Howdy to all the 4-H Horse Project members in Kansas! This is the October, 2016 edition of the Kids n’ Horses Newsletter to help keep you informed about 4-H Horse events happening around the state. AND give you a little educational information too!

Welcome to a new 4-H year! Don’t forget to renew your 4-H Horse ID Papers. OR if you got a new horse, start a new 4-H Horse ID paper on that horse. The form can be found at: [http://www.kansas4-h.org/projects/animals/horse.html](http://www.kansas4-h.org/projects/animals/horse.html) under General Horse Resources. There is a sample attached to the newsletter and available under Downloads at that same website. Remember, the 4-H Horse Identification Certificate should be on 1 page (front & back) with the picture attached.

If you would like to submit an article or have a horse event you would like to publicize, please e-mail that information to Jean at jhuntley@ksu.edu.

Happy trails and safe riding!

**Upcoming Horse Events**

Oct. 15 Horse Speed Show, Jetmore  
Jan. 27-29 Horse Panorama, Rock Springs 4-H Center

Panorama info will be posted at: [http://www.kansas4-h.org/events-activities/conferences-events/horse/index.html](http://www.kansas4-h.org/events-activities/conferences-events/horse/index.html)
40 Horse-Showing Tips

Put these useful tips from AQHA Professional Horsewoman Lynn Palm to work at your next show.

Show Smart

1. It is your responsibility as a horse owner and competitor to bring out the best in your horse.
2. Always show in disciplines in which you and your horse are prepared to perform required maneuvers confidently.
3. Familiarize yourself with the show grounds when you get there. Know where the office, vet, farrier, warm-up areas and show rings are located.
4. To get your horse to accept the new show grounds and environment, work in hand with lunging for exercise and leading to acclimate him to the show surroundings.
5. Know the show schedule and listen to the intercom for any changes. You do not want to miss your class or be too early and have to wait!
6. Always know where your trainer/coach is in case you need him or her to assist you.
7. Tests, patterns and courses should be memorized before the warm up so the rider feels confident and prepared.
8. Walk the course for a hunter/jumper class, trail courses or pattern classes to build your show-ring strategy.
9. Make showing a fun and learning experience. Identify what was desirable in a class and what could have been better. The things that you and your horse can improve upon are your homework for the next show.
10. If showing isn't as successful as you would like, don't forget to ask yourself: Is your horse suited for you? Does your horse enjoy his "job" and the discipline in which he is competing? These are tough questions to ask yourself, but if you and your horse aren't a good match, you won't perform well together in the show ring.

Show Apparel, Tack and Grooming

11. Look professional! Always wear attire that is appropriate for your discipline and know what is acceptable according to your show rulebook.
12. Always wear a certified helmet when riding and competing.
13. Ladies, wear a hair net to keep your hair neat and contained throughout the whole day.
14. Have a packing list for show attire, hair, makeup, etc.
15. A judge will always appreciate proper tack fit. To “Ride Well,” your saddle needs to fit you, too.
16. Be sure that all tack is oiled and cleaned and all keepers are used on English bridles.
17. Always use clean and properly fitted saddle pads so they fit the perimeter of the saddle. Be sure they are not too small or too big, giving a sloppy appearance.
18. Make sure the accessories, tack and bits are correct for all show rules.
19. Turn your horse out with your best grooming for every class, as any judge will be impressed by this.
20. Use safe show products that make your horse shine and stand out.

In the Warm-Up Ring

21. Practice your warm-up at home and time it, which will give you a strategy to prepare for your show-ring class.
22. Make sure your warm-up area has good footing. If it is crowded, go outside the rings and find a safe place to warm up.
23. Be sure your warm-up includes lots of change in directions. The more you change directions, the more you encourage lateral suppleness.
24. The more you do transitions, the more you stretch and strengthen the longitudinal muscles in the hind limbs.
25. Incorporating dressage figures into your routine can improve your performance in any discipline.
26. If your horse is distracted, he is telling you that he needs to spend more time doing slow maneuvers in a worrisome area.
27. Be sure you practice arena etiquette: a minimum of one horse length’s distance head to tail and side by side and when approaching another rider head on, pass left arm to left arm.
28. Learn by watching others ride but don't try to make your horse perform like others.
29. There should be no training at a show, you should compete in what your horse already knows and does well.
30. Always try to school in the ring you will show in before the show starts.

