GRASSLAND EVALUATION
CONTEST

OBJECTIVES
Targeted Life Skills: Self-esteem, Decision Making, Problem Solving, Critical Thinking, Cooperation, Teamwork

Opportunity will be provided for faculty to share information about related college degree programs in Animal Science and Plant Science and career options in:

Cooperative Extension Service
Livestock Operations Management
Natural Resources Conservation Service
U. S. Forest Service
Game and Fish Commission

The Grassland Evaluation Program will train 4-H members in decision making skills in the area of grassland resource management. This is a competitive format that integrates the areas of pastures, livestock, soils, wildlife, and plant identification. Details can be found in the Grassland Evaluation Contest Manual: http://agebb.missouri.edu/mfgc/news.htm.

ACTIVITY

The 4-H Grassland Evaluation Contest is a state-only activity and consists of four parts: Grassland Condition, Wildlife Habitat Appraisal, Soil Evaluation, and Plant Identification. A field site is chosen in a grazed pasture. A 50'x50' area will be marked in the field from which certain questions must be answered.

Grassland Condition
Students are given a hypothetical farm scenario with cattle and pasture production for spring, summer, fall and winter. The student must then evaluate the pasture area marked in the field, interpret soil test results, animal forage requirements, and pasture forage production and determine if forage production meets animal needs. Corrective decisions must be made to solve production problems based on information provided.

Wildlife Habitat Appraisal
The student is asked to complete a set of questions pertaining to wildlife habitats and pastures. The student must also assess the suitability of the pasture site as wildlife habitat for bobwhite quail and cottontail rabbit.

Soil Evaluation
The student is asked to locate the contest site on an aerial photograph from a soil survey map. The correct soil description for that site must be determined from the survey information and the description must be interpreted to answer questions for that soil and site. Suitability of that soil for specific forage species must also be assessed.
Plant Identification
The student must identify selected live weed and forage species correctly and give the correct life cycle for each plant.

General Rules:

Date: The preferred date will be the last Wednesday of April or the first Wednesday of May.

Location: The contest location will be announced annually and will be in the Faulkner County area.

Eligibility: The contest is open to 1 junior 4-H team and 1 senior 4-H team per county. The number of 4-H individuals per county is unlimited. A team is a maximum of four members or a minimum of three members. All county 4-H team members must be 4-H members of the same county. All senior or junior 4-H members can return to compete the following year even if they were previously members of a first place team or were high point individual.

Registration: Registration dates will be announced annually. Both teams and individuals must be registered for the competition.

Competition: The contest event will be set up and conducted according to the general rules used by the Mid-America Grassland Contest. The competition will be conducted rain or shine, except during occurrence of lightning or other dangerous conditions. Awards will be presented to the top three individuals in the junior and senior divisions. Team awards will be presented to the top three junior teams and the top five senior teams.

Mid-America Contest Eligibility: The top five placing 4-H senior teams in the state contest are eligible to compete in the Mid-America Grassland Evaluation Contest in Missouri. In the case that a qualifying team loses members to below a 3-person team minimum before the Mid-America contest, the remaining team members can compete as individuals. If other senior individuals from the county of the qualifying team also competed at the state contest, those individuals may be substituted only if the original team members must drop off the team. The state 4-H high individual will be eligible to compete at the Mid-America contest. Lodging and travel funding will be available for the contest.

Prepared by John Jennings: Professor: Forage