4-H Horticulture Project

WHAT’S IT ALL ABOUT?
Horticulture involves the science and art of cultivating flowers, fruits, vegetables or ornamental plants in a garden, orchard or nursery. The 4-H horticulture project helps you discover the magic of plants, whether for food, engineering or pure enjoyment.

» Explore the basics of plants and plant science including plant growth, soils and plant varieties.
» Learn to care for vegetable and flower gardens, lawns or commercial horticulture crops.
» Learn about crop and soil sciences whether you grow plants in a container, on a small garden plot, or on an acre of land or more.
» Learn about careers in the “green” industry.

THE BIG PICTURE
Starting Out:
» Identify different types of gardens.
» Plant seeds.
» Grow and maintain a garden.
» Learn pest management techniques.
» Learn how to harvest crops.
» Examine the parts of a plant and discover the function of each part.
» Learn to identify and use common garden tools.

Learning More:
» Learn about garden fertilizer and nutrients plants need to grow.
» Plant bulbs in the fall for spring blooms.
» Learn to divide plants.
» Make a container garden.
» Learn about compost and build a compost bin.
» Discover different ways to prepare and use garden produce.
» Sell produce at a farmers market.

Expanding Horizons:
» Start an herb garden.
» Learn about food preservation methods.
» Take a soil sample and have it tested for nutrients.
» Learn about integrated pest management for the yard or garden.
» Experiment with organic production.
» Design an experiment.
» Test different varieties or management techniques.
» Design a landscape plan for your home.

CURRICULA & RESOURCES
Michigan 4-H Curricula
» 4-H Flower Gardening Project Guide (4H1337): http://4h.msue.msu.edu/4h/resources/flower_garden_gd
» Michigan 4-H Guide to Herb Gardening Projects (4H1516): http://4h.msue.msu.edu/4h/resources/mich_4h_gd_herb_gardening
» Heritage Gardening: Vegetables (4H1279): http://4h.msue.msu.edu/4h/resources/heritage_gardening_vegetables
» Michigan 4-H Guide to Herb Gardening Projects (4H1516): http://4h.msue.msu.edu/4h/resources/mich_4h_gd_herb_gardening
» Selecting Vegetables for Exhibit (4H1175): http://4h.msue.msu.edu/4h/resources/selecting_vegs

National 4-H Curricula
http://www.4-h.org/resource-library/curriculum/
Gardening:
» See Them Sprout (07162) (Grades 3-4)
» Let's Get Growing (07163) (Grades 5-6)
» Take Your Pick (07164) (Grades 7-9)
» Growing Profits (07165) (Grades 10-12)
» Helper's Guide (07166)
» Exhibit Guide (07167)

Continued on back
FOCUS ON HORTICULTURE

Science
- Explore the parts of plants and study their functions.
- Design experiments to discover optimal temperature and light on seed germination and plant growth.
- Experiment using different types of weed prevention in your yard or garden, comparing organic and inorganic methods.
- Experiment using different types of pest control in your yard or garden, comparing organic and inorganic methods.

Citizenship & Leadership
- Volunteer at a community garden or start your own.
- Organize a perennial exchange.
- Start or participate in a local garden tour.
- Grow a row for the hungry or donate excess produce to the local food bank.
- Cut some flowers or design a floral arrangement and bring to a nursing home.

Life Skills
- Use critical-thinking, problem-solving and decision-making skills to help you make good decisions about project management.
- Keep records on your project expenses and income.
- Practice personal resiliency through successes and challenges in your project.

Communication
Prepare a poster or demonstration on how to:
- Grow a square-foot, keyhole or other specialty garden.
- Design a container garden.
- Use herbs.
- Make a floral arrangement.
- Preserve fruits and vegetables.
- Obtain proper nutrition from the fruits and vegetables you grow.
- Prune woody ornamentals.

CURRICULA & RESOURCES, CONT.

Curricula — Other States
- Garden Mosaics (Cornell University): http://communitygardennews.org/gardenmosaics/pgs/action/action_do.htm
- My First Garden (University of Illinois Extension): http://urbanext.illinois.edu/firstgarden/index.cfm

Other Resources
- KidsGardening (National Gardening Association): http://www.kidsgardening.org/

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?
- Contact your local Michigan State University (MSU) Extension office for workshops, activities and events.
- If you are interested in a college education in horticulture or crop science, visit MSU’s website at www.msu.edu to explore those majors.
- Enter a local horticulture contest.
- Attend a garden show.
- Job shadow a horticulturist, flower shop owner or greenhouse manager.
- Enter a horticulture exhibit at the county fair.
- Tour the MSU Horticulture Gardens including the Michigan 4-H Children’s Garden.

Adapted with permission from “4-H Horticulture Project,” by Iowa State University Extension, 2011, Iowa 4-H Project Hot Sheet. Retrieved from http://www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/projects/MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status. Issued in furtherance of MSU Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Thomas G. Coon, Director, MSU Extension, East Lansing, MI 48824. This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned. The name “4-H” and the emblem consisting of a four-leaf clover with stem and the “H” on each leaflet are protected under Title 18 U.S.C. 707. (4H1619IP-WEB-3:2013-LP) Produced by ANR Communications.