



# New Mexico 4-H Greentop Project Guide



New Mexico 4-H Is A Program of New Mexico State University's Cooperative Extension Service

400.F-4  
(New 1998)

## New Mexico 4-H Muzzleloading Project

*Welcome to an exciting piece of history: Black Powder Shooting. "Black powder-white smoke" is the order of the day while you complete this fun and rewarding project. Use this sheet to help guide you through this project.*

### ***Materials that are included with this project***

- Record form 300.A-7
- New Mexico 4-H Shooting Sports Green top 400.F-2
- New Mexico 4-H Muzzleloading Green top 400.F-4
- Muzzleloading Rifle Handbook 100.F-44 (N98/99)

### ***What You Will Learn***

- **Looking Back-** A look back into the history and evolution of black powder firearms. How did we get from hand held canons to modern in-line rifles?
- **Lock, Stock, and Barrel-** What are the parts of the different types of muzzle loading firearms? If you learn them, you can talk to your local buckskinner intelligently.
- **Understanding Black Powder-** What is black powder? What difference does grain size make? What is "Pyrodex" and how does it differ from black powder? What about modern smokeless powder?
- **Taking Care of Your Gun-** This is the best part of the 4-H Muzzleloading Project! What are the do's and don'ts of cleaning, maintenance, and storage? What other accessories and supplies will you need for this job?
- **Safety and Range Discipline-** What are the steps between picking up your firearm and firing the shot? Learn to concentrate with a positive attitude so no one gets hurt.
- **The Fundamentals of Firing a Shot-** Aiming, firing, shooting positions, all the things you learned in the 4-H rifle project, only better.
- **Look at the Opportunities-** Explore the clubs, associations, competitions, events, and other 4-H projects that relate to "black powder- white smoke" fun!

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## ***Fun Things You Can Do***

- Look into the history of your local area and find out how muzzleloading firearms and black powder were used and how they influenced your history.
- Make your own muzzleloading accessories. If you like making things out of wood, leather, or metal, this is your project. There are probably several people in your community who can help you. Have your 4-H leader or county agent help you find them. Here are just a few of the possibilities:
  - Powder horn
  - Ramrod
  - Buckskins
  - Gun rack
  - Possibles bag
  - Shooting patches and shotgun wads
  - Silhouette targets
  - Rifle and shotgun slings and cases
  - Loading or shooting benches
  - Target stands
  - Cross sticks
- You can build your own muzzleloader and make your own bullets with experience and the right equipment.
- Once you have learned about all the accessories and proper loading and firing techniques, experiment with different loads for different purposes. Here are some things to remember:
  - When trying to find the best load, you must fire from a firm rest or bench for consistency.
  - Powder charge, patch type, bullet type, and weight all affect how your muzzleloader shoots.
  - Target loads are generally lighter than hunting loads.
  - Rate of rifling twist in the barrel of your muzzle loader affects what type of bullet will shoot best.
  - Keep a shooting journal. All of these details are easy to forget.
- Many areas have shooting clubs and competition for kids and adults. Your county agent or local sporting goods store can help you find them. 4-H shooting sports are truly a "Sport of a Lifetime."
- Remember all the muzzleloader related disciplines:
  - Revolutionary and Civil War reenactments
  - Muzzleloader Pistol
  - Cap and Ball revolver
  - Muzzleloader shotgun
  - Mountain man rendezvous
  - Hunting
  - Muzzleloader rifle

### ***Other Muzzle Loading Publications Available at Your Extension Office***

1. Muzzleloading Silhouette Contest #200.F-50
2. Rifle and Muzzleloading Silhouette Target Specifications (available at County Extension office)
3. Basics of Muzzleloading- Extension Circular #500
4. The Muzzleloading Rifle Handbook #100.F-44 (N98/99)

### ***What Additional Projects Can I Do Next Year That Still Relate to the Muzzle Loading Projects?***

1. Braiding.....Making gun slings
2. Citizenship.....Teach others about shooting sports and the importance of safety.
3. Cooking.....Learn outdoor cooking techniques.
4. Leadership.....Help other 4-H members in the shooting sports projects.
5. Leather craft.....Make gun cases or other equipment cases.
6. Photography.....Take pictures of other shooters or animals you might hunt.
7. Sewing.....Make a gun case or shooting garments, such as camouflage clothing.
8. Welding.....Make silhouettes for practices.
9. Wildlife.....Learn how to identify or track wildlife.
10. Woodworking.....Make target frames for practices.