



February 2007

TO: Minnesota 4-H Horse Families

FROM: Brad Rugg, Program Director, Fairs and Animal Science

RE: 4-H Involvement in Western Saddle Club Association shows

Many County 4-H Horse Programs have successfully used sponsorship of a WSCA Show as a fundraiser. The helmet policy, however, would mean that all riding classes offered to 4-H-age youth (grade 13 and under) would need to wear a helmet. This requirement would not qualify the show as an official WSCA Show with WSCA points awarded. Thus, 4-H programs cannot sponsor a WSCA Show.

There is, however, a successful model that will still allow 4-H Horse programs to experience positive service learning opportunities and potential financial gain through WSCA Show involvement. Several 4-H programs will contract with the WSCA Show sponsor to perform specific tasks for the show. In return, they receive money from the sponsoring group. In these cases it is not appropriate for 4-H'ers or 4-H volunteers to conduct management tasks such as hiring judges and chairing show planning meetings. Other sponsoring groups will publicly state that all profits from the show will go to a specific 4-H horse program. In these and similar scenarios, it is recognized that many horse enthusiasts are active in both 4-H and WSCA. When dual membership exists, it is critical for participants to understand they are exhibiting in the show or managing the show independent of 4-H and are not supported with liability and/or insurance preserved only for 4-H activities.

A WSCA Show, for example, may be sponsored by a local non-4-H horse club, who decides to give some or all of its profits to the local 4-H horse program and reflect this choice in all of the show promotion. Many of the members of the sponsoring club may likely be 4-H members, 4-H parents and 4-H volunteers. These people can participate freely in the WSCA show. Adults may choose to manage the show and youth may decide to ride in the show without helmets. They must also realize they do not carry a 4-H affiliation with them during their involvement in the show. As a result, liability will not be covered through the University of Minnesota and any 4-H medical insurance is not applicable for this non-4-H activity.

If you need clarification on the contents of this communication, please feel free to connect with your County 4-H Program Coordinator/Director or your 4-H Regional Educator. The goal of Minnesota 4-H is to provide a wide range of safe activities to young people. Thanks in advance for your cooperation as we transition to and implement the statewide helmet policy.