

TEXAS A&M AGRI LIFE EXTENSION



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Clover Connection

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When people think of 4-H, shotgun sports and archery probably aren't the first things that come to mind. However, in Texas shooting sports is the top ranking 4-H project in terms of participation numbers. I guess this shouldn't come as a surprise for a state full of people that love to hunt and be outdoors.

Traditionally, people tend to automatically link 4-H to agriculture, which is just a limited view of what the program has to offer! Now, don't get me wrong, 4-H is still very much connected to roots in agriculture, but we are also much more. Recently, the National 4-H Council has launched a rebranding campaign as part of a strategy to increase membership and diversity. By 2025, 4-H hopes to add 4 million members nationally by expanding its reach into urban and suburban communities.

Part of the rebranding will involve emphasizing 4-H projects surrounding science, technology, engineering and math, also referred to as the "STEM" fields and promoting activities such as rocketry and building drones. We have an active 4-H robotics group here in Henderson County. We are even competing at the State 4-H Roundup competition with a team of Intermediates and Seniors this June! Many of the major livestock shows have even added a robotics competition to their lineup of events and contests.

At the end of the day, no matter what 4-H project you are involved in it all comes down to youth participating in experiences designed to help them become productive adult citizens. Texas 4-H (and the 4-H program in general) uses a non-formal educational process of engaging youth in a "learning by doing" process. This includes hands-on opportunities, participation in workshops and clinics conducted by volunteer leaders or professionals, as well as competitive experiences which allow 4-H members to demonstrate the knowledge they have learned. Through this entire process, youth are learning key life skills such as working with others (teamwork), cooperation and goal setting just to name a few.

Texas 4-H is part of Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Texas A&M system. Founded in 1908, 4-H is the largest youth development program in Texas, reaching more than 550,000 youth each year with 300 of those being here right in Henderson County! We have an open enrollment and accept new members year-round. For more information on how to get involved as a member (or volunteer) please contact me at kate.pittack@ag.tamu.edu or 903-675-6130.

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