

Maryland 4-H Animal Science Program Guidebook

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Horsemanship Standards Program

Overview

As part of the UME 4-H Horse Program, the Maryland 4-H Horsemanship Standards Program was developed in 2005 to serve as a key educational program for youth and volunteers interested in horsemanship and equine management. The program is designed for 4-H members to progressively improve their horsemanship skills and knowledge through a structured organized system of levels of achievement in both riding and acquisition of knowledge. The Standards have been developed to allow for learning for individuals who may or may not have access to horses on a regular basis. They are divided into six learning levels of accomplishment in both Knowledge and Riding skills in 3 different disciplines: English Riding, English Riding with Jumping, and Western Riding. Participants in the horse program gain essential skills including mastery, independence, generosity and belonging that will aid them in the future.

Through participation in this program, 4-H members will develop horsemanship skills leading to safer animal management practices and riding experiences. They will also learn best management practices in the areas of horse handling, nutrition, health and veterinary care, grooming and bandaging, stable management and barn safety, tack and equipment, breeds, conformation and movement, and horse transportation and travel safety. "Horseless" horse members have the opportunity to develop their horse related knowledge in all of these areas resulting in the development of similar life skills.

More information about the Maryland 4-H Horsemanship Standards Program can be viewed at <http://www.4horse.umd.edu/activities/Horsemanship%20Standards.html>

Horsemanship Examiners

UME volunteers are encouraged to become Examiners for the Horsemanship Standards Program if they have the knowledge and skill to do so.

The objective of the Maryland 4-H Horsemanship Standards Examiner Testing is to offer a fair but rigorous testing of volunteer equine knowledge and skills in order to identify and approve volunteers to serve as examiners in any of the Level 1-6 Horsemanship Standards tracks. Examiners may choose to be tested for any or all tracks in sequence.

Levels 1-3

UME volunteers wishing to become approved Examiners to officially test 4-H members for Levels 1-3 must:

- attend a scheduled training or complete the online training modules
- complete an open book written test for each track and/or online training module
- complete the Volunteer Status Form for Levels 1-3 in conjunction with their county/city Extension office.

Levels 4-6

UME volunteers wishing to become approved Examiners to officially test 4-H members for Levels 4-6 must:

Knowledge

- Have completed knowledge levels 1-3
- attend a scheduled training or complete the online training modules
- pass each level in sequence by completing a closed book written test for each level
- complete the Volunteer Status Form for Levels 4-6 in conjunction with their county/city Extension office.

Riding

- Have completed Riding levels 1-3
- attend a scheduled training or complete the online training modules
- be evaluated by an approved panel of three individuals in sequential order of the levels using set evaluation criteria in an actual testing environment
- complete the Volunteer Status Form for Levels 4-6 at their county/city Extension office.

Enrollment for testing of Levels 4-6 may be limited depending on the number of riders/youth available.

Dates and evaluation criteria for each level can be viewed at:

www.4horse.umd.edu/activities/horsemanship%20standards%20examiner%20level%204%20testings.html

Examiner Training

Volunteers wishing to become examiners must attend a training workshop in order to become approved for levels 1-4 or complete online training modules at one's own pace. As part of the training, volunteers will learn details about what the horsemanship standards program is, general rules and guidelines, how to set up a testing, how to

conduct a testing, and what information and skill is expected of 4-Hers for each knowledge and riding level.

Full day trainings for levels 1-4 will cover levels 1 & 2 in the morning and levels 3 & 4 in the afternoon.

Level 5 + 6 trainings will be offered as needed.

Training dates will be set at the beginning of the calendar year if possible and will be offered at various locations across the state. Additional trainings may be offered as requested if the need exists. Information about upcoming trainings can be found at www.4horse.umd.edu/activities/Horsemanship%20Standards.html