

CHOUTEAU COUNTY 4-H LIVESTOCK COUNCIL

Constitution and By-Laws

Article 1 – Chouteau County 4-H Livestock Council

The name of this organization shall be the Chouteau County 4-H Livestock Council (CCLC).

Article 2 – Source of Authority

The 4-H name and emblem are the property of the USDA and identify youth programs administered by the USDA, through the Land Grant System and the Cooperative Extension System. The CCLC has authority to use the 4-H name and emblem in accordance with the state and federal guidelines based on its affiliation and cooperation with Montana State University Extension and Chouteau County Extension.

4-H is a youth education program of the Montana State University Extension, cooperating with the USDA and local county governments. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Montana State University and the Montana State University Extension Service prohibit discrimination in all of their programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital and family status.

The MSU County Extension Agents have the responsibility for the leadership of the 4-H program. The agents have authority in matters of conduct, discipline, health and safety in connection with the 4-H members and leaders enrolled in the county.

Article 3 – Mission Statement

The CCLC will ethically guide the integrity of 4-H members to be successful in their animal projects and will conduct the Chouteau County 4-H show and sale in the same manner. We will be true, honest, and forthright in all dealings in our community. We will set a positive example and encourage camaraderie among all those involved in the Chouteau County 4-H program.

Article 4 – Purpose & Objective

1. **Purpose:** The purpose of the CCLC shall be:

- A. To teach a greater understanding of meat animal evaluation, livestock husbandry, and ethical showmanship.
- B. To provide incentive and to encourage greater participation in livestock projects.
- C. To provide leadership opportunities for youth within the Council structure.
- D. To recognize members who do quality work in selecting, feeding, and showing livestock projects.
- E. To provide 4-H members an opportunity to have their market livestock projects evaluated.
- F. To establish rules and enforce compliance of regulations for participation in the Chouteau County Fair.
- G. To examine and act upon issues and concerns expressed by the membership.
- H. To create opportunities for youth to grow and to do their best, both individually and collectively in their livestock projects.
- I. To provide opportunity for positive intergenerational learning and service to our community.

2. **Objective:** The objective of this Council shall be to organize and facilitate the livestock portion of the Chouteau County 4-H program through:

- A. Development, maintenance, and promotion of a balanced 4-H livestock program.
- B. Enabling leaders to help develop, evaluate, and channel suggestions in carrying out the county 4-H livestock program.

- C. Cultivating channels of communication for the exchange of information between the 4-H Center for Youth Development, Chouteau County Extension Office, leaders, and youth.
- D. Providing and supporting opportunities for the youth of Chouteau County, stimulating greater interest in and raising the standards of 4-H livestock projects, while learning life skills through participation in 4-H club activities, project work, educational workshops, competitions, and leadership opportunities.
- E. Encouraging opportunities for 4-H leaders, 4-H members and their chaperones, to attend and participate in district, state and national livestock activities.
- F. Promoting and adhering to conduct that is moral, ethical and legal, and following the 4-H Policies and Guidelines set forth by the MSU Extension, Montana 4-H Program and the Montana 4-H Leaders' Council.
- G. Promoting 4-H member and club involvement in livestock programs and recruiting and mentoring new members and leaders into livestock projects.

Article 5 – Membership

Council membership shall include the beef, swine and sheep fair superintendents. Council membership shall also be open to all 4-H leaders, 4-H livestock members age 14 and over as of October 1 of current 4-H year and in good standing, and leaders-at-large, regardless of race, color, sex or national origin, religion, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or family status. The County Extension personnel shall serve in an ex-officio capacity.

Any member or leader enrolled in 4-H through the Chouteau County Extension Office is

considered in good standing upon payment of dues and adherence to Council by-laws. All such members and leaders are eligible to participate in all Council-sponsored activities.

Article 6 – Voting

Voting Rights: Each Council member present is entitled to one vote at regular or special Council meetings. There will be no proxy votes.

Article 7 – Officers & Elections

1. **Officers:** The Officers of the CCLC will consist of:

- A. President
- B. Vice President
- C. Secretary
- D. Treasurer

2. **Election of Officers:**

- A. Annual elections will be held at the second meeting in the fall of each year.
- B. Terms of office shall be for two years.
- C. An officer may succeed him/herself in office, but not to exceed two terms, or a total of four years in any one office successively. Vice President may be a candidate to succeed the president at the end of the term(s).

D. Retiring officers will be available to newly elected officers in an advisory capacity to aid in the transition of duties and responsibilities.

Article 8 – Duties of Officers

1. **President** – The duties of the President shall be to:

- A. Preside at all meetings, appoint committees, and perform such duties as prescribed by the Council.
- B. Set the agenda for the Council meetings, in cooperation with the County Agent and/or personnel. The President will not have voting rights at Council or Executive meetings unless to break a tie vote.
- C. Serve as the chairman of the Executive Committee.
- D. Have signature authority on all CCLC accounts.

2. **Vice President** – It shall be the duty of the Vice President to: A. Assume the duties of the President in his/her absence or in the event the President office is vacated.

- B. Serve as an ex-officio member of all committees.
- C. Learn the duties of the President and be prepared to follow the latter into office at the end of the President’s term if elected.
- D. Have signature authority on all CCLC accounts.

