

## TEXAS 4-H RECORD BOOK CATEGORY DESCRIPTIONS

2025-2026

*Updates are noted as red text*

Record Book Category	Description
Beef	This project encompasses various aspects of market and breeding beef cattle, including animal husbandry, livestock selection, and maintaining cattle health. Participants engage in activities such as skillathons, livestock judging, educational presentations, quiz bowls, and the exhibition of beef cattle at local, county, state, and national cattle shows.
Citizenship, Civic Education & Community Service	Include information such as serving your community, knowing how to make a difference, or learning about your local, state, or national communities/government. Through appreciation of cultures and heritage, the member understands the rights and responsibilities of membership within the family, neighborhood, community, state, nation, and world. This includes activities related to global citizenship as well.
Dog Care & Training	This category should focus on activities related to dogs such as daily care and health, being a “dog foster parent”, obedience training, training in areas of service, community service and competition.
Consumer Education	This category focuses on helping youth become smart and responsible consumers. Activities include learning how to make informed decisions when purchasing items such as clothing, home appliances, electronics, financial products, and vehicles. Youth also explore topics like money management, the economy, consumer rights and responsibilities, and how personal choices impact their future.
Entomology	This category includes activities where youth learn about insects by studying, collecting and identifying various insects. Discover how helpful and harmful insects live, multiply, are controlled, and affect humans. Includes activities such as beekeeping.
Fashion & Interior Design	This project offers hands-on experiences in fashion and interior design, including sewing, completing DIY household projects using basic to advanced construction skills, and developing strong consumer decision-making skills. Youth may also participate in community service activities related to fashion or interior design. The project encompasses a wide range of textile arts, such as quilting, knitting, weaving, felting, and leatherwork. In addition, participants can explore career pathways within the fashion and interior design industries.
Food & Nutrition	This category includes activities related to the food and nutrition project where youth learn to make healthy food choices, prepare nutritious and safe meals and snacks, gain knowledge of nutrients, and adopt behaviors that can help reduce their risk for chronic disease.

Gardening & Horticulture	This category includes activities related to the horticulture project where youth learn about plant growth, environmental horticulture and ecology, fruits and nuts, landscape design, soil and water, insects and diseases, vegetables and herbs, and life skills and career opportunities.
Goat	Includes information from a market and/or breeding goat project. Examples of activities to include: animal husbandry, livestock selection, health, and the exhibition of meat or haired goats at local, county, state, and national goat shows. This can include participants engaging in activities such as skillathons, livestock judging, educational presentations, and quiz bowls. This category excludes dairy goat activities, which must be entered in the Animal & Agriculture category.
Health & Personal Safety	This category includes activities where youth learn how to improve physical, intellectual, emotional, and social health. It also focuses on healthy living, prevention and wellness and community health resources. Safety concerns related to health issues, such as first aid and emergency preparedness, can also be included.
Horse	This category includes activities related to the horse project such as activities in horsemanship, horse development, selection and training. Horse project members can demonstrate their knowledge and skills through exhibiting horses, riding competitions, quiz bowls, speaking events and judging events.
Leadership	The leadership category includes activities where youth can demonstrate learning and the practice of leadership life skills. Information provided in this category could demonstrate growth in leadership through a variety of projects. Leadership skills can be learned and practiced through elected/appointed positions, volunteering and making things happen, and/or facilitating activities. Leadership skills and philosophy include, but are not limited to, understanding and accepting self, caring for others, communication skills of listening and speaking, group dynamics, interacting with others, decision making, delegating, and parliamentary procedure.
Natural Resources	This category covers the study and exploration of the science, skills and knowledge within the 4-H Natural Resources project areas. Project areas include Wildlife & Fisheries, Forestry, Aquatic Science, and Outdoor Living Skills. Learning experiences can consist of self and group study, events, and activities related to each project area, a variety of summer camp experiences, and a wide array of curriculum enrichment school programs. <b>Entomology and Range Science related projects should be under those categories category.</b>
Photography	The photography project encourages self-expression and teaches proper use of photographic equipment and technologies that include print and digital media. This project allows for participants to express artistic talents and communicate them through their project work. Photography provides opportunity for career exploration and promoting 4-H.

