NEBRASKA 4-H SHOOTING SPORTS POLICY

Adapted from the National 4-H Shooting Sports

I. Situation Statement

The Nebraska 4-H Shooting Sports (SS) Program encompasses the initiative goals of volunteer leadership of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Extension. The program in Nebraska is administered by a nationally certified state committee consisting of Extension staff and volunteers. The program is designed to: 1) give youth thorough safe instruction and training in the use of firearms and conservation; 2) enhance self-confidence, personal development, responsibility, and sportsmanship; 3) create an appreciation and understanding of natural resources; and 4) provide volunteer instructors safe and proper instructional techniques and information on how to plan and manage shooting and conservation clubs. The program relies on state 4-H certified & trained instructors to conduct classes in the various disciplines (archery, rifle, pistol, shotgun, muzzleloading, and wildlife/hunting).

The program requires 4-H certified & trained instructors to adhere to the safety rules and regulations as dictated by the program.

The 4-H S.S. Program is a youth development education program which uses a prevention education model that strongly emphasizes positive youth-adult interaction and peer leadership. It uses skills and disciplines of safe shooting and conservation to assist young people and their leaders in attaining knowledge and developing essential life skills. The program can enhance family communications and quality time together. It creates an environment for a caring relationship between a young person and a significant adult, whether this is a family member, other adult, or teen volunteer. These activities provide the opportunity for immediate gratification to the youth and satisfaction and self-worth to the adult/teen leader who acts as teacher and role model for younger 4-H/youth members.

II. Nebraska 4-H Shooting Sports Minimum Standards for a Shooting Sports Program

The Nebraska 4-H Shooting Sports Advisory Committee recognizes the diversity of the 4-H shooting sports programs within the state has established the following minimum standards:

- That all instructors accept and abide by the Nebraska 4-H Shooting Sports Code of Ethics;
- That the 4-H Curriculum is the established and accepted curriculum for teaching youth the shooting sports within a 4-H program;
- That it is in the best interests of adult leaders and 4-H youth that the recognized 4-H curriculum be utilized in conjunction with a written

risk management plan;

- That the thrust of the 4-H shooting sports curriculum is to teach the child life skills, as opposed to teaching shooting skills to the child;
- That certifications by other national organizations are a welcome supplement to the 4-H shooting sports certification process;
- That the following minimum guidelines for instructor training at the state level are adhered to:

  - All certified adult 4-H volunteers with supervisory responsibilities in the shooting sports program are a minimum of 18 years of age or older.
  - All state level certification workshops must provide a minimum of twelve (12) hours of instruction; including a minimum of eight (8) hours instruction in each specific discipline taken and a minimum of four (4) hours instruction in teaching youth development, ages & stages and life skills.
  - All instructors must teach at least once every two (2) years to remain certified.

III. Program Objectives

The 4-H Shooting Sports Program strives to enable people, their parents and adult volunteers to become responsible, self-directed and productive members of society. Extension staff, leaders, instructors and coaches must understand the goals and objectives of the program in order to manage or present it properly. These goals and objectives are consistent with the goals and objectives of the 4-H program. The program transfers knowledge, skills and attitudes to develop human capital, using the subject matter and resources of the land-grant universities.

The specific goals and objectives of the 4-H Shooting Sports Program include, but are not limited to those listed below.

A. To enhance the physical, cognitive, social and emotional development of youth through safe, educational, and socially acceptable involvement in a shooting related activity.

B. To encourage understanding of our natural resources and the development of a personal environmental stewardship ethic by young people through participation in shooting, hunting, and related activities.

C. To teach safe and responsible use of firearms and archery equipment including sound decision-making, self-discipline and concentration.

D. To promote the highest standards of safety, sportsmanship and ethical behavior.

E. To expose participants to the broad array of vocational and lifelong avocational activities

related to shooting sports.

F. To strengthen families though participation in lifelong recreational activities.

G. To complement and enhance the impact of existing safety, shooting and hunter education programs using experiential educational methods and progressive development of skills and abilities.

IV. Philosophy

A. All instructors in the program will be certified by a member of the Nebraska State 4-H Shooting Sports Training Team to teach specific course(s). Instructors will participate in an update when new material or new instructional methods are developed.

B. The shooting sports program can be an individual or group 4-H project activity.

C. The enrollment in the program has the potential of reaching new youth audiences as well as new volunteer leaders.

D. The program is open to all youth. Youth must be eight years old by January 1 of the current year before enrolling in a shooting sports project. Youth must be 9 years old or older by January 1 of the current year before enrolling in shotgun or muzzleloading projects.

