

PEAC NEWS

YOUR CONNECTION TO THE 4-H ALBERTA EQUINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

March 2020



WELCOME TO PEAC NEWS

The purpose of this newsletter is to keep 4-H Equine Leaders informed of PEAC's work, resources updates, programs opportunities and general equine project tips.

PEAC News will be distributed twice per club year – generally in the fall and the spring.

WHAT IS THE 4-H ALBERTA EQUINE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PEAC)?

PEAC serves as an advisory body to 4-H Alberta. There are representatives from each of the seven 4-H regions.

Representatives seek input from members, leaders, regional council and regional committees to ensure their recommendation and work represent the needs and interests 4-H members, leaders and volunteers.

PEAC's work helps to promote and enhance the 4-H equine projects in Alberta focusing on fun, safety, progression, member retention and leader skill development.

4-H EQUINE RESOURCES AT YOUR FINGERTIPS!

Equine project members learn basic aspects of working with horses in Horsemanship Levels 1 to 3; starting with the basics of riding, safe horse care, and stable management. Within each level, there is a variety of mounted and dismounted abilities, with the skills building upon those learned previously. Once members have mastered the basics, they may choose to continue with Horsemanship Levels 4 to 7 within the disciplines of Western or English riding, or areas such as packing or Green Certificate.

*These resources are available for order through your club supplies, as well as in the **Resource Section** of the 4-H Alberta Website.*

Resources that will get you started:

Horse Reference Manual - Basic horsemanship information that is important for any horse owner to know.

Horsemanship Levels 1 - 3 - Safety and basic horsemanship skills.

Horsemanship Levels 4 - 7 - Members continue to learn horsemanship skills. They can also advance their knowledge about Jumping, Dressage, Ranch Horse, Rodeo, Packing, Reining and Cattle Events.

Mounted Assessments Flow Chart – A chart showing progression across the horsemanship levels.

4-H Equine Bit Poster - Provides a general guideline for bits allowed within 4-H.

Horsemanship Video - A video showing the step-by-step progression of horsemanship skills learned through the 4-H Equine Project.

More equine resources can be found on www.4h.ab.ca

A BIT OF 4-H EQUINE PROJECT HISTORY

The horse project started in Alberta in 1966 and has undergone many changes since that time. Any members or leaders who have had a long involvement with the 4-H equine project will note these changes and will have noticed that the quality of horses and horsemanship has improved greatly.

The focus of the 4-H equine project has always been to make the relationship between the horse and rider as enjoyable and safe as possible. How this has been accomplished has changed over the years. When the project began, it was much less structured than it currently is. The project books showed how to feed and care for a horse, but riding instruction was left to the discretion of the club's leaders.



2019-2020 CLUB YEAR STATS (UNOFFICIAL)

- 980 members taking 1,243 horse projects.
- The top projects (beyond Horsemanship Level 1-3 and Level 4-7) are:
 - Western Rodeo
 - Horse Showing
 - Young Horse
 - English Jumping

CONTACT US

4-H Alberta - Provincial Equine Advisory Committee

- **East Central**
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- **Northwest**
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- **Calgary**
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- **4-H Council of Alberta**
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- **4-H Section**
Alesha Hill

During the 75th Anniversary of 4-H in Alberta, a group of equine leaders developed an equine program for Showcase '92. Following this event, the group continued to meet and formed the Provincial Equine Advisory Committee (PEAC). One of the first orders of business for this committee was to review the current equine project and develop it to meet the current needs of leaders and members.

PEAC, with the assistance of 4-H Alberta staff, talked and surveyed many 4-H members and leaders in Alberta to find out what they liked and didn't like about the current project. They also looked at what other provinces and states in the U.S.A. did with their equine projects.

One of the common themes that PEAC heard was that leaders wanted to have more structure to the project. They wanted skill development that had a definite progression. Leaders mentioned that they would like a way to help them to develop the skills. As well, they wanted a way to work with parents and members to show where the members were in this path of skill development. The result is the current equine project, which provides leaders with a structure for skill development and working with members. It can also show parents which skills a member has and is working on. In addition to the project material, PEAC has developed many resources and provides training for leaders. The 4-H Alberta equine project is recognized as one of the best in North America.

LESSON PLAN EXAMPLE

5 Minutes - Safety check by all members and leaders, and preparation of any required lesson equipment (for example: pylons, rails, standards, barrels, etc.).

10-15 Minutes - Warmup. Consider using some rider stretching exercises (page 246). Vary the warmup, according to the rider's skill level, to keep the riders' and horses' attention. Use the corners and long sides, as well as your pylons to keep the riders and horses' attention. Possibly change direction and gaits.

5-7 Minutes - Following the warm up, speak to the group of participants about today's lesson plan specific to their needs (example: rein effects on page 250 of manual). Demonstrate examples of the skills involved in the lesson.

More information on rein effects can be found starting on page 250 of the 4-H Horse Reference Manual or Horsemanship Rider 3 & 4 of the Horsemanship Video http://www.4h.ab.ca/downloads/project_manuals/Horse_Video.html

10-15 Minutes – Allow members back to work on their mounted skills, following the lesson plan. Focus on the strengths of each rider by giving them encouragement, specific instructions and attainable goals. It may be feasible to work with rider level groups at different ends of the arena, under suitable instruction and supervision.

5 Minutes – Reassess the lesson. Ask for demonstrations from different riders to show their success with various aspects of the lesson.

5-10 Minutes – Game: Do something fun and safe with the level group to practice the learned skill. For example, a large pattern where someone calls out the rein effect. The last member to respond answers a skill-testing question.

Post Lesson - Review your lesson and tweak the areas that could be improved.

LESSON POINTERS

- Be flexible on everything, but keep safety at top of mind.
- Have more than one WRITTEN lesson plan prepared per week and share them with your leader helpers.
- Incorporate fun! This could be a game or trail challenges. Use your imagination!
- Set aside time for safety checks on both tack and horses.
- Once a month work on record book elements such as vital signs, hoof care, vaccinations, deworming, weight / height / body score.
- Keep track of attendance by having a sign-in sheet for each event (include members, parents and leaders); store all sign-in sheets in one book.
- Evaluate your events by asking what participants learned and what they liked. This helps you get to know the group and how to improve your event for next time.
- Prepare incident reports for accidents (even for near misses). You may want to have ribbons ready for horses' tails to remind riders not to ride too close.
- Check in on each rider individually. Use this as an opportunity for encouragement and discussing specific goals.
- Teaching groups is an art. Be organized and ask for outside assistance. Group lessons are not private or even semi-private, yet each person is an individual who needs encouragement and personal guidance during the lesson. Take problems and turn them into challenges with opportunity.
- Do take breaks in the lessons. You may leave the participants on the rail or have a group stop. Keep safety in mind, and do what works best for the group.

4-H ALBERTA

4-H Alberta's Website www.4h.ab.ca , or reach us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube @4halberta

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