

### Horse Helmet Policy for Arizona 4-H

Arizona 4-H places a high priority on providing for the health and safety of all our participants. Ensuring the safety of those in 4-H horse projects is a high priority. The potential for concussions or other traumatic brain injuries are very real possibilities in the horse program. In fact, the rate of serious injury per number of riding hours is estimated to be higher for horseback riders than for motorcyclists and automobile racers.

For many years, Arizona 4-H has required that helmets be worn in certain jumping events in English horsemanship. In addition, several county 4-H programs and 4-H horse clubs have been requiring that helmets be worn whenever a child is on a horse. The vast majority of state 4-H programs already require helmets to be worn during all horse events.

Beginning January 1, 2015, Arizona 4-H will require that an industry approved ASTM/SEI equestrian helmet be worn by all Arizona 4-H members when they are mounted on a horse and participating in an Arizona 4-H horse event/activity/project meeting. The harness must be secured and properly fitted. Any rider violating this rule at any time will be immediately prohibited from further riding until such headgear is properly in place. It is the responsibility of the rider, or the parent or guardian of the youth exhibitor to see to it that the headgear worn complies with the appropriate safety standards for protective headgear intended for equestrian use, is properly fitted, and in good condition. Arizona 4-H, leaders, show committees, officials, and judges are not responsible for checking headgear worn for such compliance.

For safety purposes, Arizona 4-H strongly encourages helmets to be worn around horses at all times whether or not it is a 4-H event. In addition, 4-H horse leaders will be required to review and complete an equestrian safety training module in 4HOnline. We strongly encourage each family involved in the 4-H horse program to review the video, "Every Time, Every Ride" and learn about how the use of a helmet will help prevent serious brain injury. This video is available from your local county Extension office.

Approved August 13, 2014



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