E. A 4-H Shooting Sports instructor of a discipline has the right to refuse any participant from the shooting sports activity in the interest of safety for the participant and others in the class.

F. A county will not sponsor or schedule any shooting sport activity conducted by anyone other than a 4-H Shooting Sports trained & certified instructor of the appropriate discipline.

G. Inter-agency cooperation, collaboration and participation through use of facilities and equipment as well as cooperative programming is strongly encouraged.

H. It is strongly suggested that all youth complete the State of Nebraska Hunter/Bow Hunter Education Program sponsored by the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

I. It is recommended that a county does have a S.S. coordinator to assist in administering and promoting the S.S. program in the county.

J. Competitive shooting events are optional and individual, and not the main thrust of the program.

V. Program Administration

The program is administered by the State 4-H Shooting Sports Advisory Committee and the Nebraska State 4-

H Office. The State 4-H Office and 4-H Advisory Committee will:

A. Administer the program.
B. Develop a program outline for counties to follow.
C. Conduct instructor training and certification activities.
D. Develop informational materials to be used in publicizing the program.
E. Provide orientation to county staff of the shooting sports program.
F. Initiate resource development in partial support of programming.
G. Maintain files of 4-H instructor certification status.
H. Cooperate with county staff to assist in program operations and administration.

VI. Instructor Certification Requirements

The program requires that members of the Nebraska State 4-H Shooting Sports Training Team, who are nationally certified, conduct classes in the various disciplines: archery, wildlife/hunting, shotgun, muzzleloading, pistol (air, .22), rifle (BB, pellet, small bore). No person may be certified as an instructor until the following requirements are met:

A. 18 years of age or older (must be 18 years of age on or before January 1, of the current year).

B. Attend and successfully complete an instructor training program administered by members of the Nebraska 4-H Shooting Sports Training Team and demonstrate competency to instruct as determined through a written test, trainer observation and other screening used during training.

C. All volunteers must be approved through the Child Protection and Safety Policy Process before being approved as instructors. This includes completing the Volunteer Profile (4HF 104). Failure to cooperate in such screening will disqualify any volunteer or staff member from service. All Volunteer Profiles will be updated and re-approved on a four-year basis.

D. Only one certification per discipline may be achieved at a single state sponsored training workshop. A participant must attend all of the training sessions at a state-sponsored workshop to become a certified instructor. The instructor in each class reserves the right not to certify a person if he/she feels the candidate will not be a competent instructor.

E. All state-level certification workshops must provide a minimum of twelve (12) hours of instruction, including a minimum of eight hours of instruction in each specific discipline taken and 4 hours of instruction in teaching skills, 4-H philosophy, youth development, risk management and additional topics identified by the State 4-H SS Advisory Committee.

F. Youth, ages 14 to 17, who have successfully completed a state or national sponsored workshop, may assist a certified instructor while under their direct supervision, as a Junior Instructor.

4-H certification, achieved only by successful participation in a 4-H leader workshop, is an absolute requirement for an instructor in the shooting sports disciplines. No other certifications or qualifications are accepted as a substitute. Just because you are an expert marksman does not mean you know how to work with kids. And just because you are a firearm's instructor certified by another person does not mean you know about 4-H philosophy and procedure. Each 4-H leader workshop includes youth development principles and concepts, risk management practices, and program management in addition to shooting discipline training.

VII. Instructor Renewals & Recertification

A. To keep up your certification as a Shooting Sports instructor you must teach or assist in teaching a class every two years. This requirement must be documented as per Section XI.

B. Should an instructor's certification lapse, the individual must repeat the training at an instructor certification workshop. It is suggested that certified instructors attend a training workshop every 3 - 5 years.

C. Renewal will be required of all instructors when new teaching materials become available or when a program change is initiated by the Nebraska State 4-H Shooting Sports Advisory Committee which requires an update.

D. Certified, active instructors may attain an additional discipline certification by participating and attending a one-day training workshop specific for the discipline desired if the individual attends this workshop within 18 months of initial certification.

VIII. Duties of Certified Instructors

A. To provide basic instruction to youth.

B. To report all youth trained to the County Extension Office who will make annual reports to the State 4-H Office or another designated representative.

C. To keep current as certified instructors by teaching classes every two years and attending instructor updates or retraining sessions as available and as required by the Nebraska State 4-H SS Advisory Committee.

