



Pennsylvania 4-H Horse Program Fee *March 9, 2009*
Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is a 4-H horse program fee needed?

The 4-H Horse Program Development Committee and Penn State faculty and staff have been challenged to meet the present needs of extension educators, volunteers and youth at the county, district and regional level. Likewise it is difficult for county educators and volunteers to meet local and district program requests and needs. Current funding sources are no longer adequate for maintaining and growing a high quality 4-H horse program. Additional resources are necessary to maintain current programs and provide additional opportunities and resources for program participants.

After careful consideration, and much discussion and planning, the 4-H horse program is going in a strong new direction. This fee, along with the equine endowment being created, will enhance current programming and allow new initiatives to be moved from concept to reality. Many ideas routinely proposed by leaders, such as the shared horse and recreational programs, have not been able to advance due to a lack of staff and resources. The vision of the Development Committee is to bring the strongest of the ideas to the forefront, tailor the concepts to the region, organize the human capital needed for success, and implement them. The passion members and leaders have for the 4-H horse program will be further set in motion.

2. What is the horse program fee and how is the fee determined for each county?

It is important to recognize that this is a program fee and *not* a member fee. However, the total fee due from each county is calculated based on the total county 4-H horse member enrollment. In each county, a \$25.00 fee will be assessed annually for every 4-H horse member. Total horse program fee = \$25.00 X number of 4-H horse members in the county.

3. How will the funds from the program fee be used?

Two 4-H horse program extension associates were hired to help maintain and develop programs at the county and regional level. The associates will assist county extension educators and volunteers with regional and multi-county 4-H horse events and activities. Money generated by the program fee will be used for salaries and related expenses for the extension associates, as well as to support a 4-H Horse Program Endowment. Activities may include but are not limited to:

- Horsemanship and handling clinics
- Trail riding and other recreational programs
- Activities for urban and suburban youth and youth who do not own horses
- Horse judging, horse bowl, hippology and communications resources
- Therapeutic horsemanship
- Regional or multi-county camps, meetings, clinics, etc.
- Volunteer, extension educator and youth training.

3. How will the funds from the program fee be used? (continued)

Activities will support current 4-H projects, the Safety and Horsemanship Skills Programs and a new recreational project to meet the needs of youth using horses for recreational purposes. In addition, opportunities for youth who do not own horses will be included.

The endowment will provide sustainable funding to address program needs and provide programming at the county, regional and state level. The endowment will help ensure the future of the 4-H Horse Program and hopefully reduce or eliminate the need for future increases in program fees.

4. In which counties will the two extension associates be based?

The extension associates are based in the eastern and western regions of the Commonwealth. The associates are currently based in Crawford County (western) and Dauphin County (eastern). The associates are providing information and educational activities that are available to all counties within their assigned region through on-site, web based or video options.

5. How were the decisions made to implement the program fee?

The 4-H Horse Program Development Committee obtained input from volunteers, stakeholders, extension educators, and university administrators to develop this proposal. A strategic plan was developed in 2005 which indicated the need for additional program resources. Input on a proposal for a program fee was obtained through meetings and discussions at subsequent 4-H Horse Program Development and Advisory Committee meetings, 4-H Horse Forum, 4-H Animal Science Extension Educator In-Service and some district 4-H horse meetings. Follow up phone calls and meetings with the Extension Leadership Team and a cross section of extension educators were conducted as the proposal was further developed.

6. How was the fee amount determined?

A cost recovery worksheet was used to develop an initial budget that proposed a \$10 fee per year to support one extension staff associate. After review of the initial proposal, the Extension Leadership Team recommended an increase in the fee to \$25 per year to provide both eastern and western regional positions and address long term programming needs. The budget was revised to include two positions in order to provide more support for local and regional programming and help ensure future program sustainability.

It should be noted that most recreational or educational programs have significantly higher fees than those associated with the 4-H Horse Program. The \$25 fee is less than fees for many activities such as sports, music, dance, etc. that are often conducted over a limited time period.

7. Which 4-H members should be included to determine the county's program fee?

All 4-H horse project members including horseless, model horse, shared horse, and therapeutic (youth with special needs) should be included in calculation of the program fee. However, it is recognized that some counties have short term or special programs where the fee may not apply. The rule of thumb is the 4-H Horse Program fee should apply to the same youth as the educational materials fee.

8. Is there a horse program fee for Cloverbuds?

We do not currently have any approved curriculum for this age group in the horse program. Youth under eight years of age therefore would not pay the fee until they are enrolled in a 4-H horse project at age 8.

9. If the county collects fees from each member, what happens if a 4-H member says he/she is unable to pay the 4-H Horse Program fee?

Depending on availability of local funds, a county may choose to pick up a portion of the cost so that no fee or a smaller portion of the fee will be passed on to the 4-H member. Clubs may also fund-raise to support the program fee. *Individuals that qualify for free or reduced lunches through their public school system are eligible for funding through the Opportunity Fund.* Leaders should work with county educators to complete a request for support for eligible individuals from the state Opportunity Fund. Use the 4-H Horse Program Fee Member/Club Opportunity Fund Request form to request support from the fund. The Opportunity Fund Request Form must be submitted with the check from each county. The form is available on the 4-H Horse Program website or on the College of Agricultural Sciences extension website with cost recovery information.

10. What if a youth belongs to more than one 4-H club or is enrolled in more than one 4-H horse project, will they (or the county/club) have to pay their horse program fee in more than one club or project?

No. The program fee is paid once per year and covers all of the youth's 4-H horse projects, no matter how many clubs or projects they are enrolled in.

11. How should counties generate the money for the 4-H Horse Program fee?

Counties are encouraged to consider a variety of options for generating the county fee. Counties may choose to conduct local fund raisers, include cost recovery fees as a portion of participant fees for specific 4-H horse events, collect member fees, etc. One or more methods may be used to generate the fee. Counties should determine the method(s) of fee generation that is most appropriate for their respective circumstances.

12. What is the timeline for implementation of the fee collection?

The fee must be collected by the county and submitted to the Department of Dairy and Animal Science at Penn State by October 1 of each calendar year. The initial payment is due October 1, 2008.

13. What are the procedures for collecting and paying the fee?

County extension staff working with volunteer leaders will collect fees in their county. Total amount due from each county will be based on county 4-H horse member enrollment data. One or more methods may be used to generate the fee as noted.

Each county will send *one* check for the total amount for their county to the Administrative Assistant/Financial Officer in the Department of Dairy and Animal Science (DAS). The check should be accompanied by the Youth Development Annual Report (YDAR) form indicating the total number of 4-H horse members in the county *and* the Opportunity Fund request form (*if applicable*). The fee must be collected by the county and submitted to DAS by October 1 of each calendar year.

14. May we send one check with our Youth Development Annual Report (YDAR) report to pay for the educational materials fee and the horse program fee?

No. A separate check must be mailed to the Department of Dairy and Animal Science for the 4-H horse program fee.



15. Is there a way to keep track of each member's payment of their horse program fee?

Yes. The Membership Enrollment Form will be revised and club members will be expected to complete the form. The leader will check off in the appropriate space on the form that club members have paid the horse program fee or the county has paid the fee. Staff in the Extension Office will also be able to note this payment in the Youth Development Annual Report (YDAR).

For related information:

Refer to the 4-H Cost Recovery and 4-H Revenue Generation FAQ and the 4-H Horse Program website at www.das.psu.edu go to 4-H Horse Program and Program Information.