

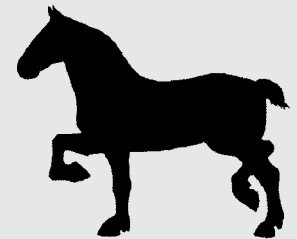
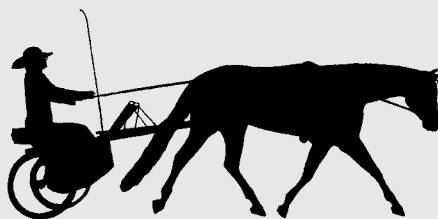
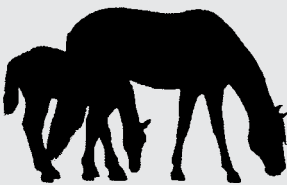
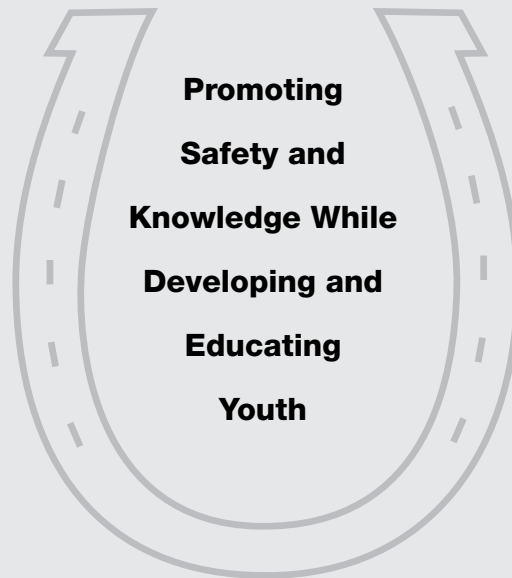
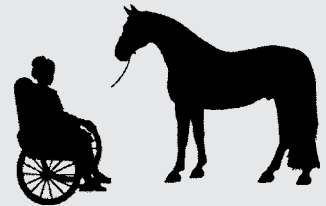
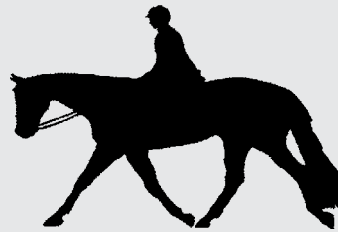
MEMBER

PENNSYLVANIA

4-H Horsemanship Skills

RESOURCE BOOK

4-H Horse Program



PENNSSTATE



College of Agricultural Sciences • Cooperative Extension

How to Use This Book

The Horsemanship Skills Program will help you safely ride and handle horses, improve your horsemanship skills, and have fun with horses. It will also teach you skills for daily living. You can participate in this program with any horse, regardless of your riding style or interests.

In this book you will find member skill sheets and testing information. Use this information to record your progress and prepare for skill testing. References are included to help you study skills and methods for learning skills. Your leaders, parents, and county extension educator may help you find additional resources and activities to learn the skills. However, it is *your* responsibility to study, practice, and master the skills.

The program is available to all 4-H members, regardless of ability to ride or own a horse. You are not required to use your project animal, although this is recommended. If you do not own a horse, you may participate by sharing or leasing a horse.

The Horsemanship Skills Program is optional with some exceptions. Refer to the current *Pennsylvania 4-H Horse Show Rule Book* for requirements for showing in state show qualifying classes.

Participation in the program may satisfy some project requirements and should be included in the project annual record. This program may also be used in conjunction with the *4-H Horse Safety Checklist*, *4-H Horse Safety Standards*, and other safety resources.

If you have questions or need additional information, contact your county extension educator and leader and check the Web site periodically for updates.

4-H Horse Program Web site:

www.das.psu.edu

(4-H Horse Program/Horsemanship Skills)

Contents

General Information.....	1
References and Educational Materials.....	2
Testing Information for All Levels.....	3
Testing Information for Level 3 or 4.....	5
Level 3 or 4 Testing Information Form.....	6
LEVEL 1 Member Skill Sheet	7
LEVEL 2 Member Skill Sheet	9
LEVEL 3 Member Skill Sheet	11
LEVEL 4 Member Skill Sheet	13

Prepared by Patty Kelly, volunteer, Westmoreland County; Patricia Comerford, extension horse specialist; Donna Zang, extension director, Butler County; Andrea Graeff, equine extension associate; and Brian Egan, instructor of equine science; in consultation with the Pennsylvania 4-H Horse Program Development Committee.



