



Minnesota 4-H Youth Development

PART OF THE ...

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

EXTENSION



**4-H Shooting  
Sports**  
*Learn By Doing*

# MINNESOTA 4-H SHOOTING SPORTS PLAN & POLICY

## **I. Situation Statement**

The Minnesota 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife Program will utilize the National 4-H Shooting Sports Program and Curriculum. All 4-H Shooting Sports Instructors will need to obtain 4-H Shooting Sports Program Instructor Certification prior to conducting 4-H shooting sports programs with youth.

Statewide or Multi-State training programs and Instructor Updates utilizing National 4-H Shooting Sports Program and Curriculum will be offered annually. The length of the training has involved a Friday evening through Sunday afternoon. The Minnesota 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife Program Development committee (hereafter known as PDC) has reviewed training requirements and has determined that this is an adequate time frame to provide acceptable training for instructor certification.

The National 4-H Shooting Sports Program and Curriculum was developed, drafted and tested by the National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee over a period of years and has been offered to states since the mid 1980's. The curriculum is scrutinized continually and revisions made as appropriate. Writers of the curriculum included National Rifle Association instructors and training counselors, hunter education instructors, National Bowhunter Education instructors, National Archery Association instructors, National Muzzleloading Rifle Association instructors, and Extension Specialists.

Many youth shooting programs have been available, so the subject matter of 4-H Shooting Sports is not unique. Several of the programs laid claim to a youth development foundation. Most of them used a volunteer corps to present the program to young people. A few of them even tried to link shooting to other areas of concern. The 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife Program combines the best of all of these programs while keeping a relationship with the existing natural resources, safety or outdoor recreation programs. The materials and training programs emphasize young people and their life skills as the product of the

program while using tested techniques and positive reinforcement. Strong and continuing recruitment of volunteers, intensive volunteer equipping and management, minimal commitment of professional staff and time and attractiveness to males and females, older teens, and families have been and continue to be key elements in successful 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife Programs.

The program relies on National and State 4-H trained & certified instructors to conduct classes/programs in the various disciplines (Archery, Rifle, Shotgun, Muzzleloading, Pistol, Wildlife, and Program Coordinators) using the National 4-H Shooting Sports Curriculum. Shooting Sports has the potential of being a high liability activity. Therefore, the program requires 4-H trained & certified instructors to adhere to the safety rules and regulations as dictated by the program to decrease the liability of such an educational experience. The intent of the program is that it be conducted as a group project with appropriated supervision rather than an individual 4-H member independent project

The 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife Program is a youth development education program that uses a prevention education model that strongly emphasizes positive youth-adult interaction and peer leadership. It uses skills and disciplines of safe shooting and wildlife management 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 selfworth to the adult/teen volunteer who acts as teacher and role model for younger 4-H youth members.

## **II. Program Objectives**

- A.** Youth development is the number one goal of the 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife Program. 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife programs provide an outstanding way of promoting human growth and development in the life skills identified by the National 4-H Program.
- B.** To enhance development of participant's self-concept, character and personal growth through safe educational and socially-acceptable involvement in shooting activities.
- C.** To strengthen families through life-long recreational activities.
- D.** To develop leadership qualities in youth and adult participants.
- E.** To expand 4-H membership and involve additional 4-H adult volunteers.
- F.** To encourage understanding of natural resource concepts through participant's interest in shooting and hunting.
- G.** To expose participants to the broad array of vocation and lifelong avocational activities related to shooting sports.
- H.** To teach safe and responsible use of firearms and archery equipment, including sound decision-making, self-discipline, and concentration.
- I.** To promote the highest standards of safety, sportsmanship, and ethical behavior.
- J.** To complement and enhance the impact of existing safety and hunter education programs.
- K.** To provide 4-H training and certification in the various shooting sports disciplines for adult volunteers.

- L. To maintain and expand a state level committee of Nationally trained and certified 4-H Shooting Sports Instructors.

