4-H Wildlife Food Plot Project
2022-2023 Project Record Book

Name (as enrolled in 4-H Online): _____

County of enrollment: _____

District *(circle one)*:   Delta   Ouachita   Ozark

Level as of 2021 project year (circle one):   Junior   Senior

[Make this report your own!
Add project photo or creative illustration here.]

By signing below, you state that you have completed this record book yourself and to the best of your knowledge, this information is correct.

Participant Signature: _____Date:_____

By signing below, you state that you are familiar with this work and to the best of your knowledge, the youth participant completed this book and the information is correct.

Parent Signature: _____Date:_____

4-H Agent Signature: _____Date:_____

* *

Instructions for County Extension Office: Upload this document with signatures in a PDF format in the Box folder by the March 5 deadline. All signatures are required on cover page and County Agent Assessment must be included. Deadline for coordinator to receive project book and video is March 5. March 1 is listed as the deadline for participants to turn in materials to the county office on the website and in 4-H announcements. County offices may set the county deadline earlier in order to meet state deadline.

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4-H WILDLIFE FOOD PLOT PROJECT
ACTIVITY CHECKLIST
(4 points maximum for all checkmarks)

Place a check mark in each blank when each activity is completed.

_____ Review entire project record book to get a better understanding of all project tasks.

_____ Select 1/8 acre area between 4628 sq ft and 6262 sq ft. (Plots outside this range are disqualified!)

_____ Take soil sample. (Include a copy of the soil test report in your project book.)

_____ Prepare plot. For example, add fertilizer and lime according to soil test report.

_____ Pick up seed packet from County Extension Office.

_____ Prepare plot for planting seeds, such as disking.

_____ Plant seeds.

_____ Place exclosure cage in plot. An example of exclosure cage is two t-posts set three feet apart wrapped with ten feet of 2x4 inch welded wire of five-foot height.

_____ Monitor rainfall with rain gauge, website data, or other means.

_____Observe your plot for wildlife. (Look for tracks or other sign, and/or a trail camera.)

_____ Schedule a site visit with a County Agent or their authorized representative in the county where the food plot is located. Youth must be present! Provide the county agent with the **County Agent Assessment Score Sheet** before you meet them at your plot and bring an extra copy.

_____ Take pictures and include in your project record book:
   o   The plot before, during and after planting
   o   Wildlife visitations or signs they left
   o   Visits with your agent (at the plot site and possibly when reviewing the soil test at the office)
   o   Your working at the plot (action photos)
   o   Exclosure cage and surrounding vegetation, after plot has been grazed
   o   Your educating others about wildlife, establishing food plots, disking to enhance native vegetation, or other practices

_____ Prepare a brief video at your food plot telling your project story (3 minutes maximum).

_____ Turn in project record book and video to county office by March 1st or the county deadline, whichever is earliest.
   o   Bring addressed and stamped thank-you letter(s) to the county office and ask staff to complete that section of the project book.
   o   Include signed **County Agent Assessment Score Sheet** or remind County Agent to provide.

PREPARING YOUR PLOT

Site selection

1-1. What estimated size is your plot? (2 pts) _____ x _____

1-2. How many square feet? (2 pts) (Area = Length x Width) _____
       (NOTE: The project plot should be approximately 1/8 acre in size and about 5,445 sq. ft. <u>Plots less than 4,628 sq. ft. or more than 6,262 sq. ft. are not eligible for competition</u>.)

1-3. Where did you decide to put your food plot? (e.g., at a neighbor's property, on a farm, on a power line right-of-way, in the backyard, etc.) (2 pts)

1-4. Why did you choose this particular site? (5 pts)

1-5. Sketch a map of your food plot, or paste a computer-generated map (e.g., Google Earth). Show the shape of the food plot and its surroundings. Include a rough measurement of the dimensions of the plot. (5 pts)

1-6. What type of habitat is around your food plot? *(Check all that apply.)* (2 pts)
_____ Field
_____ Woods
_____ Tree line
_____ Abandoned home site
_____ Fence row
_____ Stream or creek
_____ Other (please describe):

Soil testing

1-7. On what date did you take a soil sample? (1 pt)

1-8. What did your soil test recommend? (2 pts)

1-9. Who did you consult with about your soil test report? Write their name and affiliation, e.g., County Extension Agent. (5 pts if a county agent; all others 1 to 4 pts.)

1-10. What type of soil amendments (fertilizer, lime) did you use in your plot, if recommended? (2 pts)

1-11. Why did you follow, or not follow, the recommendations from the Soil Test Report? (*If soil recommendations were not followed, be sure to provide justification.*) (10 pts)

1-12. Briefly discuss why you agree or disagree with the following: "good soil = good wildlife." (5 pts)

1-13. Attach your official Soil Test Report on the next page. (5 pts)

[INSERT SOIL TEST REPORT HERE]

PLANTING YOUR PLOT

2-1. On what date did you plant your plot? (2 pts)

2-2. What did you do to prepare your plot? (e.g., disking, herbicides) (5 pts)

2-3. Describe the method used to spread seed. (e.g., broadcast by hand, used a seed spreader) (5 pts)

2-4. After planting the seed, did you lightly disk, use a roller, or other method to improve soil contact with the seed? If yes, explain. (2 pts)

2-5. Explain how weather conditions after you planted your seed helped or harmed germination. (5 pts)

