Learn About Your Animal
By: Lisa Karr-Lilienthal, PhD, Companion Animal Extension Specialist

The winter months are a great time to learn more about your animal and your project area. There are lots of things to learn about animals and they can be a valuable tool to learn more about science. While you are inside over the winter, spend some time learning more about your particular companion animal.

Ideas of topics to research include:
What breed of animal do you have? There are a variety of breeds within each companion animal species and horses. Learn more about your particular breed.

- From German shepherd dogs to Siamese cats to Angora rabbits, breeds were developed for a variety of reasons. Learn more about the breed you have, what country did it originate in, and what was their original purpose or work.
- Once you learned more about the background of your breed of animal, you can look for signs that your pet responds similarly or different from their original work. Is your Labrador a good retriever?
- Sources of information include the American Kennel Club, American Rabbit Breeders Association, or the Cat Fancier’s Association.

Study the body parts of your pet. Do you know where your dog’s muzzle is? Your cat’s loin? Your horse’s withers?

Learn about the proper diet of your pet. There are a variety of diets available. Look for information on what you should be feeding.

- There is a variety of good nutrition information available for animals at eXtension.org as well as in books and other websites.

What jobs can you get in the future working with your animal? Would you like to be a veterinarian, design pet foods, capture pictures through pet photography?

- Look for information on the variety of careers you can find with animals. Check out this site for profiles of people with a variety of careers with companion animals: http://www.extension.org/pages/68169/career-profiles#.VMgDES7pVCA

The winter is also a great time to read a book about animals. There are a variety of books about animals. Some are classics (Black Beauty, Charlotte’s Web, Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH) and others more recent (The Warriors series, Redwall series, Magic Kitten series). There are lots of great animal books that will help you learn more about animals at your library.

http://animalscience.unl.edu/horse-trail-challenge-4h

Visit the link below to sign up for the C & H Newsletter:
http://go.unl.edu/chsignup
Nebraska 4-H Horse Dress Code
By: Rebecca Gunderson & Lena Cottle, PhD, Equine Extension Specialist

It’s the night before your first State 4-H horse show and you’ve got your trailer packed, horse clipped, tack oiled, and the only thing left is your show clothes! You ask yourself “What are the rules on jeans? Can I wear those ones with the rhinestones?” Unfortunately, the answer is no, you cannot. 4-H dress code can be somewhat confusing and hard to follow! This article will help to further explain the rules and hopefully answer any question you may have!

The Nebraska 4-H horse dress code is the same at the district and state levels. The ONLY exception being at the Nebraska 4-H Horse Stampede you do NOT have to wear a hat.

WESTERN:
Hats & Helmets:
For western attire, protective helmets are allowed in ALL classes. Hats must be worn at all times and should stay on during performance classes. Hats are only optional during barrel racing and pole bending classes. If the rider enters the arena wearing a hat, a two second fine will be given for losing the hat. Feathers, if present, may not protrude beyond the outer edge of the brim nor above the top of the crown.

Shirts & Blouses:
Shirts and blouses must be all white, including buttons, thread, zippers, etc. They must have a convertible collar (one that is meant to be folded at the seam line and may or may not be buttoned at the base of the neck). Tuxedo, turtleneck, or other stand-up collars are NOT permitted. National, county, or club emblems are NOT permitted. NO rhinestones, silver collar tips, or similar embellishments on blouses are permitted. Sheer, see through, sleeveless shirts/blouses are not permitted. Long sleeve is recommended, although short sleeves are permitted.

Jeans:
Dark blue denim jeans must be worn and a belt is recommended. Heavy contrasting threading and fringes are NOT permitted. Minimal white or tan thread on the pockets is permitted. NO rhinestones, silver studs or similar embellishments are permitted.

Boots:
Hard-soled shoes or cowboy boots are considered safe and appropriate. Boots with waffle type tread greater than or equal to 1/8 inch will NOT be allowed.

ENGLISH:
Attire:
For English attire you must wear a hunt coat of traditional hunter seat style and colors such as navy, grey, black, brown, or dark green. Breeches (or jodhpurs) should be of traditional shades of buff, kaki, canary, light grey, or rust. English boots or paddock boots with half chaps should be black or brown.

Helmets:
Safety helmet must be of traditional colors. ASTM/SEI approved safety helmets are strongly recommended. You must wear a safety helmet with a chin strap in classes over fences. Hair must be kept neat in a braid, hair net, or hair bow. The correct exhibitor number must be displayed on exhibitor or saddle pad.

ADDITIONAL:
Gloves, unrowelled spurs, crops, and bats are optional. 4-H arm band is REQUIRED and is to be worn on the left arm above the elbow. Necklaces and scarfs are permissible. For more information please refer to the 4-H Show and Judging Guide book., which can be purchased at http://marketplace.unl.edu/ne4h/curriculum/animalscience

TRIVIA!
Test your knowledge with the following trivia questions! (Answers on page 4)
- What is the estimated lower critical temperature for a horse with a moderate hair coat?
- More than half of the world’s rabbits live in what continent?
**Master Equine Manager:**

Want to learn the science of horse management on your time schedule? The Master Equine Manager program is designed to enhance the broad-based horse industry by informing and educating people on quality horse care and responsible horse ownership.

The learning modules and topics include:

- **Welfare of Horses:** Understanding Horse Behavior, Facilities and Equipment, Equine Quality Assurance
- **Horse Nutrition:** Forages for Horses, Feeds and Feeding
- **Horse Health:** Equine Emergency Treatment, Vaccinations for Horses, Understanding Horse Parasites, and Hoof Care
- **Selection of Horses:** Conformation and Evaluation, Unsoundness’ and Blemishes

Begin by visiting [http://animalscience.unl.edu/ansc-master-equine-manager-certification](http://animalscience.unl.edu/ansc-master-equine-manager-certification). You will find a complete program description and registration information for easy access to begin learning anytime day or night.

