



August 8, 2017

Dear Florida 4-H Community Club Members,

This is an exciting time of year in the world of Florida 4-H Youth Development. We stand on the precipice of the dawn of a new 4-H Year on September 1. As this 4-H year comes to a close, however, we sincerely hope that your 4-H club experience has been filled with learning and fun! As we pause and reflect on this past year, we are so proud and impressed with the accomplishments of our 4-H youth, volunteers and Faculty. From our national competition winners to our first-time campers, everyone has accomplished so much! On behalf of Florida 4-H we hope you continue your involvement and re-enroll for the 2017-18 program year. Re-enrollment opens in 4HOnline on August 18.

The Florida 4-H Youth Development Program strives to be the leading positive youth development program in the nation. As our motto states, we want to “Make the Best Better” by enhancing our county, district and state-level programs and events to ensure they are the highest-quality experiences possible for our youth participants. We have committed ourselves to providing your children with the best youth development experience as possible in the context of an ever-changing world. We also want to invest in our communities’ futures by involving more youth and families in our 4-H programs. Increased costs and recent changes in legislation, policies, and the like have added additional expenses to Florida 4-H that create an added challenge in meeting our commitment to you. We did experience some budget related challenges in the past year, and we appreciate all the support and continued dedication from our wonderful 4-H volunteers and families.

Also last year, we introduced a membership fee for 4-H Community Club members ages 8-18. We are going to continue this fee, and we are requesting that you join us in continuing to invest in 4-H. This past year this fee helped secure things like state-wide insurance coverage for our community club members, transportation for 4-H members to 4-H University and SRTLTC. In the 2017-18 program year, Florida 4-H will once again be asking families to pay a \$20.00 annual membership fee\* for Community Club Members 4-H ages 8-18. Just like last year, half of this fee will be managed and used by your local 4-H program and the remainder will be used to invest in collective needs. The Florida 4-H Youth Development Program will continue to use these funds to improve, update, and modernize state-level events, activities, and competitions for 4-H youth. Member insurance will also be paid for again by the state instead of individual county programs to alleviate this local burden. We will continue to implement transportation solutions for state and regional events and provide more support for your local agent and programs. This past year we utilized buses to help transport youth to Florida 4-H University, and saw a significant increase in participation in that event in 2017.

Here is an overview of how the fee process will work, and this system is extremely similar to the process last year.

- You will enroll your youth in 4HOnline as usual. After you have submitted all enrollments for your family in 4HOnline, you will click on a link to an e-commerce online storefront where the

membership fee can be paid using a credit or debit card. You should also expect an e-mail with the same link. If you do not use credit or debit cards, a check may be mailed to the Florida 4-H Headquarters.

- If a membership fee is a barrier for any youth to join 4-H, please contact your local county 4-H Agent. Your local 4-H Agent or staff will work to find solutions as needed.

Based on feedback we received from families and stakeholders throughout Florida, this year there will not be a family-determined amount; all youth ages 8-18 will be asked to pay the entire fee. Also all youth will be asked to pay the fee regardless of family size. Once again, if the fee poses a challenge to participation, please contact your local 4-H agent who can help find a solution.

Please view this as an opportunity to “Make the Best Better” for your 4-Her and for all the other youth that could benefit from the Florida 4-H Youth Development Program. Again, thank you for your past involvement in 4-H and we hope to see you again in the fall! If you have any questions or concerns, please don’t hesitate to reach out to your local 4-H office.

Sincerely,

Chris DeCubellis  
Associate State 4-H Program Leader  
UF/IFAS Extension