**Montana 4‐H Contest**

**Guidelines & Policies**



**Montana 4‐H Congress**

Montana State University ‐ Bozeman Campus

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Please contact the 4‐H Center for Youth Development with questions or concerns regarding information provided in these guidelines.

Brett Schomer, *Program & Events Coordinator*

210 Taylor Hall

Bozeman, MT 59717

406.994.1721 • [bschomer@montana.edu](mailto:bschomer@montana.edu)

4‐H offers many opportunities to be involved in educational events and activities. For example, members can choose to be involved in camps, project meetings, club meetings, special interest projects, festivals, fairs, and contests. Participation in contests is one way that 4‐H members can develop the following life skills:

 Fostering positive self‐concept

 Learning decision‐making and responsibility for choices

 Developing an inquiring mind

 Relating to self and others

 Acquiring a concern for communities, both local and global

Some 4‐H events and activities involve peer competition. Competition is an opportunity for work or performance to be evaluated against the work of others by a designated person who brings his or her own perspective and training to the event.

The results of contests provide a measuring tool to help make improvements in future endeavors. Contests also designate higher achievement and lower achievement. It is important for you to recognize this reality before entering a contest. It is also critical that you learn how to gracefully accept winning as well as losing. Both are equally valuable learning experiences.

Everyone who participates in a contest is a winner because of the risk taken by asking for another person’s informed opinion about the quality of your work. Regardless of the final determination of ribbon placing, those who participate in 4‐H contests learn how to find information, organize ideas, put theory into practice, develop skills of inquiry, develop motor skills, and have fun interacting with other young people, leaders and friends.

By choosing to exhibit completed projects at contests and other events, 4‐H members are usually asking an adult to give an opinion about that member’s work or performance. Remember that each judge comes with a different background, and judges’ comments and opinions may vary slightly. View this as a positive factor. It is this judgment factor that allows the 4‐H member to be creative and innovative. Even though you do not always agree with the judge’s determination, you should respect the opinion and accept the decision.

Contests and other competitive events are only one way to evaluate growth and development. There are also many other ways to evaluate progress. 4‐H members can continually evaluate their own work. This self‐evaluation is a real “learn by doing” process. By observing standards of quality of work that has been completed by other members and professionals, members, leaders, and parents can assist in a continual evaluation of project work as it progresses.

Montana 4-H Congress is held annually on the Montana State University campus in Bozeman, MT.

Montana State 4‐H Congress is designed to provide educational and state level competitive events to Montana 4‐H’ers age 13 years and older as of October 1.

Montana 4-H Congress Participants that are 13 years of age **are permitted** to compete in the state contest at the discretion of the County. However, they may not be eligible for an award trip due to age requirements set by the national/regional event. They do not lose their eligibility and can compete in future years to again earn eligibility for a national award trip

The guidelines for each contest include:

* Congress Contest Rules
* Congress Contest application information
* Scoring guidelines and score sheets

The following competitive events will be held at Congress on Thursday (July 13, 2017).

* Demonstration & Illustrated Talk
* Livestock Judging
* Horse Judging
* Stir‐Ups
* Horse Skill‐a‐thon
* Gavel Games
* Fashion Revue
* Quilting
* Public Speaking
* Video
* Career Communications

**PLEASE NOTE:**

These are the competitive event guidelines ONLY. Registration for contests and all of 4‐H Congress are included in the Registration Guidelines provided by the 4‐H Center.

The following are awards and trips available to winners of State Congress competitive events. In addition, each member participating in competitive events will receive an award ribbon. Funding for the trip will be a collaborative effort between the Montana 4‐H Foundation, the winner, and other potential sponsors.

**\*\*\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE\*\*\*\*\***

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**Montana 4‐H Congress Competitive Events**

FASHION REVUE:

Counties may allow any member who received a blue ribbon at the county level and is old enough to attend Congress to participate in the State Fashion Revue. The **top placing individual** will be awarded a trip to National 4‐H Congress and have the opportunity to participate in the Fashion Revue if one is held.

PUBLIC SPEAKING:

Counties may nominate any number to participate at the state competition. There is a public speaking contest at Western 4‐H Roundup. Therefore the **top two eligible individuals** in the public speaking contest at congress will be given a choice of award trips. They can choose to travel to Denver and compete in the regional contest or travel to National 4‐H Congress in Atlanta where there is no contest, but more leadership opportunity. Funding will vary depending on the option chosen.

DEMONSTRATIONS/ILLUSTRATED TALKS:

Counties may nominate any number to participate on the state level. The **top 3 placing (teams of 2 are counted as 1 placing))** state contest participants are selected to attend National 4‐H Congress, provided they have not already attended the event.

LIVESTOCK AND HORSE JUDGING:

Counties may nominate a **maximum of one (1) team consisting of 4 individuals and two (2) alternates** (participating as individuals) to participate at the state level. **If a single county cannot field a full team, two adjacent counties may combine members but only if neither county can field a team on their own. Therefore no alternates are permitted to accompany dual county teams.**

The top teams in Livestock, Horse, Horse Skill-a-ton (hipology), Gavel Games (parliamentary procedure) and Meats (held at the KMON judging in Great Falls) are awarded a trip to the Western 4‐H Roundup held in conjunction with the Denver Livestock Show in January. Please be aware of the state policy regarding eligibility of members to go to Roundup.