General Information

On the next few pages you will find guidelines to use in developing your horsemanship skills. You must master these basic skills before you and your horse will be able to perform advanced levels of horsemanship.

The 4-H Horsemanship Skills Program is based on progressive learning, which means that learning is more important than passing levels or earning awards. Your main goal at every level of this program should be to develop knowledge and always practice safety.

Level 1 emphasizes *basic, correct, and safe principles for handling and riding a horse.*
Level 1 skills are the foundation for all levels and emphasize basic skills at the walk and trot.

Level 2 emphasizes building a *solid foundation of horsemanship skills.*
Level 2 introduces the lope or canter and proper aids.

Level 3 uses foundation skills to learn *intermediate horsemanship skills.*
Level 3 requires the rider to be balanced while using aids and maintaining an even pace.

Level 4 completes an *advanced level of horsemanship skills.*
Level 4 requires a balanced horse and rider exhibiting calmness, rhythm, suppleness, and coordination.

- ◆ Mastering proper horsemanship skills before progressing to the next level requires **patience, maturity, interest, dedication, and time.**
- ◆ Both you and your horse will benefit from proper instruction.
- ◆ Remember practice does not make perfect. ***Perfect practice makes perfect!***
- ◆ Study references to understand and learn about skills. If you have difficulty learning or mastering a skill, please find help. See suggested resources, or contact your leader, instructor, or a member of the Pennsylvania 4-H Horse Program Development Committee. **Never work with another 4-H member or horse when angry.**
- ◆ ***Set No Time Limits!*** It may take a lot of time to master skills. Progress through these skill levels will vary with every horse and rider.
- ◆ When you change horses you must start again at Level 1 and continue with the successive levels.

The skills are not western, hunt seat, saddle seat, or contest skills. These skills are for all disciplines, riding styles, and uses. Members should identify their discipline and ride one- or two-handed as appropriate for testing.

You will learn handling and riding skills by starting from the basics and moving up to more difficult skills. By doing this, you will gain a strong understanding of and ability in horsemanship. You may advance far past these skill levels to more specialized areas such as jumping, reining, contest classes, competitive trail riding, and driving.

References and Educational Materials

The following resources can be used to explain and teach horsemanship skills

Start with Safety: Horse Safety Guidelines,
by Pat Comerford and Tim Potter
Published by American Youth Horse Council
(www.ayhc.com or 800-TRY-AYHC)
Also available from HorseBooksEtc.com

Horses, Safety, and You: How to Work With and Around a Horse Safely (Code# A0610B)
Penn State College of Agricultural
Sciences Publications Distribution Center
(AgPubsDist@psu.edu or 814-865-6713)

Safe Horse, Safe Rider, by Jessie Haas
Published by Storey Communications, Inc.
Amazon (www.amazon.com)

Cherry Hill Publications
Breakthrough Publications
(www.booksonhorses.com or 800-824-5000)

Arena Pocket Guide

Western: Beginner–Intermediate–Advanced
English: Beginner–Intermediate–Advanced

101 Arena Exercises

Horse Handling and Grooming

101 Longeing and Long Lining Exercises: English and Western

Horsekeeping and Training (Riders Library
CD-ROM)

United States Pony Club (USPC) Publications,
by Susan E. Harris:
Breakthrough Publications (www.booksonhorses.com
or 800-824-5000) or USPC Equine Bookstore Catalog
(www.ponyclub.org or 859-422-5522)

The USPC Manual of Horsemanship

The USPC Guide to Longeing and Ground Training

Longevity Training, by Lynn Palm with Sue M. Copeland
Breakthrough Publications
(www.booksonhorses.com or 800-824-5000)

CHA Horsemanship Manual and other materials
Published by the Certified Horsemanship Association—
The Association for Horsemanship Safety and Education
(www.cha-ahse.org, phone: 800-724-1446)

The Complete Guide to Western Horsemanship,
by J. P. Forget
Amazon (www.amazon.com) or
HorsesinYourMailbox.com

Saddle Seat Equitation: The Definitive Guide,
by Helen K. Crabtree
Amazon (www.amazon.com)

Getting the Most from Riding Lessons, by Mike Smith
Amazon (www.amazon.com) or
HorsesinYourMailbox.com

Drive Smartly—Drive Safely
The Carriage Association of America
(www.caaonline.com)

Breaking and Training the Driving Horse,
by Doris Ganton (text and DVD)
Published by Wilshire Book Company
Amazon (www.amazon.com)

Harness Safety Checklist
The American Driving Society
(www.americandrivingsociety.org)

Pennsylvania Council on Therapeutic Horsemanship
(www.pacth.org)

North American Riding for the Handicapped
Association, NARHA (www.narha.org)

Many additional resources on safety, horsemanship, handling, and riding skills are available.
Work with your instructor or an experienced equine professional to locate reliable resources.



