

4-H National Headquarters Fact Sheet

SPONSORING CONTESTS, AWARDS PROGRAMS, AND OTHER EVENTS

Donor or sponsor identification and involvement with a 4-H contest, awards program, or event will be approved only as result of an agreement between the Cooperative Extension Service and the donor or sponsor as to the type of award, purpose of the award, criteria on which the award will be given, and/or the rules and regulations under which a contest or awards program shall be conducted. Any sponsor, donor, organization, individual, or group wishing to cooperate with the Cooperative Extension Service in sponsoring an award or contest shall receive authorization to use the 4-H Name & Emblem from the appropriate person in their geographical area of responsibility prior to issuing any publicity or promotional materials related to the award or contest.

Donors or 4-H awards or cooperating sponsors of 4-H contests should be recognized by the Cooperative Extension Service in ways that show appreciation, but do not imply endorsement of the donor's product. Likewise, donors should be permitted to publicize their association and involvement with 4-H, but focus should be on the 4-H rather than on sales promotions. Any tangible item given by a donor as a 4-H award that incorporates the 4-H emblem as a part of the item shall use the official shape and design of the 4-H emblem as prescribed in the regulations and shall be duly authorized for production. Donors of 4-H awards or cooperating sponsors of 4-H contests cannot require the use of or refer to specific brand name products or services as criteria for an award or in conducting a contest.

If the Name or Emblem of 4-H is used in conjunction with a donor or sponsor's name on any 4-H award or in printed or visual material used in publicizing, promoting, or conducting a 4-H contest, the 4-H Name & Emblem shall be given a position of prominence. In conjunction with a 4-H contest or other programs for which awards are given (demonstrations, exhibits, or displays), the use of brand name products or services should be discouraged and if used, a statement clarifying 4-H does not endorse the products or services should be included in the program or written materials.

SPECIAL 4-H DAYS OR EVENTS SUPPORTED BY PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

4-H groups often participate in events arranged and conducted by private enterprise companies and organizations. When 4-H members participate, their primary role should be to promote the 4-H program and not the product, membership, religion, or politics of the organizer.

USE OF 4-H MEMBERS IN SPECIAL EVENTS ON BEHALF OF A PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

Many 4-H groups participate in project demonstrations at shopping centers, hosting for private concerns, exhibits at trade shows, etc. Some of these occasions require ties to products. These may include (1) modeling at a specific department store, (2) demonstrating new products at a store, and (3) assisting in tours of a new manufacturing facility. These activities should be carried out to further the educational objectives of 4-H or to promote the 4-H program and not a product or service.

GENERAL PUBLICITY IN THE MEDIA

Public exposure for 4-H is appropriate and beneficial to 4-H. There are frequent occasions, however, when interest might be expressed by a private enterprise to have 4-H identified with specific products. Care should be taken to ensure that products or product names are concealed or otherwise obscured during photo or filming sessions and in written media releases. This will help to avoid any misunderstanding regarding product ties or endorsements by 4-H.

In the event commercial groups sponsor regular or special 4-H media programs, such sponsors should be encouraged to conclude the program with a statement that this program is being provided as a public service on behalf of 4-H or in support of 4-H.

For questions concerning 4-H Clubs or Affiliated 4-H Organizations, please contact the 4-H National Headquarters—USDA at (202) 720-2908 or at 4hhq@nifa.usda.gov. For additional Fact Sheets, or other materials related to 4-H programming, please visit <http://www.national4-hheadquarters.gov/>.

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