2021 Guidelines for Groups

Who: Groups of five or more youth (ages 5-18 years as of January 1, 2021); groups can consist of families, friends, 4-H clubs, scout troops, etc.

What: Prepare, plant, maintain, and harvest a small garden and complete contest record book

When: April 2 – July 30, 2021

Why: Learn what it takes to grow the food we eat

How: Call your local 4-H Agent for more information about the contest or visit the project website.

Registration and Rules:
- All participants in this project must be current SC 4-H members for the 2020-21 club year. Consult your 4-H agent for enrollment procedures for your group.
- For a registration fee of $12, the group will receive access to a record book, at least two seed packets (one pollinator and one edible), and project newsletters.
- Groups will be required to prepare, plant, maintain, harvest and utilize a garden plot of no less than 50 sq. ft. with four different plant varieties. If the youth does not have space for a 50-sq. ft. garden, every effort will be made by the 4-H Agent to provide space.
- Groups must plant the two seed varieties they are given (one pollinator and one edible). In addition, they must plant at least two other edible crops of their choice. If spacing allows, you may plant more than four types of plants.
- Seeds/seedlings must be in the ground no later than May 31.

Record Book:
- One group record book is to be completed by the youth in the group throughout the course of the project and submitted no later than July 30. Record books are age appropriate: Cloverbuds (ages 5-8) and Juniors (9-13), and Seniors (ages 14-18). Ages are determined as of January 1, 2021.
- The age of the oldest youth in the group determines the age division record book.
- For younger ages and areas without good internet connectivity, parents and 4-H agents, respectively, can assist with record book completion.
- Tutorials and information will be provided through the project newsletters and you can also ask your local 4-H agent for assistance.
Judging:

- Youth will be divided into two categories prior to judging: Cloverbuds (5-8 years of age) and Juniors/Seniors (9-18 years of age). Age is determined as of January 1, 2021. Cloverbuds will be reviewed on the county level given participation ribbons/certificates upon completion of the project. (They are a non-competitive age division). Junior/Senior group record books will be judged on the county level. One winning Junior/Senior group book per county will be sent to the regional level for record book competition. One winner in the group category on the regional level will be sent to the state level for competition. Awards are sponsored by the SC Master Gardener Program. Only projects scoring 165/220 (75%) or higher are eligible to move on to regional and state level judging.
- Groups should expect at least one site visit from judges. Participants are encouraged to be on site for this visit. Dates of these site visits will be coordinated by your local agent.
- The actual garden plot and the record book will both be taken into consideration upon judging on the county level, which will be done by qualified Extension Agents, Master Gardeners, and/or volunteer. Only material included in the record books, along with attached score sheets from the local level, will be judged on the regional and state levels.
- State winners from 2020 (Junior, Senior, and Group) are not eligible to compete for prizes in the same age division for two consecutive years. (For example, if you participated as a Junior in a group project that won the state level in 2020, you would have to register as an individual to be eligible to compete or have aged up to compete in the senior-level division.)

Project Garden Timeline:

- April 2 - Deadline to register for the project online
- May 31 - Deadline to plant garden
- July 27 - Deadline to judge gardens
- July 30 - Deadline for record books to be turned in
- mid-August - County winners will be announced
- August 31 - County awards distributed by this date
- September - Regional and State winners will be announced (awards shipped directly to participants)

Resources:

- Clemson Home and Garden Information Center (HGIC)
- SC Produce Availability Calendar
- Clemson Extension