Additional resources and supporting materials will be added as they become available.



Check the 4-H Horse Program Web site periodically for updated information:
www.das.psu.edu (4-H Horse Program/Horsemanship Skills).

Testing Information for All Levels

Congratulations on your effort and participation in the Pennsylvania 4-H Horsemanship Skills Program!

You should practice and learn skills before testing, and then be prepared to demonstrate skills at testing. Do not expect examiners to teach skills at testing.

Mastering each skill level and preparing for testing may take a long time; some skills may take several weeks, months, or years to master. The time required will depend on you and your horse's ability. Work with your parent, trainer, or a helper who is experienced with horses and understands how to teach you and your horse to safely and correctly perform the skills.

It is recommended that you master and test handling skills first and then proceed to riding skills. When handling skills are completed, saddle your horse or pony and go to the riding test site.

If your horse or pony is uncooperative for any reason or you have difficulty with a skill, you will be given at least three tries to correctly complete each skill.

At the end of the testing, you will be given a copy of your skill evaluation sheet, which includes whether you passed or will need to retest.

Remember, no one fails! If you need to retest, you should work and practice more and try again. At completion of testing, examiners will offer suggestions on how to improve your skills before testing again.

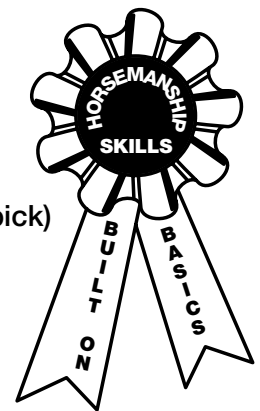
All members passing any level will be recognized in some manner at the county, district, and state levels.

For Level 1 testing you need to take the following to the testing site:

1. Properly fitted protective headgear; suitable clothing and boots or footwear
2. Horse or pony (clean and groomed)
3. Halter and lead
4. Bridle
5. Saddle and saddle pad
6. Grooming equipment (rubber curry, body brushes, comb, and hoofpick)
7. Parent or adult helper
8. Positive attitude!

NOTE: Training equipment or training aids may not be used for testing.

For Levels 2-4 testing, you will need the above items and all tack and equipment needed for skills in these levels. Check with your local leader or examiners to determine other items you may need and additional details for testing. Having a parent or adult helper with you at testing is recommended.



Riding with One or Two Hands for Testing

Members preparing to test should identify their primary riding interest and ride the tests one- or two-handed as appropriate for their discipline. The current PA 4-H Horse Show Rule Book should be used as the reference for the appropriate method. Members who participate in activities not covered by the rule book should ride one- or two-handed according to the industry standard for that discipline. Regardless of discipline, reins must be held correctly, demonstrating the proper use, hand position, and action.

Levels 1 and 2 are to be ridden one- or two-handed, as appropriate, for the entire test. Members may not switch from one- to two-handed during the test. For some of the more advanced skills in Levels 3 and 4, a member may use one or two hands to aid in execution of maneuver. Reins must be used correctly, and the skill must be executed properly.

Retesting—Level 1

For Level 1 horsemanship skills, retesting will be done as appropriate by section: handling and riding. If a youth does not pass one or more individual skills, he or she will be required to retest the respective section or sections.

Example 1: A youth tested in Level 1 did not master handling skill 1-2 (properly halter a horse) but passed all riding skills. The youth must then retest all skills in the handling section. He or she would *not* be required to retest the riding section also.

Example 2: A youth tested in Level 1 did not master skill 1-12 (mount and dismount properly) and skill 1-26 (emergency dismount) but passed all the handling skills. The youth must then retest all skills in the riding section. He or she would *not* be required to retest the handling section also.

If a youth does not master skills in *both* the handling and the riding sections, he or she would be required to retest the *entire* Level 1 test.

Example 3: A youth tested in Level 1 did not master skill 1-6 (safely tie a horse) and skill 1-25 (emergency stop). Because the skills not mastered were in *both* the handling and the riding sections, the youth must retest the *entire* Level 1 test.

Retesting—Levels 2-4

In Levels 2-4 of the Horsemanship Skills Program, retesting is done on an individual skill basis. Youth will only be required to retest the specific skills not mastered in Levels 2-4.