In the Show Ring
31. Always begin showing when you enter the ring and never stop until you leave the ring.
32. Leave your stress and nerves at the barn. Compete with optimism! If you give off any negative energy, your horse will know and tense up during the class. Turn phrases like "I'll try" or "What if" into "I will" or "My horse will do well."
33. Remember to breathe during your class! A relaxed and loose rider will promote relaxation and confidence within their horse.
34. A correct rider will always have invisible aids - no one should see the communication with your horse.
35. Always looking in front of your horse will show confidence to a judge. Practice a pleasant expression in the mirror. A good competitor always has a pleasant, relaxed expression.
36. You never get a second chance to make a first impression.
37. After warming up, keep your horse moving to keep his concentration on you and so that he doesn’t get cold.
38. Watch other classes and how the judge judges.
39. At the end of your class, always reward your horse with a pat, soft voice or treat when he does well and/or willingly tries to do what you ask of him.
40. Always show good sportsmanship and be respectful to other riders and their horses, no matter who is the winner that day. Source: America’s Horse Daily

General Safety Rules
Safety Lessens Danger
*Know your horse, its temperament and reactions. Control your temper at all times, but let it know that you are its firm and kind master.
*Know your horse’s peculiarities. If someone else is riding it, tell them what to expect.
*Horses require kind, gentle, but firm, treatment. There are a few vicious horses, but most of those become vicious through abuse. However, you must be firm and consistent. Decide what you want from your horse, and insist on getting it.
*Never tease your horse. It may develop bad and dangerous habits for the rest of its life. If so, your safety is in serious jeopardy.
*Do not punish your horse, except at the instant of the disobedience. If you wait even a minute, i.e. the horse will not understand why you are punishing it. Punish without anger, lest your punishment be too severe. Never strike or kick your horse about the head or legs.
*Riders and attendants should not be loud or rowdy. Loud noises can make a horse jumpy and nervous both on the ground and under saddle. Eventually some horses react by kicking. A sharp tone of voice may be used for checking an animal, but your voice should never be louder than is required to meet the situation.
*Ask permission when leading through a group of people.
*Never race. Horseplay is only for the unmounted horse, not for the horse and rider.
*Always treat other people on horses or afoot in the same manner you would like to be treated.
*Remember – “Kickin’ never gets you nowhere, less’n you’re a mule.” – Cowboy Proverb
Source: Horses and Horsemanship, a National 4-H Council Publication
Unsoundness and Blemishes

Soundness in the horse is of extreme importance, since its efficiency in performance is dependent upon its ability to move.

Any abnormal deviation in the structural function of a horse constitutes an unsoundness. All unsoundness problems do not have the same degree of severity. Some unsoundness issues can be treated successfully, other cannot.

An example of a blemish is an unsightly scar or rope burn. A blemish does not interfere with the serviceability of the horse.

Any time a horse is lame, we can suspect an unsoundness. Lameness is any irregularity in gait which results from moving with pain or difficulty. Lameness may be detected while the horse is in a standing position; however, it is most noticeable at the walk or trot. If lameness is severe, the horse will refuse to put weight on the affected limb, even in the standing position.

When moving, the lame horse is forced to carry most of its weight on the sound limbs, hence the “nodding” of the head when the sound limb strikes the ground. When the lameness is on the left fore leg, the head will nod as the right foot is planted on the ground, but will jerk up as the left or lame leg touches the ground. Lameness in both front legs is indicated by a stiff, stilted action or short stride. The head is carried higher than usual without nodding.

The exact location of lameness is often difficult to determine. Many common unsoundness issues of the legs may be detected by carefully comparing the opposite leg. Swelling and inflammation can be observed by handling the leg.

Most unsoundness problems of the legs and hooves are caused by injury, or excess stress and strain. Horses with faulty conformation are more subject to unsoundness. Many times it is possible to detect an unsoundness by being familiar with correct conformation.

Be sure to consult your veterinarian with your concerns about lameness or unsoundness in your horse. Some problems are easier solved than others.

Some common problems are: thrush, quarter crack, wind puff along with more severe problems such as ring bone, founder, and navicular disease. Your veterinarian can diagnosis the problem and work with you on curing or managing the issue.

Source: Horse Science, A National 4-H Council Publication

Equine Extra! The Ideal Horse

Balance. When looking at balance, the best view is a side view of the horse. A well balanced horse should have a shoulder, back and hip equal in length. The ideal horse should have legs that are the same length as his body is deep at the heartgirth.

Muscling. Muscling is usually evaluated at the forearm, gaskin, and stifle areas of the horse. The horse should have a good bulge to the forearm and gaskin muscles. Also a horse should be wider through the stifle than the top of the hip when viewed from the rear.

Structural Correctness. Structural correctness is evaluated from the side, front and rear views. Horse should have straight legs when looking at each view. Deviations could be toed-in, toed-out (front views), sickle hocked (side view), or cow-hocked (rear view).

Quality. Quality is the overall refinement, smoothness and style of the horse. Mares should look more feminine and stallion and geldings should look more masculine. A clean shiny hair coat is also quality related. Breed character is also a quality character. It deals with the attributes which identify a horse to its specific breed.

Travel. Travel is usually evaluated at the walk and trot from the front and rear. Travel deals with straightness of stride, softness of gait, and snap and flexion. Horses will ideally tract straight; however some horses may wing in or paddle out.

Source: Horsing Around, 4-H Cooperative Curriculum System