

Tips for County Fair Judges – Shooting Sports

Wisconsin 4-H recommends that you consider the following information when you judge shooting sports entries at county fairs.

1. Parts or components of firearms and archery equipment
 - a. Exhibits on parts or types of sporting equipment are quite common. However, the sporting arms and ammunition manufacturers provide numerous visual teaching aids on the subject to Shooting Sports leaders. Thus reproduction of a commercial poster is not as challenging as an exhibit on the evolution of firearms, or the disassembly of a personal firearm or compound bow, or something a bit more “creative.”
 - b. For posters containing diagrams of the parts of sporting equipment, proper labeling can be determined from Shooting Sports or industry literature. A local 4-H Shooting Sports leader could be a very useful resource if Shooting Sports is very active in the county you will be judging.
2. Types of firearms
 - a. As with parts and components described above, look for creativity and accuracy. Diagrams of rifles, shotguns, handguns, etc., as well as different action types are provided in the Shooting Sports literature.
 - b. It is very important that the exhibit offer some insight into the different uses of firearm types or the function of different types, components, and actions.
3. Ammunition types and components
 - a. Most fairs specifically exclude *live* ammunition. Spent casings or intact ammunition without primers and/or powder should be displayed. You will also find diagrams of ammunition components.
 - b. An exhibit on reloading ammunition should include a description of the equipment and components used and safety procedures.
4. Homemade shooting or archery equipment: Look for quality materials, safety features, craftsmanship, and utility of homemade, bows, arrows, quivers, gun cases, gunstocks, hunting clothing, etc.
5. Exhibits relating to safety: Look for the standard 10 commandments of firearms safety, including the importance of muzzle control (where the gun is pointed), knowledge of what is behind the intended target, and use of the safety mechanism on the firearm. Key statement to look for is “Treat all firearms as if they were loaded!” Refer to Wisconsin 4-H Shooting Sports literature or Wisconsin DNR Hunter Education materials from a local warden or hunter education instructor.
6. Game animals and birds: Be certain hunting exhibits with waterfowl wings, mounted trophies, or other wildlife artifacts are *legal*.
7. Other miscellaneous Shooting Sports exhibits could include sportsmanship, a hunting trip story, wild game care and preparation, related hobbies such as gun collecting or taxidermy, or displays of targets and results of competition. Look for originality, creativity, visual appeal and accuracy. The free, annual Wisconsin DNR hunting regulations brochure can be a very useful reference.