UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION

2026 Horse information sheet

Prepared by the 4-H State Horse PDC and the Department of Youth Development.

This information sheet gives details on the rules for this year's Minnesota 4-H Horse Project. These rules will apply at the state level and at the Minnesota State 4-H Horse Show.

Animal ID deadline for 2026 - May 15, 2026 for all horses, miniature horses, and western heritage horses. Contact Kris Vatter, Dakota County Extension Educator, office for more information.

Western Heritage Exception: If your Western Heritage horse is not identified by May 15th and not being used for other horse project activities your horse identification and Coggins test results and lease if necessary are due within 10 days following attendance at a Safety Clinic.

Ownership requirements

Ownership requirements for all 4-H Animal Science Projects are uniform for Beef, Dairy, Dairy Goat, Dog, Horse, Llama - Alpaca, Meat Goat, Poultry, Rabbit, Sheep, and Swine. Animals must be owned solely by the 4-H'er or the 4-H'ers family. The family includes the 4-H'ers parents/guardians and siblings living together as a family unit. Animals owned by non-family members must be leased and follow lease guidelines. All information must be submitted by May 15 with 4-H Online data.

Ownership Clarifications

Horse ID requirements:

- All required information must be complete in 4-H Online
- A photo must be uploaded into 4-H Online (the photo on coggins is not the required photo upload)
- A current negative coggins should be uploaded if available by the May 15 ID deadline. If it is not available by the May 15th ID deadline the horse ID will still be considered complete but a current negative coggins must be submitted and on file before the horse can participate in any group practices or competitions.
- The horse's name on the coggins MUST match the horse's name in 4-H Online. The owner listed on the coggins doesn't matter as long as the horse matches.

Leasing program

- Horses can be leased by more than one 4-H'er but cannot be shown in the same class by different 4-H'ers
- Leased animals must follow the guidelines in the Minnesota 4-H Animal Science Lease Program Fact Sheet. All ID information and the Minnesota 4-H Animal Science Lease Information Form must be submitted by May 15 with 4-H Online data.

Minnesota Board of Animal Health requirements for exhibition, county and state fairs

Height Guidelines

- Accurate height in hands must be entered into 4-H Online.

- Any horse that is ID'd in 4-H Online at 14.0 hands or less is a pony. If you are close on your ID or in person you will be flagged and either required to measure at the state show or moved to the appropriate class.

Western Heritage Unique ID Option:

- **ID option for Western Heritage horses ONLY:**
  - Any horse to be shown at a Western Heritage event must be enrolled as a 4-H project animal and be properly identified on the 4-H Horse Identification Form.This form must be submitted to the Extension Office on or before May 15th of the current club year. If your Western Heritage horse is not identified by May 15th and not being used for other horse project activities your horse identification and Coggins test results and lease if needed are due within 10 days following attendance at a Safety Clinic. This must be submitted to your local Extension Office for upload into the 4-H Online system.
- **Safety Clinics**
  - Participants must attend a Safety Clinic conducted by a Western Heritage Certified Instructor, once with a horse to be eligible to compete at a Regional event or activity. If a 4-H'er has participated in a Safety Clinic with a specific horse they then may become eligible to participate in regionals or state by participating in a certified practices to attain Safety Clinic sign off conducted by a Western Heritage Certified Instructor, once each year to be eligible to compete at a Regional event or activity. Western heritage practice conducted by a certified instructor in each Western Heritage event to be eligible to compete in that event at a Regional event or activity. The Western Heritage Certified Instructor is responsible for turning in their attendance lists to Renee Kostick @ hinkx001@umn.edu for the participant to be eligible.

Show divisions and classes

Performance:

The following performance classes will be offered in 2026: (note exhibitor must choose between ranch pleasure and western pleasure)

Western Pleasure
English Equitation
Ranch Pleasure

Western Horsemanship
Trail (choose 1)
- English
- Western

English Pleasure
Showmanship (choose 1)
- English
- Western

Games:

The following games classes will be offered in 2026:

Barrels
Jumping Figure
Pole Weaving
Key race

Miniature Horse:

The following miniature horse classes will be offered in 2026:

Showmanship	Hunter	Jumper
Obstacles at Hand	Liberty	Costume
Ground Driving	Driving	Driving Obstacle
Roadster		

Western Heritage:

The following western heritage classes will be offered in 2026:

Round Pen Roping	Breakaway Roping	Team Roping
Goat Tying	Pen to Pen Sorting	