Testing with New or Additional Horses

When a youth acquires a new horse or changes their horse for testing, the youth must begin again at Level 1. Although the youth may have passed other levels previously, they must demonstrate mastery of skills with the horse they are currently using for testing. The skill level, ability, experience, and training of each horse will vary to some extent. Likewise, youth vary in their ability to handle, control, and ride different horses. In order to effectively evaluate horsemanship skills, mastery of the skills must be demonstrated by the youth with *each* horse at *each* level.

Testing Information for Level 3 or 4

Are you ready to test Level 3 or 4?

Youth should practice and be prepared to properly demonstrate skills at testing for Level 3 or 4. Work with your parent, trainer, 4-H leader, or knowledgeable adult to help determine if you are ready to test before you request to be tested.

You must have passed Levels 1 and 2 prior to testing for Level 3. You should have mastered each skill and be able to complete each skill without multiple attempts at home before you are tested. You should be able to complete all skills within each level in no more than 45 minutes. If you are not able to complete all skills within this time frame and without multiple attempts, then you are probably not ready to test.

Procedures to Arrange for Testing

When you are ready to test, contact your county extension educator and submit the “Testing Information Form” (see next page or Web site) to the educator and/or the people coordinating the testing. The county educator should be aware of your request for testing and may help you or your 4-H leader arrange for testing. To arrange for testing, the extension educator or your leader should contact Level 3-4 examiners in your district or area. A list of Level 3-4 examiners is on the 4-H Horse Program Web site at www.das.psu.edu (4-H Horse Program/Horsemanship Skills).

Please note that it takes time to coordinate schedules, examiners, locations, etc., for skills testing; arranging for testing details may take several weeks. Please recognize that arranging for testing in your home county or local area is not always possible. You may need to drive to a district or state location to test for Level 3 or 4. It is important that you provide complete information on the attached form. These steps will help ensure that you can be contacted if needed and tested as soon as possible.

Required Paperwork

1. Submit the “Testing Information Form” to your county educator and/or the person coordinating testing.
2. If you are retesting skills in Level 3 or 4, you must bring the evaluation sheet from your previous test in order to document the skills that you need to retest.
3. There are health requirements for horses at most 4-H events, facilities, and the Penn State Ag Arena. Please check for current requirements and bring required health papers and information with you to the testing site.

What to Bring to Testing

1. Horse or pony (clean and well-groomed).
2. All tack and equipment needed for the skills in this level.
3. Properly fitted protective headgear and appropriate footwear (required).
4. Tack and attire suitable for the seat/style that you ride. (You may use show attire or neat, safe, working attire, providing it is appropriate for the seat. Training equipment may not be used for testing.)
5. A knowledgeable adult, parent, or helper (highly recommended).
6. Positive attitude!

Level 3 or 4 Testing Information Form

After you have practiced the skills, work with your 4-H leader, coach, or parent to determine if you are ready to test Level 3 or 4. Please complete the information below if you have passed Levels 1 and 2 and are prepared to test. This will help coordinate testing schedules and arrange for testing.

NOTE: You may need to drive to a district or state location for testing Level 3 or 4.

County _____

4-H Member Name _____

Parent or Adult Contact Name _____

Address _____

Parent/Adult Phone: home _____ work _____

E-mail _____

Check all times and list dates that you are available to test:

	TIMES	DATES ABLE TO TEST
Weekday mornings	_____	_____
Weekday afternoons	_____	_____
Weekend mornings	_____	_____
Weekend afternoons	_____	_____

.....

Please return this form to your county extension educator or send it to the person coordinating testing in your county or district.

If you have questions or are unsure who to contact about Level 3 or 4 testing, contact your county educator and Level 3-4 examiners.

To find examiners in your area, go to the 4-H Horse Program Web site at www.das.psu.edu (4-H Horse Program/Horsemanship Skills).

Thank you for your cooperation. Good luck!

