

September 9, 2003

Dear 4-H Professionals,

As Ohio 4-H and Ohio State University Extension move forward with the implementation of cost recovery measures, I want to share additional information and thoughts with you.

I have had many questions from agents, program assistants and volunteers regarding the \$2 cost recovery fee added to the sale of 4-H publications. Let me share more details on how that decision was made and other insights that I have observed. First, since our organization decided that additional cost recovery measures were needed to maintain a premier educational system, I have heard the most negative feedback on a state 4-H membership fee. As the task force met last spring, there was also considerable discussion regarding the implementation of a statewide 4-H membership fee. There was some support for this type of fee, but a majority of task force members (and other 4-H professionals that provided feedback to me) were not supportive of adopting that approach. In reality, the additional \$2 curriculum fee for 4-H publications replaces a state 4-H membership fee. Secondly, the \$2 fee also provides advantages to county staff because a system already exists to collect and manage the books. No additional paperwork or processing time needs to be completed for this aspect of the cost recovery plan. Thirdly, the 25% discount on the \$2 curriculum fee continues for counties and allows for financial resources to be invested locally.

From some of the questions I have received, I know that you sincerely care for the youth participating in your local programs. You are looking for ways to reduce the cost to the members by sharing project books, copying resources locally, etc. The current Ohio 4-H plan relies on the sale of 4-H publications. If this is unsuccessful, additional cost recovery measures will need to be explored. The same is also true with the other curriculum fees (school enrichment, special emphasis, Carteens, and state events).

4-H is not being singled out in the Ohio State University Extension cost recovery plan. All program areas are struggling with similar questions regarding the development and implementation of cost recovery plans. It is certainly a challenging issue for the organization but is a necessary step because of significantly less public funds. Your leadership and cooperation is truly needed to effectively implement the 4-H plan and strengthen our organization.

A website has been created with additional information and resources regarding the 4-H Cost Recovery Plan. The address is: <http://www.ohio4h.org/cost/> Resources currently available include: Frequently Asked Questions, Letter to Classroom Teachers and Administrators, and a Letter to Juvenile Court Judges and Staff.

Feel free to contact me if you have any additional questions. Thank you for your continued leadership and support. YOU do make a difference for thousands of youth and their families.

Sincerely,

Jeff King
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