

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY FOR COOPERATION
BETWEEN FAIRS AND THE MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION SERVICE

Thousands of people benefit from exhibiting their projects at fairs and exhibitions throughout the state. For 4-H youth, this is an excellent opportunity to be recognized for what they have learned in 4-H programs during the year.

Fairs and exhibitions in Michigan are as different and diverse in their purpose and structure as the communities they represent. This diversity creates potential for misunderstanding the relationship of fairs and Michigan State University Extension Services.

To help reduce misunderstandings, Michigan State University Extension has developed the following guidelines to help establish a philosophical base for cooperation:

1. Good communication and clear understanding of each other's purpose usually results in strengthening the effectiveness of the fair and Michigan State University Extension Service in the local community.
2. Exhibiting projects can be an educational experience for youth.
3. Fairs and the Michigan State University Extension Service are separate entities. Partnerships between the two need to be developed locally.
4. Fairs and community activities are not inherently Michigan State University Extension Service/4-H educational programs.
5. The purpose of the Michigan State University Extension Service is to provide objective information and education to the public. In the case of 4-H, this process is carried out through the involvement of volunteers.
6. The role of Extension staff is to be an impartial provider of information and education to help local people make effective decisions. Objectivity is essential for Extension to work, effectively with audiences of diverse backgrounds and opinions.
7. Michigan State University Extension Service Staff in an impartial educational leadership role can facilitate communication between the fair board, volunteers and exhibitors.
8. Involvement of Michigan State University Extension Service staff in an educational leadership role can enhance the educational quality of fair and community activities.
9. Decisions affecting exhibitors and exhibitions should be made and carried out with the involvement of appropriate leadership from the local community.
10. Local lay leader and volunteer ownership of fairs is preferable and advantageous.