4-H Horse Record Book and 4-H Portfolio Competitions

Introduction

The 4-H Horse Record Book and Portfolio competitions are an opportunity for 4-Hers to record and analyze their learning experiences in the 4–H Program. Members who submit materials for judging receive evaluation and recognition for their accomplishments.

Youth may compete in only one category per calendar year. **Each County may enter one (1) Junior Record Book, (1) Senior Record Book, one (1) Junior Portfolio and one (1) Senior Portfolio.**
***Units receiving more than one entry per category will need to determine at the Unit Level, per a method of their choosing, which ONE entry per category and per age division, they will submit for competition at the State 4-H Horse and Pony Show. Deadline for submission at the Unit Level is up to the discretion of the Unit Office.

Questions about the Record Book and Portfolio Contests may be directed to Bridgitte Groom at bridg93@vt.edu or Hunter Liles at huntl97@vt.edu .

Submitting Your Record Book/Portfolio for Judging

Record Book/Portfolio competition Entry Forms must be submitted by the Unit 4-H Agent or a Designee of the Unit Office using this link: https://tinyurl.com/PortfolioRecord26 by **September 1, 2026.**
Entries must be submitted by the Unit 4-H Office.

4-Hers may choose to submit one of the following:

Record Book: A record of an individual project horse as declared for the current calendar year, beginning October 1, 2025 and ending September 30, 2026.

Portfolio: An accumulation/history of all 4-H activities for up to but not exceeding a three (3) year period including the current calendar year beginning October 1

Educational Goals for the 4-H Record Book and Portfolio are:

1. To teach children fundamental record keeping skills.
2. To teach children how to set goals and analyze what they have learned in 4-H.
3. To create a record of accomplishments which document successes in 4-H and other experiences.
4. To provide members an opportunity for recognition.

Record Book Competition Definitions and Instructions

Record books represent the work that a 4-Her completed in the equine program for a given year.

- Only the official Virginia 4-H Horse record book, **publication #406-122 (junior) or #406-123 (senior)** may be used for each horse declared. No county-specific or reformatted books will be allowed. Writable pdf books are permitted as long as it is still

the publication #406-122 (junior) or #406-123 (senior). Re-typed documents that are not the official book, no matter how close to the original they are, will be disqualified.

- Record book must be contained in a three-ring binder, report cover or the 4-H Member's Record Book Cover.
- Book may include no more than four photo pages (two pages double-sided).
- Record Book Competition is for the Record Book ONLY. Any record book submissions that include any additional items besides the record book will be considered a portfolio and judged accordingly.
- Records are for the current 4-H year, ending September 30, immediately after the state 4-H horse show.
- Record books will be scored using the scorecard included in the record book publication.
- **Only one junior and one senior record book may be submitted per County.**
    - Junior and Senior Division entries are eligible based on birthdate as of September 30th, 2026. Exhibitors aged 14 or older as of September 30th will be in the Senior Division.

Record Books must be turned into the VA Horse Center state show office **no later than 6:00 PM on Thursday of the State Show**. Only record books for which an entry submission was received via the Unit 4-H Office will be judged.

Exhibitors do not have to be physically present at the State Horse Show in order to submit a Record Book. Books may be sent to the State Office if they are not able to be present at the show, however it is best to send the book in with an Extension agent or other exhibitor that will be at the show, rather than mailing the book. If mailing, it is the exhibitor's responsibility to make sure books are postmarked by August 10, 2026 and mailed with tracking. An email confirmation will be sent upon receipt of the book. A tracking number must be assigned to the mailed book(s). If no email is received by this date, it is the exhibitor's responsibility to follow up and assure the book has been received. Mail to:

Hunter Liles
Extension Youth Animal Science Associate
175 W. Campus Drive, 388 Litton Reaves
Blacksburg, VA 24061

Volunteers and Extension personnel will judge the record books. Ribbons will be awarded for all submitted record books using the Danish System. Record books will be judged in junior (less than 14 years old) and senior categories (14 years and older). The top two youth in each category will be eligible for awards as follows: $50 top record book, $25 second record book.

Books will be on display for viewing, Friday and Saturday following the judging. They will be available for pick-up upon the conclusion of judging, with winners recognized over the Band App. **Books must be picked up in the show office.** Books may be picked up by agents or other designated person following judging. A signature will be **required** to pick up the books. If books are not picked up, they will be taken to the State Office and it is then the exhibitor's responsibility to arrange and pay for delivery of the books. Exhibitors have until October 15th to request their book be mailed to them. After this date, books will be discarded.

Portfolio Competition Definitions and Instructions

A portfolio is an organized collection of a member's progress, achievements, contributions and efforts that demonstrate accomplishments over time. For the state horse show competition, portfolios may include up to but may not exceed a three (3) year period. A record book is required for each year included in the entry. Only one junior and one senior portfolio may be submitted by a county.