### **III. Philosophy**

- A. A certified adult instructor needs to be present. All instructors in the Shooting Sports Wildlife program will be certified by the Minnesota 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife PDC to teach specific discipline(s). Instructors shall participate in an instructor update if new material, new instructional methods or significant program changes are developed.
- B. A county shall not sponsor or schedule any shooting sport activity conducted by anyone other than a 4-H trained and certified Shooting Sports Instructor of the appropriate discipline.
- C. Instructor training and certification sessions will be scheduled and conducted by the State 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife PDC as a group. No certifications will be given by individual state instructors.
- D. The county is responsible for implementing University of MN Extension Volunteer Policy as it pertains to shooting sports instructors and for verifying proper certification.
- E. The 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife Program is not an individual 4-H project, but should be taught as a group project, 4-H club, 4-H special interest group, or 4-H camping sessions.
- F. The enrollment in the program has the potential of reaching new youth audiences as well as new volunteer adult leaders.
- G. Competitive shooting events are optional and individual, and not the main thrust of the program.
- H. 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife Programs are open to all youth 3<sup>rd</sup> grade to one year after high school without regard to race, color, sex, handicap, religion, age or national origin. 4-H Cloverbuds are not eligible for any aspect of 4-H shooting sports programs.
- I. Some counties may be more restrictive with rules. If a county chooses to be more restrictive with rules (i.e. due dates, etc.) county rules will apply.
- J. A 4-H Shooting Sports Instructor has the right to refuse any participant from the shooting sports activity in the interest of safety for the participant and others in the program.
- K. Inter-agency cooperation/collaboration and participation through use of facilities and equipment as well as cooperative programming is strongly encouraged.
- L. Games using paintball guns where participants shoot paintballs At other participants is NOT AN ACCEPTABLE 4-H SHOOTING SPORTS ACTIVITY. The purpose of the 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife 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 devices at any person or any humanoid or tombstone target is inappropriate and dangerous. Therefore the National 4-H Shooting Sports Committee is unequivocally opposed to such use in the 4-H program.
- M. To ensure our positive youth development focus, all youth in our shooting sports wildlife programs must be enrolled as 4-H members.

### **IV. Program Administration**

- A. This program is administered by the Minnesota 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife PDC, and the State 4-H Shooting Sports extension staff. This committee will:
  1. Administer the program.
  2. Develop a program outline for counties to follow.

3. Conduct Instructor training & certification activities.
4. Develop informational materials used in publicizing the program.
5. Provide orientation of county faculty to the shooting sports program.
6. Initiate resource development in partial support of programming.
7. Maintain files of 4-H instructor certification status.
8. Cooperate with Extension Staff to assist in program operations and administration.
9. Provide leadership for all Minnesota 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife events including the following:
  - All 4-H Shooting Sports Instructor Training and Certifications
  - The Minnesota 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife Invitational
  - Other Minnesota 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife contests, events, fun shoots, activities, or programs as established by the committee and supported by 4-H leadership.

#### **V. Instructor Certification Requirements**

The program requires the use of national or state 4-H trained & certified instructors to conduct classes/programs in the various disciplines (Archery, Rifle, Shotgun, Pistol, Muzzleloading Black Powder, Wildlife, and County Coordinator). No person may be certified as an instructor until the following requirements are met:

1. Age: **Instructor** – Adult volunteers may be of any age, but young adults must have surpassed membership age (one year past high school).  
**Assistant Instructor** – 9<sup>th</sup> grade as of current school year. (Asst. Instructor - can instruct youth under direct supervision of a certified discipline Instructor and only if the Instructor is present during the instruction)
2. Successfully complete instructor training sessions administered by the -Minnesota 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife PDC and demonstrate competency to instruct as determined through a written test, trainer observation and other screening used during training.
3. Have been approved as a current Volunteer through local County Extension Office.
4. Volunteers who respond positively to the question on criminal offenses must be approved by the University of MN Extension Volunteer director before being approved as instructors.
5. Be recommended by County/Regional Extension 4-H Program Staff.
6. Only one discipline certification may be achieved at a single state sponsored training & certification workshop. A participant must attend all of the training sessions at a state 4-H sponsored workshop which includes a minimum 8 hours of discipline instruction and additional 4 hours on topics of shooting sports philosophy, youth development, risk management, planning county programs and additional topics identified by the Minnesota 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife PDC. The Minnesota 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife PDC reserves the right to withhold certification.
7. All shooting program instructors must have current 4-H Shooting Sports Training and Certifications.

