Practice good sportsmanship at State 4-H Horse Show

Source: Fernanda Camargo, equine extension specialist

The State 4-H Horse Show is one of the highlights for youth participating in a 4-H horse project. It gives them a goal to work toward and the opportunity to showcase the skills they have learned throughout the year.

After 2020’s event was cancelled due to Covid-19, we are so excited to host the 2021 state horse show in just a few months. As qualifying events for the state show begin, it is important for youth, parents, coaches and volunteers to remember and practice good sportsmanship.

Good sportsmanship allows young people to do their best while recognizing the hard work and dedication of others.

The competitive nature of the event is designed to teach young people determination, goal setting and perseverance. 4-H’ers can display good sportsmanship toward challenging opponents by recognizing and appreciating their hard work. Their skillful opponents should make them strive to do better.

Showing a project horse provides so much more for a 4-H’er than just ribbons. 4-H’ers learn responsibility, loyalty, dedication, humane treatment of animals, respect for animals and motivation, as they care for their horse and train for shows throughout the year.

Anyone involved in a 4-H horse project should know that respect plays a huge part in a successful project and good sportsmanship. Youth must have respect for their horse. They must also respect their opponents and the judges’ decisions. Whether they win or lose, they should gracefully accept the results.

Young people often imitate adults’ behavior, so it is important for parents, coaches and volunteers to exhibit positive behaviors and instill them in their 4-H’ers. Our 4-H leaders and parents do a great job of doing this.

We look forward to welcoming everyone back to the show this year. More information on the State 4-H Horse Show is available at (COUNTY NAME) office of the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service.

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