Contents of a 4-H Portfolio

1. Cover - All portfolios should be submitted in a three ring binder or a commercial type scrapbook.
2. Format
    - Must include at least the current 4-H year (ending Sept 30 immediately after the State Horse Show), and preferably includes up to but no more than three years of 4-H project work.
    - Must be organized by year, with most current year presented first in the binder.
    - Use of dividers of some sort is strongly suggested between portfolio components listed below.
    - All included items (clippings, ribbons, photos, etc.) must be labeled. Captions should tell why that item was included or what its relevance is to the 4-H project area.
3. Title Page - First page of the portfolio. Mount a photo of yourself on a single page. Below the photo print your name, age, date of birth, home address, and club name.
4. Table of Contents - Create a Table of Contents which shows the order of the information being presented. You may use tab dividers or number the pages.
5. Resume - This should give an overview of your entire 4-H career, and your school career and community involvement during your time in 4-H.
    - Typed in an accepted style of resume writing.
    - Include name and contact information at the top of the document
    - Use the following headings
        - 4-H project areas
        - 4-H activities
        - 4-H leadership
        - 4-H awards
        - 4-H service learning
        - Education
        - Community Involvement
        - Other as desired
6. Portfolio Story - In your own words, write a story about your 4-H experience. This is all encompassing of your 4-H career and is in addition to the record book project story. The portfolio story should include life skills gained and personal changes or development as a result of 4-H.
    - Introduce yourself
    - Tell about your project work
    - Tell about your 4-H club activities
    - Explain how 4-H has helped you become a better leader and citizen
    - Describe how 4-H has made you feel good about yourself
    - Tell about your future plans and the career you want to pursue

7. Horse Record Book – for current project and current year. Publication #406-122 (juniors) or #406-123 (seniors). No county-specific or reformatted books allowed. Writable pdf books are permitted as long as it is still the publication #406-122 (junior) or #406-123 (senior). Re-typed documents that are not the official book, no matter how close to the original they are, will be disqualified.

8. Additional Project Information - You may include any pages of miscellaneous information such as photos, news clipping, awards, programs or other materials which demonstrate your participation and/or achievements in 4-H.
    - Be selective and only include material which highlights your efforts to learn and grow through your 4-H experiences.
    - You may also include information related to your school career and community activities. Be sure to label/provide a caption for each.

Submitting Your Portfolio for Judging

Portfolio competition Entry Forms must be submitted by the Unit 4-H Agent or a Designee of the Unit Office using this link: https://tinyurl.com/PortfolioRecord26

September 1, 2026.

Entries must be submitted by the Unit 4-H Office.

Portfolios must be turned into the VA Horse Center state show office **no later than 6:00 PM on Thursday of the State Show**. Only portfolios for which an entry submission was received via the Unit 4-H Office will be judged.

Exhibitors do not have to be physically present at the State Horse Show in order to submit a Portfolio. Books may be sent to the State Office if they are not able to be present at the show, however it is best to send the book in with an Extension agent or other exhibitor that will be at the show, rather than mailing the book. If mailing, it is the exhibitor's responsibility to make sure books are postmarked by August 10, 2026 and mailed with tracking. An email confirmation will be sent upon receipt of the book. A tracking number must be assigned to the mailed book(s). If no email is received by this date, it is the exhibitor's responsibility to follow up and assure the book has been received. Mail to:

Hunter Liles
Extension Youth Animal Science Associate
175 W. Campus Drive, 388 Litton Reaves
Blacksburg, VA 24061

Volunteers and Extension personnel will judge the portfolios. Ribbons will be awarded for all submitted portfolios using the Danish System. Portfolios will be judged in junior (less than 14 years old) and senior categories (14 years and older). The top two youth in each category will be eligible for awards as follows: $150 top portfolio, $75second place portfolio.

Portfolios will be on display for viewing, Friday and Saturday following the judging. They will be available for pick-up following judging. **Portfolios must be picked up in the show office.** Portfolios may be picked up by agents or other designated person. A signature will be **required** for pickup of the portfolio. If portfolios are not picked up, they will be taken to the State Office and it is then the

exhibitor's responsibility to arrange and pay for delivery of the portfolios. Exhibitors have until October 15th to request their portfolio be mailed to them. After this date, portfolios will be discarded.

State 4-H Horse Portfolio Evaluation Rubric

Name_____ Date (mo. /yr.)_____ County _____

1. Follows Portfolio Guidelines ____ /10

   - 3 ring binder or commercial scrapbook
   - title page as first page
   - contains at least one year and no more than 3 years
   - contains all elements: title page, table of contents, resume, story, record book(s), declaration form and other project information.

2. Organization & Neatness ____ /10

   - Most current year is presented first
   - Table of Contents lists portfolio sections; sections are physically distinguishable.
   - Writing is legible and in one color ink (ink is preferred but pencil is accepted for juniors) or typed.
   - Proper spelling and grammar

3. Resume _____ /15

4. Horse Record Book (record book score x .25) _____ /25

5. Portfolio Story _____ /15

   - Member introduces themselves
   - Tells about member's project work
   - Tells about member's 4-H club activities
   - Talks about member's experiences in leadership and citizenship
   - Talks about how 4-H has made the member feel good about themselves and their personal growth.
   - Talks about member's future plans and the career you want to pursue

6. Additional Project Information _____ / 15

   - Includes photos, new clipping, ribbons, awards, etc.
   - additional information is labeled to show relevance to 4-H work, school work or community activities

7. Overall 4-H Involvement _____ /10

   - evidence that youth is a well-rounded member participating in a variety of 4-H activities.

_____ **TOTAL**

AWARD: Blue (90 -100) Red (75-89) White (74 or less)

COMMENTS:

to.