#### **VI. Instructor Renewals and Recertification & Reporting**

1. Your desire to continue as a volunteer in the 4-H program.
2. Your County and/or State's interest in seeing you continue as a 4-H Shooting Sports Volunteer.

3. Keeping up-to-date in your certified discipline through teaching the program in your County.
4. Attending instructor updates as deemed necessary by the certifying committee.
5. Annually reporting your teaching in 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife programs.
6. To maintain certification as a 4-H Shooting Sports Instructor, one must teach or assist in teaching a class within the instructors discipline every two years.  
It is required that all classes be reported and documented as per Section XII.
7. Should instructor certification lapse the individual must repeat the state 4-H training program.
8. All instructors in the program will be certified by the Minnesota 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife PDC to teach specific discipline(s). Instructors shall participate in an instructor update/renewal if new material, new instructional methods or significant program changes are developed. Instructors are to report all members & leaders trained to the County Extension Office & 4-H Program Staff immediately following the training..

#### **VII. Duties of Certified Instructors**

1. To provide basic instruction to members & leaders and other duties as outlined in the individual Minnesota Volunteer Job Description as developed in cooperation with 4-H Program Staff.
2. To report all members & leaders trained to the 4-H Program Staff and to make annual reports to the Minnesota 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife PDC or other designated representative. Reports are to cover the calendar year and be submitted by September 15<sup>th</sup> of that year.
3. To keep current as certified instructors by teaching classes and attending instructor updates or retraining sessions as available and as required by the Minnesota 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife PDC.

#### **VIII. Instructor Training**

1. Instructors Certified through the Minnesota 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife PDC will receive a copy of the 4-H shooting sports curriculum for their individual discipline.
2. Methods of instruction at state workshops will include: A) Lesson outline and use of outline; B) Discipline Curriculum Manual; C) Other methods may include - Hands on Learning, Live Firing, Demonstrations, Lecture, Role Playing, Class Involvement, Simulated Experience, Visual Aids, and Exhibits.
3. Instructor training will include a segment where workshop participants will have an opportunity to demonstrate teaching skills.

#### **IX. Instructors Code of Ethics**

1. All certified instructors will adhere to the 4-H philosophy and goals and the 4-H Shooting Sports Instructor Code of Ethics (**attached**).
2. Instructors of 4-H Shooting Sports Clubs and Special Interest Groups are to work with youth to learn the 4-H Pledge, and to encourage member participation in club meetings, county and state 4-H activities. 4-H members are expected to 1) complete member enrollment and code of conduct forms; 2) exhibit project skills; 3) present a project talk, demonstration, or presentation; 4) maintain 4-H member records for project completion.
3. Instructors should demonstrate a positive role model for youth to follow.

## **X. Minnesota 4-H Shooting Sports Wildlife PDC Structure**

1. PDC membership shall include all state level, nationally certified 4-H shooting sports instructors, both 4-H volunteer and Extension Staff.
2. PDC leadership will be provided by Extension staff nationally certified as a 4-H Shooting Sports Coordinator.
3. PDC meetings will be held bi-annually. (the second Friday of October and the second Friday of March) State Shooting Sports Coordinators may call additional meetings as necessary.

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## **National 4-H Shooting Sports Code of Ethics**

**A complete 4-H shooting sports program must convey life skills development and be presented in 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, volunteers 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 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.**

