

**Wisconsin 4-H**

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Dear WI 4-H Horse Project Members, Volunteers, and Families,

Recently, Wisconsin 4-H Horse Association updated their requirement for showing at Wisconsin 4-H Horse Expo. Beginning in 2023, 4-H members will not need to earn a blue ribbon at their fair qualifying horse show to attend Expo. This is in alignment with the other state 4-H horse shows that the association conducts, State 4-H Hunt and Dressage and State 4-H Gymkhana. Additionally, this aligns with other state 4-H animal shows.

The WI State 4-H Horse Association made this decision after seeking much feedback that included both youth member and adult voices. A survey was conducted with youth participants at the 2022 WI 4-H Horse Expo. In addition, prior to the change, a discussion including both youth and adults from throughout the state was held at the WI 4-H Horse Association's November meeting. Both the survey and the vote held in November had majority vote in favor of this change.

We appreciate that the association looked at this from a lens of making this experience equitable for all youth from throughout the state, and we support this decision. As they heard from members, volunteers, and families, they found that practices were not equitable, and all members were not being given the same opportunities. They challenged themselves to make qualifying for the Wisconsin 4-H Horse Expo opportunity equitable for all youth.

On the county level, horse project groups and clubs should continue their great work with local activities, programs, and expectations as decided by the group's membership. We recommend you to work with your local educator if you have questions about your local project group/club.

Additionally, we highly encourage members to continue showing their horses at local county fairs. The fair is a great opportunity for members to exhibit their project, gain feedback and reflect, and apply that gained knowledge to their project. Plus, the fair is a great way for the community to see your ongoing great work and passion for the horse project.

Thank you for being part of the horse project community in Wisconsin 4-H! The strong and passionate involvement of YOU - youth, volunteers, and families – allow the 4-H horse project experience and events to be exceptional. We are excited for the upcoming year of showing, learning, and growing in the Wisconsin 4-H Horse Project and look forward to watching our youth flourish in educational programs, meetings, showrings, and other horse activities.

Sincerely,

Jill Jorgensen, WI 4-H Youth Development Agriculture and Animal Science Outreach Specialist  
and  
Jessica Jens, Wisconsin 4-H Associate Director

