To: North Dakota 4-H Youth, Parents, Adult Volunteers and Staff:

RE: 4-H’s response to COVID-19 and your role

The COVID-19 pandemic is forcing all of us to find a new normal for conducting our daily lives. The same is true for NDSU Extension’s 4-H youth development program. It is still open for business. We have been busy adjusting schedules for already planned 4-H events, identifying learning resources that work in online formats and looking ahead to determine what needs to be communicated next. The pandemic has affected the entire program but we are still working hard to deliver programming for youth and the staff and adult volunteers who work with them.

We are posting updates on the Center for 4-H Youth Development web-site; distributing them to county extension offices via email; using social media channels, like Facebook; and using the broadcast messaging system in 4honline to communicate information. When appropriate we will also disseminate through NDSU Ag Communication in the form of news releases. Look at these various places for information.

As you might expect, we are receiving questions about the upcoming summer season because that’s a time for 4-H to really shine. Among many other things this includes camp experiences, contests, competitions, 4-H achievement days and fairs. Realizing that 4-H’s participation in county fairs and achievement days and the state fair is at risk, we are investigating how project evaluation, judging and showing might take place in a virtual, online format. This includes livestock projects. Other states are doing the same. We promise to communicate future plans for those activities as soon as we determine how they will be handled. It is our intent to salvage as many events and activities as possible but also comply with the directives from the Governor and other state and federal agencies related to this situation. We are following directives that protect youth, families, and staff.

In our recent communication to 4-H youth, parents and leaders we encourage:

- Leaders, volunteers, parents, and agents can access a number of resources to engage in on our COVID resource page here: https://www.ndsu.edu/4h/covid_19/resources/
- COVID messages will continue to be posted here: https://www.ndsu.edu/4h/covid_19/
- Hold virtual 4-H meetings using Zoom – it is free: https://zoom.us/. Please continue to follow 4-H Youth Protection guidelines and have at least two adults present during virtual meetings with 4-H youth.
- Utilize 4-H project content related YouTube videos with some form of reflection. Check out our project pages found at: https://www.ndsu.edu/4h/member_information/projects/project_sheets/
- Work on updating their 4-H project records. We are working on developing and posting additional activities for project related challenges and activities – more information to come on this.
- Club and Project leaders to assign activities that members can do at home, or remotely and work with local Extension staff to find creative alternatives to provide members with a quality project experience. Due to the Extension’s suspension of face-to-face educational contacts until May 15th, we request that project and club leaders not conduct efforts involving physical presence with youth. Rather, utilize the use of technology (online, virtual, text, phone) as the method of contact with youth.

NDSU does not discriminate in its programs and activities on the basis of age, color, gender expression/identity, genetic information, marital status, national origin, participation in lawful off-campus activity, physical or mental disability, pregnancy, public assistance status, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, spousal relationship to current employee, or veteran status, as applicable. Direct inquiries to Vice Provost, Title IX/ADA Coordinator, Old Main 201, (701) 231-7708, ndsu.eocaa@ndsu.edu.

NDSU EXTENSION 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

COVID-19 Related Response

4-H’s Response to COVID-19 and Your Role
Youth and adult volunteers working with our 4-H Shooting Sports program are reminded that we follow standards as identified by the National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee which states “All 4-H Shooting Sports functions (events, meetings, club practices, etc.) which include the handling or use of firearms or archery equipment requires the physical presence and constant supervision of at least one adult 4-H Shooting Sports instructor who is currently certified in that respective discipline(s).” Our current suspension of face-to-face educational activities sponsored by Extension applies to the 4-H Shooting Sports program state-wide. Our state coordinator requests that alternative, virtual/online opportunities be utilized during this time.

Youth enrolled in livestock projects, participate in online YQCA training with the discount coupon found on our ND 4-H YQCA page.

Youth enrolled in livestock and horse projects, participate in the 4-H virtual showmanship series covering 8 different species. Dates, time, and access are found here: https://bit.ly/2REPfEO

Youth enrolled in horse projects take part in riding safety videos and many other online resources.

Most importantly, it is still our intent that every youth participating in 4-H have the best experience we can provide. Due to this, we’re encouraging club and project leaders to be accommodating with their 4-H members and families in meeting any county and project requirements.

April 19-26 is National Volunteer Week. We would like to thank all of our 4-H youth and adult volunteers for their many contributions. Thank you for enriching the 4-H program and making our communities stronger. North Dakota 4-H would not be possible without you.

Thank you all for your continued support of the youth of North Dakota, the North Dakota 4-H program and for your patience as we work through this situation. Our unity of effort will help everyone manage this unique situation.

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Brad Cogdill
Chair, Center for 4-H Youth Development
April 17, 2020

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