



NH 4-H Animal Science with Cloverbuds (ages 5-7)

Objective: The focus of Cloverbud Animal Science activities is to provide a safe, fun, hands-on, developmentally appropriate learning experience for Cloverbud 4-H Members (ages 5-7 as of January 1st of the current project year). Activities should focus on participation and cooperative learning in informal settings.

Cloverbuds may work directly with live animals provided they are closely supervised by a knowledgeable screened adult 4-H volunteer with safety of the young member and all others being the primary consideration. The volunteer, other members, parents or guardians of members and all others must adhere to the following guidelines.

1. The Cloverbud member's parent or guardian designated by the parent must always be in the meeting/event area while the Cloverbud is participating in a direct animal-handling activity.
2. Prior to working directly with animal(s), safety guidelines must be reviewed with Cloverbuds and helpers.
3. The Cloverbud member must adhere to the following during all animal interactions. This varies by species, and is outlined below:
 - a. Equines: closed-toed boots or shoes and an equestrian helmet (approved by certifying agencies [ASTM/SEI or equivalent]) at all times in proximity to an equine, whether mounted or not. Properly fitted gloves are recommended when leading, riding, or driving an equine, but are not required.
 - b. Livestock such as cattle, sheep, swine, goats, llamas, alpacas: sturdy closed-toed shoes or boots.
 - c. All other animals: closed-toed shoes or boots.
 - d. Dogs: The Cloverbud member is to work with their own family dog only.
 - e. All species: focus on the task; if this is not possible, end on a positive note. If a member cannot focus, they may be bored, activity may have extended too long, or they may not be developmentally ready.
4. While working directly with an animal, first-year Cloverbuds will have adult one-on-one assistance from a screened adult volunteer or their parent or guardian under supervision of the screened volunteer. Cloverbuds in their second or third year may be assisted by an experienced senior 4-H member age 14+ or an adult as above.
5. Trained animals that are generally easy to handle are to be used when working with Cloverbuds. Exceptions may be made for very young animals (except equines) in well controlled settings with vigilant one-on-one supervision. Cloverbuds are not to directly handle Equines under 3 years of age. Cloverbuds may learn about young equines from a

safe distance and when handled by a knowledgeable handler without any hands-on by the Cloverbud.

6. At an exhibition (often held in conjunction with a fair or show for older members), each Cloverbud must have an adult one-on-one in the show ring within easy reach and available to intervene in the event of a safety concern. This adult may provide help and encouragement to the member. In the instance of Cloverbuds in their second or third year of participation, experienced senior members (age 14+) may fill the role of show ring helper.
7. All Cloverbud activities are non-competitive. If any kind of participation incentives are given, all members are to be given equal incentives such as participation ribbons. Judges are expected to give helpful and encouraging feedback to Cloverbud members.

Volunteer Training:

All 4-H volunteers working with Cloverbud members must complete the following training:

1. Review of the above guidelines
2. Ages and stages of development focusing on Cloverbuds (age 5-7, approximate grades K-2).
3. Project or species-specific curriculum introduction. This includes providing sample curriculum materials to volunteers when age-appropriate curriculum is available; additionally, how to adapt Junior curriculum to appropriate activities for Cloverbuds.

This includes focus on short, fun age-appropriate learning opportunities.

Training can be achieved in a 1.5 – 2-hour session at Volunteer Leader Conference, in counties, or virtually. Ample time should be allowed for idea sharing and Q & A.

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Suggestions for Age Appropriate Cloverbud and Animal Activities. Always remember the first goal is to provide a safe, age-appropriate activity-centered experience.

Cloverbuds often do not have access to their own project animal for 4-H educational experiences but can benefit from well supervised experiences with well-trained animals. Older 4-H members or volunteers can share animals to help Cloverbuds have an opportunity to work with animals. Safety is foremost when working with animals and youth – always monitor the training and behavior of the animal and be ready to modify or stop any activity in the interest of safety.

- Identifying species, breeds, parts, and tracks of animals
- Recognizing differences between animals of different species
- Watching an animal handling demonstration, then learning how to catch and lead an animal with assistance from a trained volunteer.
- “Designing” the ideal animal
- Selecting and identifying equipment
- Observing animal behavior
- Learning livestock terms
- Learning terms for young animals of each species
- Determining an animal’s age
- Touring a farm, zoo, wildlife center, or veterinary clinic
- Grooming an animal
- Identifying products from animals
- Exploring what animals eat
- Touring a feed store
- Feeding an animal
- Attending a 4-H meeting
- Giving a short presentation
- Keeping a scrapbook
- Learning animal photography

Show-Type Experiences:

If Cloverbuds are given the opportunity to participate in show-type experiences, follow the guidelines in this and the next sections listed by age. Show staff should ensure safety is always the **first priority** for these experiences. Knowledgeable adults should be placed strategically throughout the ring or show area to provide support to youth during their experience. Cloverbud members may have varying levels of experience within an animal science program area. Supporting these youth appropriately, while allowing them to obtain valuable experiences, is essential to making the experience meaningful. A breakdown of what is appropriate for Cloverbuds based on age follows.

Members who are 6 and 7 years old may be comfortable exploring independence with their animal projects. They should be given the opportunity to handle the animal independently, if

they so choose; however, support from adults and older teen members should be readily available in this age group at all times.

Cloverbuds may use their own animals or carefully chosen borrowed animals except dogs (family dog only).

CHILDREN AGED 5: May be involved with equine on a halter and lead. Each 4-H Cloverbud must be directly accompanied one-on-one by a parent, guardian or adult volunteer who is on foot holding the lead or within easy reach (when leading) or leading the equine when member is mounted to maximize safety. For all 4-H Cloverbud horse experiences (whether mounted or leading the equine), Cloverbuds must wear helmets approved by the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) or Safety Equipment Institute (SEI) certification and labeling.

May be involved with any animal experiences such as, but not limited to, beef, sheep, swine, goats, dairy, dairy feeder, poultry, dogs, cats, rabbit, and covies. Each 4-H Cloverbud must be directly assisted one-on-one by a parent, guardian, or adult volunteer while the child is in contact with the animal.

CHILDREN AGED 6: May engage in the same activities listed as appropriate for a 5-year-old. May ride a horse unaccompanied but only at a walk and trot. Adult volunteers or experienced senior members age 14+ should be in the ring with the Cloverbud at all times. 4-H Cloverbud members must wear ASTM- or SEI-approved helmets for all 4-H Cloverbud horse experiences.

May be involved with any animal experiences such as, but not limited to, beef, sheep, swine, goats, dairy, dairy feeder, poultry, dogs, cats, rabbits and covies. Each 4-H Cloverbud must be directly assisted one-on-one as needed by a parent, guardian, adult volunteer, or 4-H teen who is in close proximity while the child is in contact with the animal.

CHILDREN AGED 7: May engage in the same activities listed as appropriate for a 5- or 6-year-old.

May be involved with an equine on a halter and lead, unaccompanied by an adult on the ground (for example, a showmanship type class). May participate mounted in walk-trot events with adult volunteers in the ring at all times. 4-H Cloverbud members must wear ASTM- or SEI-approved helmets for all 4-H Cloverbud horse experiences.

May be involved with any animal experiences such as, but not limited to, beef, sheep, swine, goats, dairy, dairy feeder, poultry, dogs, cats, rabbits and covies. Parents, guardians, adult volunteers or 4-H teens should be in supporting roles in close proximity while the child is in contact with the animal.

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