LEVEL 1 4-H Horsemanship Skills



MEMBER SKILL SHEET

Rider's Name (Last) _____ (First) _____ (Age) _____

Address _____

Club _____ County _____ Check if Production _____

Horse's Name _____ Seat/Discipline _____ Date _____

Handling	Mastered (✓)	Member Comments
1-1 Approach and catch horse safely (tied and loose)		
1-2 Properly halter horse		
1-3 Lead, turn, and back horse safely and correctly		
1-4 Lead a horse into and out of a stall		
1-5 Practice safety rules when turning a horse loose		
1-6 Safely tie horse (correct level, length, location, knot, etc.)		
1-7 Demonstrate simple grooming of the horse		
1-8 Pick up feet and clean properly		
1-9 Bridle horse—check fit and make basic adjustments		
1-10 Saddle horse—check fit and make basic adjustments		
1-11 Demonstrate safety around the horse while handling		
Riding	Test must be ridden one or two handed as correct for seat/discipline	
1-12 Mount and dismount properly (may use mounting block)		
1-13 Describe and discuss safely riding in a group		
1-14 Use proper basic seat, leg, and body position with balance		
1-15 Proper use of reins; hand position and action		
At a walk with control and proper position:		
1-16 start and stop (gradual and balanced)		
1-17 check and release (demonstrating control of horse)		
1-18 turn while walking and walk in both directions		
1-19 ride a circle both directions and do a figure 8		
At a jog or trot with control and proper position:		
1-20 start and stop (gradual and balanced)		
1-21 check and release (demonstrating control of horse)		
1-22 turn while jogging or trotting both directions		
1-23 ride a circle both directions and do a figure 8		
1-24 Drop and regain stirrups while at a halt		
1-25 Emergency stop		
1-26 Emergency dismount		
1-27 Equipment, clothing, helmet (fit, condition, suitability, etc.)		
1-28 Overall attitude and confidence		

Level 1 emphasizes basic, correct, and safe principles of handling and riding.

To pass this level, the 4-H member must have *mastered* each skill of the test.

Retest will be by section (handling/riding) in Level 1.

LEVEL 2 4-H Horsemanship Skills



MEMBER SKILL SHEET

Rider's Name (Last) _____ (First) _____ (Age) _____

Address _____

Club _____ County _____ Check if Production _____

Horse's Name _____ Seat/Discipline _____ Date _____

Handling	Mastered (✓)	Member Comments
2-1 Proficient in Level 1 skills		
2-2 Fitting, grooming, and clipping—mane/tail/body/legs/feet		
2-3 Bathing a horse		
2-4 Ground-handling skills: walk, trot, stop, turn on hindquarters, back, and set up		
2-5 Demonstrate proper fit, adjustment, and safety of equipment		
2-6 Properly adjust stirrups		
2-7 Safety in handling skills—at all times		
Riding	Test <i>must</i> be ridden one or two handed as correct for seat/discipline	
2-8 Mount and dismount properly (may use mounting block)		
Demonstrate correct body position and upward and downward transitions using proper aids and maintaining an even pace:		
2-9 walk to a jog/trot		
2-10 increase the jog/trot		
2-11 halt		
At a canter or lope:		
2-12 start and stop (gradual and balanced)		
2-13 check and release (demonstrating control of horse)		
2-14 turn while cantering and ride in both directions		
2-15 ride a circle both directions and do a figure 8 (simple lead change)		
2-16 Drop and regain stirrups while at a walk and jog or trot		
2-17 Back 4–5 steps in a straight line		
2-18 Show a gradual and balanced halt from all gaits		
2-19 Leg yield at a walk—both directions		
2-20 Sidepass a minimum of 10 feet—both directions		
2-21 Show a simple lead change on straightaway—at least 3		
2-22 Walk and trot over 3–4 logs		
2-23 Open and close gate while mounted or dismounted		
2-24 Equipment, clothing, helmet (fit, condition, suitability, etc.)		
2-25 Overall attitude and confidence		

Level 2 emphasizes building a solid foundation of horsemanship skills.

To pass this level, the 4-H member must have *mastered* each skill of the test.

Retest will only be on specific skills—not the entire test.

LEVEL 3 4-H Horsemanship Skills



MEMBER SKILL SHEET

Rider's Name (Last) _____ (First) _____ (Age) _____

Address _____

Phone Number: Home _____ Cell _____

Club _____ County _____ Check if Production _____

Horse's Name _____ Seat/Discipline _____ Date _____

Handling	Mastered (✓)	Member Comments
3-1 Proficient in Levels 1 and 2 skills		
3-2 Fitting and turnout of the horse—high quality and appropriate for breed and type		
Ground-handling skills:		
3-3 360-degree turn on the hindquarters		
3-4 turn on the forehand—both directions		
3-5 Display confidence, safety, and knowledge around the horse		
3-6 Safely lunge a horse at a walk, trot, and canter in both directions		
3-7 Practice safety in handling skills—at all times		
Riding	Test may be ridden one or two handed; prefer as correct for seat/discipline according to industry standards	
3-8 Mount and dismount properly (may use mounting block)		
Using proper aids (hands, legs, seat, and voice), ride with a secure form keeping the horse's head and neck quiet.		
Demonstrate upward and downward transitions:		
3-9 from a walk—jog or trot and then halt		
3-10 from a walk—lope or canter and then halt		
Demonstrate use of reins at a walk and jog or trot:		
3-11 on a loose rein		
3-12 using a light rein		
3-13 riding with contact		
3-14 Drop and regain stirrups at a canter		
3-15 Back 8–10 steps in a straight line		
3-16 Demonstrate a balanced halt from all gaits		
3-17 Leg yield at a trot/jog—both directions		
3-18 180-degree turn on the forehand—both directions		
3-19 180-degree turn on the hindquarter—both directions		
3-20 Counter canter—complete circles—both directions		
3-21 Equipment, clothing, helmet (fit, condition, suitability, etc.)		
3-22 Overall attitude and confidence		

Level 3 uses foundation skills to learn intermediate horsemanship skills.

To pass this level, the 4-H member must have *mastered* each skill of the test.

Retest will be only the specific skills—not the entire test.

LEVEL 4 4-H Horsemanship Skills



MEMBER SKILL SHEET

Rider's Name (Last) _____ (First) _____ (Age) _____

Address _____

Phone Number: Home _____ Cell _____

Club _____ County _____ Check if Production _____

Horse's Name _____ Seat/Discipline _____ Date _____

Handling	Mastered (✓)	Member Comments
4-1 Proficiency in Levels 1, 2, and 3 skills		
4-2 Discuss and describe trailer safety—loading, unloading, hauling safety, etc.		
4-3 Demonstrate a ¼ pull turn on the hindquarter		
Riding	Test may be ridden one or two handed; <i>prefer as correct for seat/discipline according to industry standards</i>	
4-4 Mount and dismount properly (may use mounting block)		
Skills are to be ridden with proper head position, bending and suppleness, calmness, lightness, rhythm, and coordination using leg yielding and weight aids .		
Demonstrate lengthening and shortening of gaits:		
4-5 walk—slow/ordinary/extended		
4-6 jog or trot—slow/ordinary/extended		
4-7 lope or canter—slow/ordinary/extended		
4-8 Back a circle		
4-9 360-degree turn on the hindquarter—both directions		
4-10 360-degree turn on the forehand—both directions		
4-11 Jog or trot—depart from a halt		
4-12 Lope or canter—depart from a halt		
4-13 Leg yield at a canter/lope—both directions		
4-14 Demonstrate shoulder-in at walk and trot/jog—both directions		
Perform flying lead changes:		
4-15 diagonally across the arena		
4-16 in a figure 8		
4-17 on a straightaway (at least 3 in a row)		
4-18 Equipment, clothing, helmet (fit, condition, suitability, etc.)		
4-19 Overall attitude and confidence		

Level 4 emphasizes advanced horsemanship ability and knowledge.

To pass this level, the 4-H member must have *mastered* each skill of the test.

Retest will be only the specific skills—not the entire test.

4-H Club Motto

“To make the best better”

4-H Club Pledge

I pledge
my head to clearer thinking,
my heart to greater loyalty,
my hands to larger service, and
my health to better living, for
my club,
my community,
my country, and
my world.

4-H Club Colors

Green and White



Visit Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences on the Web: agsci.psu.edu

Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences research, extension, and resident education programs are funded in part by Pennsylvania counties, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

This publication is available from the Publications Distribution Center, The Pennsylvania State University, 112 Agricultural Administration Building, University Park, PA 16802. For information telephone 814-865-6713.

Where trade names appear, no discrimination is intended, and no endorsement by Penn State Cooperative Extension is implied.

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

The Pennsylvania State University is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to programs, facilities, admission, and employment without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. It is the policy of the University to maintain an academic and work environment free of discrimination, including harassment. The Pennsylvania State University prohibits discrimination and harassment against any person because of age, ancestry, color, disability or handicap, national origin, race, religious creed, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or veteran status. Discrimination or harassment against faculty, staff, or students will not be tolerated at The Pennsylvania State University.

Direct all inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policy to the Affirmative Action Director, The Pennsylvania State University, 328 Boucke Building, University Park, PA 16802-5901, Tel 814-865-4700/V, 814-863-1150/TTY.

© The Pennsylvania State University 2009

Produced by Ag Communications and Marketing

A0603B

Rev3M4/09mpc4577