STATE POLICY: **A Montana 4‐H member may only attend the Denver Roundup once per discipline (i.e. livestock participant in Denver may only return as a member of a horse judging or horse skillathon team).**

Some possible situations are:

a. If a member has attended the Western 4‐H Roundup as a judging team member, he/she may only go again if a member of a different judging event.

b. If a member has attended the Western 4‐H Roundup, he/she cannot be a member of a county judging team in the same discipline but may participate in the same judging contest only as an individual.

This does not eliminate 4‐H members from participating in a variety of events during Montana

4‐H Congress if they have attended the Western 4‐H Roundup. It does eliminate their going to

Denver twice in the same discipline or being a member of a county judging team in the same discipline.

STIR ‐UPS CONTEST:

The **top 2 placing individual or teams** of the 4‐H Stir‐Ups Contest at Congress will be awarded a trip to

National 4‐H Congress.

GAVEL GAMES:

The **winning team (4)** (with the possibility of 2 alternates) of the 4‐H Gavel Games contest at Congress will receive a medal and will be awarded a trip to Western 4‐H Roundup. There is a Parliamentary Procedure competition at this event.

QUILT CONTEST:

The **top placing individual (1)** of the 4‐H quilt contest will receive a medal at State Congress. A trip to National 4‐H Congress will be awarded to the top individual.

HORSE SKILL‐A‐THON CONTEST:

The **winning team (4)** of the 4‐H invitational Horse Skill‐A‐Thon contest at Congress will receive a medal at State Congress. A trip to Denver Western Regional 4‐H Roundup will also be awarded to the team.

CAREER COMMUNICATIONS:

The **top placing individual (1)** of the Career communications contest will receive a medal at State Congress. A trip to National 4‐H Congress will be awarded to the top individual.

VIDEO

The top placing individual or team will be awarded with a medal and certificate. There will be **no** award trip during this PILOT year However, **participants may compete in another communications contest (public speaking or demonstration/illustrated talk or career communications) in addition to a pilot contest, to be eligible for an award trip.**

**Other Opportunities for Awards & Recognition**

SHOOTING SPORTS:

The State Shooting Sports contest will be held in March. The award winners will be announced at Congress. There is a National Shooting Sports activity held in the summer to which winners may go. Contact Todd Kesner for more information.

RANGE JUDGING:

The official Montana 4‐H State Range Judging Contest is the contest held in conjunction with “Range Days.” Counties may register any number to participate in this contest. The top four individuals in the 4‐H division of Range Days Contest are eligible to represent Montana in the Old West Regional Range Contest. However there is no financial support for this trip at this time. The Old West Contest is held in late September or early October. The site rotates yearly between Montana, Wyoming, Nebraska, North and South Dakota.

**AMBASSADOR AWARDS AND RECOGNITION:**

**State Ambassador Officers** – Five new state ambassador officers will be announced at Congress. Those who want to apply for state office must submit an application, two letters of recommendation, and approval from the county agent and county 4‐H council. These materials must be submitted to the State 4‐H office by **June 15**. Applicants will need to bring records to

Congress to be used as support material for interviews. Some expenses while serving as a state officer are provided by the Montana 4‐H Foundation.

**MONTANA 4‐H CONGRESS CONTEST POLICIES**

**RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS**

A 4‐H member must be a registered member of the county he/she is representing. 4‐Hers cannot be a member in one county and judge for another.

**MULTIPLE CONTEST PARTICIPATION**

Members may only compete in one contest being held at State 4‐H Congress.

This policy was created so that there is opportunity for more young people to participate in a competitive event. It also places emphasis on direct preparation for each contest allowing the

4‐H member to be properly prepared for their chosen contest area. In addition, the schedule for competitive events is extremely tight making participation in more than one area difficult.

**CONGRESS REGISTRATION**

Individuals wishing to participate in any competitive event MUST follow Montana 4‐H Congress registration guidelines. Registration for Congress, including contests, is done through the county agent. Montana 4‐H Congress is a complete experience and all participants are encouraged to take part in all that 4‐H Congress has to offer.

**OUT OF STATE AWARD TRIPS**

4‐H Members may attend more than one out of state recognition trips during the 4‐H year. However, an individual may NOT attend the same award trip more than once. **Members must meet the age requirements for the awarded event to be eligible for an award trip.**

**SPONSORED TRIPS**

Many 4‐H trips are announced as being sponsored by a company, individual, or organization, such as the Montana 4‐H Foundation. This does not mean that 100% of the trip is paid for by that sponsor. Examples of expenses that may not be covered are:

• Travel to point of departure and/or event

• Meals while traveling

• Meals while in attendance at the event

• Extracurricular activities that may not be part of the program

• Some transportation while attending, such as bus, taxi, etc.

Even though a trip may be listed as sponsored, there will be some out‐of‐pocket costs. These costs vary from year based on funds available and number of eligible participants actually going on the trip.