Judges:
- Help youth learn
- Recognize efforts/successes
- Evaluate performance/exhibit
- Guide youth to what they would like to learn next

Judges should:
- Recognize accomplishments
- Provide positive, constructive feedback
- Encourage project expansion
- Appreciate members efforts
- Use a friendly judging style
- Be a good role model

CHECKLIST

Characteristics and Selection of Judges
- Knowledge of subject and ability to ask effective questions
- Experience in conference judging
- Warm friendly personality
- Positive evaluation style
- Objective
- Recognized 4-H volunteer or received appropriate paperwork as an Episodic volunteer

Orienting Judges
Consider including the following items in a 30 to 45 minutes orientation period.
- 4-H Judging Philosophy – an exhibit is not the final statement of a young person's effort nor does it offer a measurement of all the learning that has taken place. Exhibits allow 4-H'ers to receive feedback, gain a sense of accomplishment, expand future goals and share learning.
- Ages and stages of youth
- Learning is the focus of an exhibit – what the 4-H'er says should support that learning.
- Exhibit is one part of the total program – focus on the learning process rather than the product or end result
- Life skills development
  - Head - Does the 4-H'er exhibit good decision making and problem solving skills? Did they plan and organize their learning experience and did they reach their goals?
  - Heart - Does the 4-H'er communicate well? Do they appear cooperative and caring of others?
  - Hands - Is the 4-H'er motivated? Did they show good leadership skills? Did
they talk about relating their skill development to community service?

☐ Health - Does the 4-H’er manage their time well so they maintain good health?
   Did they indicate that they practice integrity and character?

☐ Skills needed to appropriately interact with children who have special needs.

☐ Questions that encourage members to talk: How – did you decide…; What – did you choose to…; Tell me – about…; What if – you had changed… Start with concrete questions and move to the abstract. Use open-ended questions so the 4-H’er will have an opportunity to talk in detail about what they have learned.

☐ Encourage judges to be honest and fair.

☐ Use the teachable moment to help members learn.

☐ Help member understand why a ribbon was awarded.

☐ Explain that both conference and comparative judging will be used
   ☐ Conference judging to provide education, evaluation and encouragement
   ☐ Comparative judging to select State Fair exhibits

☐ Explain Danish System for new judges
   ☐ Blue Ribbon – Met requirements
   ☐ Red Ribbon – Needs improvement
   ☐ White ribbon – Needs much improvement

**Following-up with Judges**

Provide an evaluation for the judges to complete.
Send thank-you notes to the judges.
Conduct a club leader or fair committee follow-up 1-2 weeks after the fair to discuss what worked, what didn’t work and concerns.

**State Fair Selection**

State Fair items are selected after conference judging has occurred. These items are generally selected using the highest commercial standards.