D. It is strongly suggested that all certified instructors and youth secure additional accident insurance.

IX. Instructor Training

Instructor training will consist of at least the following phases:

A. Explanation of the program.

B. Registration cards (purpose).

C. Methods of Instruction:

1. Lesson outline and use of an outline
2. Instruction manual
3. Various methods-actual experiences, demonstrations, role playing, lecture, class involvement, simulated experience, visual aids, exhibits, and hands-on.

X. Instructor Code of Ethics

A. All certified instructors will adhere to the 4-H philosophy and goals.

B. Instructors should demonstrate a positive role model for youth to follow.

Nebraska 4-H Shooting Sports Code of Ethics

A complete 4-H shooting sports program must convey life skills development and be presented in such a way that is safe, technically competent, and helps to instill 4-H values in participants through teaching and example. Certified shooting sports instructors and volunteers must be cognizant of their role as a moral and ethical mentor, as well as teacher, to youth and adults in their state and community.

As a 4-H shooting sports instructor or volunteer:

- I will respect the participants, volunteer and property associated with the 4-H shooting sports program.
- I will set a good example as a mentor and role model for 4-H shooting sports youth and volunteer leaders.
- I will conduct myself and my 4-H shooting sports program in a professional and ethical manner.
- I will strive to be knowledgeable of the life skills embodied in the 4-H shooting sports program and aid positively in the development of youth through adherence to those principles.
- I will strive to be technically competent in the subject matter I teach and adhere to the state and national 4-H shooting sports guidelines and curriculum.
- I will respect the dignity of each participant in the 4-H shooting sports program regardless of gender, origin, ability, achievement or conviction.

XI. Record Keeping

Shooting Sports instructors should keep accurate, thorough, up-to-date records of their training activities each year. There are many formats that can be used to record this information. An example is provided in the Risk Management Section (Activities Log) of this manual. The 4-H Shooting Sports Activity Log, or a similar form containing the

requested information, must be turned into the local UNL Extension Office on an annual basis. This information, reporting of teaching activities, will renew the certification of instructors who performed the teaching or assisted with the teaching activity. UNL Extension Offices should keep these records for as long as the instructor remains active in the shooting sports program or a minimum of five years, whichever is greater.

XII. Paintball Policy

The purpose of the 4-H Shooting Sports Program is to promote youth development through the safe and responsible use of Archery equipment and firearms. Pointing any type of firearm including air guns, laser guns or laser sighting devises at any person or any humanoid or tombstone target is inappropriate and dangerous. Therefore, the Nebraska 4-H Shooting Sports Program is unequivocally opposed to such use in the 4-H program.

XIII. Footwear Policy

Any participant while on the shooting line or shooting course in any outdoor 4-H shooting sports event; including club programs, training programs and competitions, will be required to wear shoes that completely cover their feet. Examples of footwear that are not acceptable include, but are not limited to, sandals, clogs, crocks, flip flops and bare feet. Shoes that have holes, perforations, open tops, open backs, or open sides are not acceptable footwear while participating on the shooting line or shooting course with any firearm, pellet rifle or archery equipment.

XIV. Risk Management

Recommended Management Procedures for county programs:

A. State 4-H volunteer leader procedures and policies followed - Leader application forms completed, signed, approved and on file in the Extension Office for all certified SS leaders. All instruction must be done under the supervision of a Nebraska 4-H certified SS leader. Work closely with the 4-H Youth Development Program staff person in each county to meet state guidelines for volunteer leaders.

B. Waiver of liability/Parental permission form - All 4-H members enrolled in the Shooting Sports projects are to have parent or guardian read and sign the Shooting Sports waiver before beginning project meetings. The certified instructor or club leader must ascertain that all members have the forms signed before participation. Forms are to be turned into and kept in a permanent file in the Extension Office.

C. Accident Insurance - Each county program should take out

special accident insurance coverage on SS members. The "year" plan offered by specialty insurance companies is suggested. Many are available at $1 per member per year. All shooting sports leaders should know the policy number and procedures required. A copy of the policy should be kept with the certified leader and the original on file in the Extension office.

D. Emergency Plan - An emergency plan of action should be written and followed for each training site and/or activity. This plan should consider:

- Potential risks analyzed and procedures planned
- Minor incidents/first-aid - who treats or determines procedure (first aid kit)
- Access to emergency medical treatment (telephone on site, phone numbers to call, transportation, etc.)
- Two-deep leadership (at least two adults on hand) know the plan and procedures
- Natural catastrophe procedure (fire, tornado, lightning, etc.)

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