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### 4-H Companion Animal Challenge

**March 14th, 2015**

NEW CONTEST for 4-H members!

The Companion Animal Challenge will include a variety of contests that 4-H members (ages 10—18 years old) can compete in without a dog.

**Contests include:**

- Dog Skill-a-thon
- Dog Quiz Bowl
- Demonstration Contests
- Art & Photography Contest

**Contestants**, all entry forms are due to your County Extension Office by **Friday—February 13, 2015**. County Extension please send a printed copy of this form by **Friday—February 20, 2015**.

For More information visit [http://go.unl.edu/4hcac](http://go.unl.edu/4hcac) or contact:

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### Canine Companions for Life 4-H Dog Expo

**May 1 and 2, 2015**

**Adams County Fairgrounds**

This is an educational event that allows for youth to learn more about dogs, careers with dogs, and dog health as well as practice showing their dog and work on training techniques.

Youth can complete practice runs with a judge in:

- Showmanship
- Obedience
- Agility
- Rally-obedience
- Clover kids
- Costume contest
- Crate decorating
- Art/photography
- Dog quiz bowl

Judges will walk youth through the class with the youth so that they understand what is expected of them in each class and then youth are scored by a judge.

Educational sessions are interspersed during the day for youth to learn more about the care of their dog.

For more information, visit [companionanimal.unl.edu](http://companionanimal.unl.edu)
Judging Horses—Where to start?
By: Kathy Anderson, PhD Equine Extension Specialist

Do you want to judge horses, but don’t know where to start? Or are you involved in competitive horse events but want to know what judge’s look for? How do you get started? Many professional horse show judges initially learned to judge through some type of judging team – either youth (4-H/FFA) or collegiate teams. However, you can still learn to judge if joining a team is not an option.

First, learn the rule book for whatever association a person intends to judge in. Next, seek out clinics and workshops that are offered for judges, new or current. These may be events focused on youth teams, however adults are normally more than welcome to attend and some even offer adult divisions. Anyone can listen and learn how the classes are judged and pick up tips. Be sure to watch for these judging clinics/contests as each summer several are offered across Nebraska. Some of these events feature live horses and some are done using video. Also, there are several national breed and discipline groups that offer judges training at numerous locations and dates. All are great opportunities for some to learn more.

Another great opportunity is to volunteer to ring steward for shows at any level. When doing so, a person generally assists the judge throughout the day. Many aspiring judges gather tremendous experience as a ring steward.

In the on-line world, there are numerous resources out there to use. For example, check out the University of Nebraska Equine Extension website at [www.horse.unl.edu](http://www.horse.unl.edu) for narrated lectures on judging Western Pleasure, Halter, Reining, Hunter Under Saddle, and Western Riding and other Horse Judging Resources. These resources have been used by numerous judging students to expand their knowledge on all of these events. For those interested in judging teams and those who need to learn how to give Oral Reasons, there is an excellent DVD, “Presenting Oral Reasons in Horse Judging Contest” that can be purchased at: [http://marketplace.unl.edu/extension/catalogsearch/result/index/?p=1&q=horse+video](http://marketplace.unl.edu/extension/catalogsearch/result/index/?p=1&q=horse+video).

Finally, a new course is soon to be released by eXtension/horses - “Preparing to be a Professional Horse Show Judge”. This opportunity will provide a great insight to judging horses at all levels and guidelines for a person to be prepared when hired to judge a show.

For someone who has a desire to judge horse shows, it takes a lot of work and self-motivation to learn the classes, be professional and prepared. Take the time to study and learn, ask questions and seek out other professionals at all levels.

Help us make our newsletter better!
Answer the following questions and send your response to [http://go.unl.edu/chsurvey](http://go.unl.edu/chsurvey)
1. What would you change about this issue?
2. What is one thing you’d like to see in the next issue?
3. Do you believe there is helpful information in this issue? If so, what is helpful?
4. Any other suggestions to better our newsletter?

Trivia answers!
- What is the estimated lower critical temperature for a horse with a moderate hair coat? 50 degrees F! Make sure your horse stays warm this winter!
- More than half of the world’s rabbits live in what continent? North America!
Is your local youth doing great things with companion animals or horses?!

Do you have updates or news on youth in your area dealing with companion animals or horses? If so, send the information and pictures to lkarr-lilienthal2@unl.edu or lcottle2@unl.edu. Your youth may be featured in our next issue!
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2015 4-H Horse Stampede
Mark your calendars! The 2015 4-H Horse Stampede has been scheduled for Saturday-March 14, 2015.

Contestants, all entry forms must be returned to your County Extension Office by Friday-February 13, 2015. County Extension please send a printed copy of this form by Friday-February 20, 2015.

**New this year – speech contest can be done at your local extension office through Adobe Connect on the day of the contest (Schedule with your county office)

Horsin Around 2015
February 28th-March 1st, 2015
This year’s presenter will be Jeff Mellott of Andover, Kansas.

He is an AQHA Professional Horseman, AQHA & NSBA Judge, Past President KQHA, KQHA Volunteer Award 2012, AQHA Trainer of multiple World & Congress Champions.

“My goal is that each rider enjoys the journey to their own success in and out of the arena.”

For the first time in 17 years, Jeff is now able to take outside customers. Youth, Amateur & Select spots available. Specializing in All-Around horses & exhibitors. Also specializing in Horsemanship, Trail, and Western Riding.

Jeff is a true master at teaching you how to reach your highest levels in any event.

For more information on this event visit: http://horse.unl.edu

Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

The 4-H Youth Development program abides with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture.