to provide another Train the Trainer Workshop before the end of 2006. The workshop will again be open to leaders and club members 8th grade and above. If you have club members who are interested in becoming Trainers, make sure they attend upcoming mud, manure, and pasture workshops if they have not already: Prior participation in these workshops (including last year's classes at Training School or this year's Equine-A-Rama) is required as a prerequisite before attending the Train the Trainer Workshop.