3. **Secretary** – It shall be the duty of the Secretary to:

- A. Keep and maintain a record of the minutes of the meetings, call the roll, and submit the minutes to the Extension Office within one week. Extension Office will email minutes to Council members prior to the next meeting.
- B. Submit notice of upcoming meetings publicly one week in advance when possible.
- C. Keep current records of all the current by laws, policies and guidelines.
- D. Have signature authority on all CCLC accounts if deemed necessary.

4. **Treasurer** – It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to:

- A. Keep accurate financial records, copies of invoices, bills, etc., relating to the funds and property of the Council. A copy of the check register, accounting for all receipts and expenditures, shall be presented at all meetings.
- B. Receive, record and deposit all funds in a regulated bank or similar financial institution in Chouteau County, to the appropriate accounts established by the Council.
- C. Pay bills and make other authorized expenditures provided for in the budget or otherwise approved by the Council.
- D. Furnish financial reports annually at year-end and at such times as required by Montana 4-H. Financial reports should include a Statement of Financial Position (balance sheet) and a Statement of Revenues and Expenses (income statement.)
- E. Act as custodian of all funds and personal property of the Council, and keep a current list of all such property.

F. Prepare all financial records for an annual audit to be conducted in November by the Financial Review Committee.

G. Prepare and file in a timely manner, all reports required by federal, state and local governmental agencies.

H. Have signature authority on all CCLC accounts.

I. Serve as the Chairman of the Financial Review Committee.

I. All checks will be counter signed by a second Council member with signature authority.

5. **MSU Extension** - The Extension Agent serves as an ex-officio member of the Council and its committees. The Extension Agent shall have all privileges of a regular member, including participation, submissions of motions and voice, excepting that the Extension Agent does not have a vote.

Leadership for the 4-H program is provided at the national, state, and county levels by MSU County Extension Agents, working cooperatively with parents and volunteer leaders. 4-H advisory committees, 4-H councils, leader associations, and other organizations serve in an advisory capacity and give advice to the direction of 4-H program efforts. The authority to establish and administer such groups is held by Montana State University Extension personnel at the county and state level. The County Extension Agent has the final authority and responsibility for the conduct and leadership of the 4-H program in each county.

Extension Agents may have signature authority on all CCLC accounts if deemed necessary.

Article 9 – Committees

1. Standing committees of the CCLC shall be:

A. Executive Committee: The Executive Committee shall consist of the President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and the Extension Agent. This committee shall have the supervision over matters of general interest of the organization and may meet to attend to Council business between the regular meetings of the Council.

B. Financial Review Committee: At least two (2) Council members, in addition to the Treasurer, shall review the account books annually and set a budget sometime during September and present a summary of findings and an annual budget at the November meeting.

2. The President may appoint special committees from time to time to facilitate the working of the CCLC.

Article 10 – Resignations

In the event of a resignation of any elected member, the vacancy will be announced before the next Council meeting, at which time the vacancy will be filled by majority vote.

Article 11 – Removal

Any Officer or Representative may be removed from office by the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the eligible voters at a CCLC meeting or special meeting called for that purpose, for conduct detrimental to the interest of the CCLC and 4-H program, for lack of support for its objectives, or refusal to render reasonable assistance in carrying out its purpose.

Article 12 – Meetings

1. The CCLC will meet the third Tuesday of September, November, January, March, May and July.
2. The Executive Committee may call special meetings.
3. Committee meetings shall be as needed.

Article 13 – Amendments

1. These by-laws may be amended or revised in part or total at any regular meeting of the Council, provided the amendments or revisions have been submitted and read at the previous regular meeting.
2. It shall require a two-thirds vote of those present to amend and adopt these by-laws.
3. By-law amendments become effective immediately upon adoption.

Article 14 – By-Laws

A copy of the current by-laws shall be available for review online or upon request from the Chouteau County Extension office.

Article 15 – Governance

1. The CCLC will refer to the most current *Robert's Rules of Order* for parliamentary authority.
2. The CCLC will refer to the current *MSU Extension Montana 4-H Program Policies and Procedures* and the *Montana 4-H Councils & Committees* for guidelines.

Article 16 – Quorum

A quorum shall consist of three eligible voting members including at least two officers.

Article 17 – Majority

1. A majority consists of one or more over fifty percent (50%) of the members present at the meeting.
2. A business item must receive more than fifty percent (50%) of the votes to pass.

Article 18 – Dissolution Clause

If, for any reason, this Council shall be dissolved, any remaining assets will be given to the Chouteau County 4-H Council.

Article 19 – Compensation and Conflicts of Interest

All persons associated with this chartered group are volunteers. No adult or youth will use their position with 4-H or the knowledge gained from their position in 4-H for personal financial benefit.

Article 20 – Whistleblowers Protection

To maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics, the Montana 4-H Program will investigate any suspected fraudulent or dishonest use or misuse of resources. Any allegations of dishonesty will be handled with sensitivity, discretion and confidentiality to the extent allowed for by law. The 4-H organization will use its best efforts to protect whistleblowers against retaliation.

Article 21 – Document Retention and Destruction

The following procedures for the retention and destruction of records will be followed.

Charter permanent

By-Laws permanent

EIN Paperwork permanent

Minutes permanent

990 tax returns 7 years

Annual and Audit reports 7 years

Bank records 7 years

Donor Records and Acknowledgment Letters 3 years

Grant paperwork 3 years after completion

Correspondence 3 years

Copies of all permanent records will be kept on file at the local Extension Office. The Extension Office in collaboration with the Executive Committee are designated to identify records that have met their required retention time and will oversee the destruction as appropriate by shredding.