



New Mexico 4-H Greentop Project Guide



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

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SELF DETERMINED PROJECT

What are Self Determined Projects?

Welcome to the Self Determined 4-H Project! Self Determined (SD) projects are advanced, self-designed projects. They are available in each of the project areas on the *4-H Project Short List*. You may enroll in *Dairy Cattle SD*, *Vet Science SD*, *Forestry SD*, *Leathercraft SD*, *Clothing SD*, *Baking SD*, etc.

Who should enroll in a Self Determined Project?

The purpose of the SD project is to allow advanced 4-H members, usually senior members, to design a project that will challenge them. This means the 4-H member has completed the projects in that subject matter area previously. For example, a 4-H member who has completed *The Normal Animal*, *Animal Diseases*, and *Animal Health and Our World* projects in the Veterinary Science area would be ready to enroll in *Vet Science SD*. This procedure allows the 4-H member to develop basic skills and knowledge before designing a Self Determined project.

What are some advantages of Self Determined Projects?

Self Determined projects allow advanced 4-H members the opportunity to challenge themselves with topics beyond the scope of the basic projects. This gives the 4-H member the opportunity to learn advanced skills, complete creative projects and explore the career possibilities of that project.

What is required to complete a Self Determined Project?

- To complete the project, the 4-H member needs to plan his/her project with 4-H leaders, parents and agents.
- A written plan, the first three pages in the Self Determined booklet, must be completed and signed by a parent or leader early in the 4-H year.
- Then the member can go to work, completing the Record of Work section on the last page as he/she works through the Self Determined project.
- The Evaluation section on the last page will be completed when the project is finished.
- The entire booklet will accompany any SD exhibits at Achievement Day, county, regional or state fairs. If the form is not attached to the project, the exhibit is ineligible for judging.

Examples of Self Determined Projects

Baking SD – A senior 4-H member plans a special dinner for her 4-H leaders. She researches types of foreign breads, practices the recipes, chooses Pita Bread, a main dish bread, and Baklava, a dessert using a bread base, as a part of the dinner menu. She invites the leaders, prepares the dinner, and evaluates the meal.

Entomology SD – A senior 4-H member organizes an **Entomology** project study group for his county. He researches the names and addresses of all the youth enrolled in Entomology and designs a list serve on his computer. He holds 2-3 project meetings, which teach the youth how to collect, identify and mount insects. He sends out information on E-mail, prepares several handouts that supplement the *Entomology* project book, and encourages 4-H members to complete their projects.

Citizenship SD – A senior member reads a news article that describes the low voter registration of young adults who are eligible to vote. He works with the League of Women Voters in his community to set up booths at the community college and the county fair to register new/eligible voters.

Market Lamb SD – A 13-year-old 4-Her who has shown lambs since he was nine years old notices that the pens at the fairgrounds have rough edges, some broken places, and need painting. He speaks to the fair board and outlines his plan. He will recruit an adult/experienced 4-H member to weld the broken spots; then he will file rough places and paint the pens. He plans to find a donor for the paint and paint brushes needed.

Forestry SD – A 17-year-old 4-H member, who is thinking about college and a career choice, decides to learn more about careers in forestry. The *Forestry* project has been his favorite 4-H project. He wants to stay in the southwest for college and his career. He researches colleges that offer a Forestry program, orders catalogues, talks to Forestry professors about courses he should take in his final two years of high school, and enrolls in those courses. He explores some internet sites concerning forestry issues in the southwest as well as career opportunities.

The project should challenge the youth, go beyond what they have learned in previous projects, and be of high interest to the 4-H member. Prior planning and approval as well as concentrated effort, followed by evaluation, is required.