

Credit Notes

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Are you looking to earn high school credit for the hands-on learning you do with 4-H? Look no further than Career and Technology Studies.

Career and Technology Studies (CTS) is a program that enables you to get the most out of your 4-H experience, by assigning credit value to your 4-H project work. CTS proves to complement your 4-H career by offering high school-aged students the opportunity to:

- develop skills that can be applied in daily life, now and in the future;
- refine career-planning skills;
- develop technology-related skills;
- enhance employability skills;
- apply and reinforce learning developed in other subject areas;
- prepare for transition into adult roles in the context of family, community, workplace and/or further education.

The course structure of CTS enables schools to design unique programs, geared to meet your learning needs and to take advantage of community resources. CTS's Agriculture courses have outcomes that are closely aligned to the learnings you acquire through your completed project work. BUT, in order for you to earn CTS credits for your project work, you must first take note of certain procedural considerations in your school.

It is necessary for you to approach school staff *before* beginning a 4-H project for which you expect to earn credits (4-H project work cannot be claimed "retroactively"). School staff and guidance counselors will then understand your intention at the outset, and they will be able to help you align your 4-H project with curricular outcomes, thus ensuring appropriate completion of credits.

The reason that past project work is not accepted for current credit is that schools are not able to assign credit to student work that is not matched to the official program of studies; student work must also reflect an appropriate amount of time and effort on the students' part to earn credits. While 4-H project work aligns closely to CTS programming, it is by no means an exact match and therefore, a few extra "tweaks" may need to be added to a student's project work to ensure a successful match.

Teachers, school counselors or administrators might not always understand the work that you do in 4-H, or even what a project really entails, and this may create concerns on how to go about approving 4-H projects for CTS credit.

And so, with this in mind, when you approach school staff with questions about CTS credit for 4H project work, it is best to begin with your school's CTS or work experience teacher because these are the folks who will likely best understand the complements between CTS programming and 4-H project work. Team up with them to identify an existing CTS course that has outcomes close to the activities that will be part of your planned 4-H project. Then, keep in touch with them throughout your club year so that they can help make sure that you are covering everything that is required for course credits. Another detail to be aware of is that the timelines of your project will meet the deadlines required by the school.

By working together with school staff, you can make sure that the great learning that is part of your 4-H project work also enables you to earn valuable credits toward a high school diploma.

For further information about CTS courses and how you might align your 4-H project with curriculum, you have a number of sources of information:

- Visit Alberta Education's "Career and Technology Studies" web page at: education.alberta.ca/teachers/program/cts/course.aspx. This site separates out the different "strands" of the CTS program, which will help give you a better idea of whether or not your project has potential to fit with the CTS program;
- Contact Brent Andressen, Agricultural Education Program Coordinator with the 4-H and Agriculture Education Branch, via email, brent.andressen@gov.ab.ca, or phone, 780-427-4225;
- Contact the Team Leader, Career and Technology Studies, Alberta Education, by calling 780-427-2984 (toll free within Alberta by dialing 310-0000 followed by the area code and telephone number).