Poultry	The poultry project teaches members poultry production and marketing by managing poultry projects. Project topics include broilers, capons, turkeys, egg production, and development from egg to chick. Participants engage in activities such as skillathons, poultry judging, and educational presentations.
Public Speaking	The public speaking project develops and promotes the skills needed to research, organize and present a speech on a given topic. Participants learn the process of speaking to a group of people in a structured, deliberate manner intended to inform, influence, or entertain listeners. In addition, participants develop their own personal style, while projecting a positive personal appearance. Members learn about the different types and use of various speaking styles while having the opportunity to practice those skills.
 Open/Self-Directed	<p>This category provides 4-H members with the opportunity to design and carry out a project that does not fall into an existing defined project area as listed on the 2025–2026 Texas 4-H Project List. Self-directed projects allow youth to explore unique interests, pursue emerging topics, or develop skills in areas where no formal 4-H project currently exists. To qualify as a self-directed project, members must complete at least six experiential learning experiences (such as clinics, workshops, interviews, research, or facility tours) and at least two leadership or citizenship experiences (such as teaching others, organizing events, or creating exhibits) related to the project. Projects that do not meet these requirements are not considered self-directed projects, but instead should be recorded as activities (e.g., participation in contests such as livestock judging, horse judging, etc.).</p> <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entrepreneurship allows 4-H members to explore the process of creating, managing, and growing a business venture. Youth in this category learn how to take an idea and develop it into a practical product, service, or enterprise. Projects may involve identifying a need, developing a business plan, budgeting, marketing, and evaluating success</li> <li>• Animal projects not listed elsewhere, such as exotic wildlife animals, dairy cattle, dairy goats, and llamas/alpacas.</li> <li>• Agricultural mechanics projects, emphasizing hands-on skills such as constructing, repairing, and maintaining agricultural equipment and structures. Examples include building utility or livestock trailers, fabricating custom gates, repairing or designing agricultural machinery, and modifying farm implements.</li> <li>• Evaluation-based projects, such as livestock, poultry, meat, horse, wool, and mohair evaluation, if they meet the required number of experiential learning and leadership/citizenship activities. <b>Participation in contests alone does not constitute a project and should be recorded only as an activity under another project category.</b></li> </ul>

Rabbit	The rabbit project teaches proper methods of caring for, raising, breeding, and marketing rabbits. There are three project options: market, breeding, or any non- competitive (i.e., pet) projects.
Range Science and Agronomy	The category focuses on projects which offers activities and experiences in the area of soils and crop science, crop production, botany, and rangelands. Backyard gardening projects are not suitable for this category. <b>See the natural resources category to make sure your project experience doesn't better fit there.</b>
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics	Includes all aspects of biological, mechanical, or electronic sciences. This could include projects in the areas of welding, fabrication and woodworking projects, robotics; rocketry, videography, computer science and other STEM. <b>Any activities related to Photography should be included in the Photography category.</b>
Sheep	The sheep category includes activities such as selecting, feeding, exhibiting, raising, animal health, nutrition, breeding and marketing sheep. Includes market or breeding animals. This can include participants engaging in activities such as skillathons, livestock judging, educational presentations, and quiz bowls.
Shooting Sports	This category covers education in the knowledge and skills of firearms and their use. The Shooting Sports project provides comprehensive introduction to handling and shooting safety and the fundamentals of firearm use. Disciplines include archery, pistol, rifle, shotgun, and muzzleloading. Learning experiences can include self and group study, events, and activities related to each project area, a variety of summer camp experiences, and a wide array of curriculum enrichment school programs.
Swine	The swine category includes activities such as selecting, feeding, raising, animal health, nutrition, breeding, and marketing swine. Either market or breeding animals can be raised. This can include participants engaging in activities such as skillathons, livestock judging, educational presentations, and quiz bowls.
Visual & Performance Arts	This category includes activities and events that engage imagination through art, dance, plays or theater, and music. It can include stage performance, stage design, videography, and 4-H Talent Showcase. It could also include visual arts such as painting, pencil drawings, crafts, and other skills. Youth should include information about how they have developed communication skills, decision-making, and problem-solving as well as career exploration in related fields. <b>This category does not include photography or public speaking as they have their own independent category.</b>
Veterinary Science	This category includes the broad study and/or practice of the techniques and procedures involved in caring for animals. It includes learning about veterinarian careers and courses of study. This category should include activities or knowledge beyond basic, routine animal husbandry.