MAINTAINING YOUR PLOT

3-1. During the course of this project, how much estimated total rain/precipitation did your plot get each month? (6 pts)

AUGUST:_____   NOVEMBER:_____
SEPTEMBER:_____   DECEMBER:_____
OCTOBER:_____   JANUARY:_____

3-2. How did you come up with this estimate? (rain gauge, weather data from which website?) (2 pts)

3-3. Describe any pest, weed, or disease problems in your plot. (2 pts)

3-4. How did you manage or prevent problems with pests, weeds, and diseases? (2 pts)

OBSERVING YOUR PLOT

4-1. Which of the plants identified on your seed label grew inside your plot? (5 pts)

4-2. Place a photo or sketch of <u>two plants</u> found <u>inside</u> your food plot in the space below. Write the name of the plant next to the photo or sketch. If you don't know its name, look in a field guide or online at a plant database. You can also ask your local County Extension Agent for assistance. (6 pts)

4-3. Write the definition of a native plant and your source for the definition. (2 pts)

4-4. Using the definition of native, tell whether each plant you identified in Question 4-2 is native or non-native. (4 pts)

4-5. Look for evidence of wildlife using your plot (e.g., tracks, scat, feathers, scrapes, game camera images). Place photos or sketches of <u>two</u> different items of evidence you found in the space below. Write what animal you think it is next to the photo or sketch. (6 pts)

4-6. Based on your observations, how were animals using your plot? (feeding, passing through, bedding, etc.?) (2 pts)

4-7. Describe the exclosure cage you placed inside your plot. (e.g., size, type of wire) (2 pts)

4-8. Describe how plants inside the cage were different, or the same, as those found outside the cage. (2 pts)

FINANCIAL RECORDS

5-1. List expenses for establishing and maintaining your food plot (e.g., registration fee, travel expenses to and from the plot, soil additions, herbicides, pesticides, rain gauge, etc.). You can include donated items and enter a 0 for the cost. Do NOT include corn bait or expenses unrelated to growing a food plot. (10 pts)

Date	Description of Expense	Cost
	TOTAL	

5-2. Did you have any means of making money on this project? (trapping, visitors?)

_____No   _____Yes

If yes, how was this accomplished and how much did you earn? (apply bonus points, up to 10 pts)

PROJECT STORY (PICTURES)

In this section, provide pictures taken during your project showing what you did during the different stages of establishing your food plot from beginning to end. For example, show a picture of you taking a soil sample, planting seeds, a deer track, a time-series from day one of the food plot and at intervals of two or three weeks; and take a picture of the exclosure cage compared to what's outside the cage. Include a photo of your community outreach, for example. <u>IMPORTANT: Include a picture of you and the county agent at your plot site the day that the County Agent Assessment score sheet is completed</u>.

Provide 10 photos with captions. Earn 1 point for each picture that shows a different project activity. Get another point for providing a caption to the picture. (20 points) Ten photos maximum!

6-1.   Insert pictures starting here. Add pages as needed.

[More pictures]

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

7-1. What effort did you make to promote your 4-H Wildlife Food Plot Project? **(35 pts)**

Points will be awarded based on the number of presentations and the audience. For example, presenting to the local Lions Club or Quorum Court will receive more points than presenting to your local 4-H Club. Those presenting to all three will receive the highest number of points.

Examples:
- Gave a presentation at your 4-H club, science class, a local meeting, or Quorum Court.
- Use tracks and feathers as a show and tell project at school.
- Made an exhibit or display which was shown at a local meeting or event.
- Invited guests from school, 4-H club, or hunting club to visit plot and discussed your project.
- Posted pictures of your project on social media.
- Shared project video at 4-H club, school, etc.

Date	Description of Outreach	Number in audience, or number of viewers

7-2. Write a thank you letter to Eagle Seed Company. To receive full credit, the letter must be received by Eagle Seed before March 1st. The address is listed below. (5 pts for copy of letter; 5 pts for mailing the letter; 10 pts maximum)

- Brad and Joyce Doyle; Eagle Seed Company; P.O. Box 308; Weiner, AR 72479

[Place a copy of the letter or note here, 5 pts]

PROJECT EVALUATION

8-1. On a scale of 1 to 10, how successful was your food plot? *(Circle one number below.)* (2 pt)

    Not   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10   Very
Successful   Successful

8-2. Did you read any articles in magazines from the Quality Deer Management Association, also called Rack Pack? (2 pts)

     _____ Yes   _____ No   _____ Didn't receive magazines

8-3. What is something you learned from this project? (2 pts)

8-4. What improvements, if any, would you suggest for making this project better for everyone? (2 pts)

8-5. **JUDGES ONLY**: Rate the neatness, orderliness, and completeness of the project book. (10 pts) _____

VIDEO

Preparing Your Video

Make a brief (3 minutes maximum) video about your 4-H Wildlife Food Plot Project. Using your own words, tell what you did for this project, and don't get off track! Use any device like a cell phone or video camera to record your video. The video doesn't need to be fancy or formal. Just stand in front of your food plot and talk as if you were telling a friend about your project. (Special video graphics, manipulations, or enhancements will not be considered in judging and therefore are unnecessary.)

- Set up your video at your food plot site.
- Start by telling your name and county.
- Provide a view of your food plot.
- Describe your food plot and if you think it was successful or not.
- Tell about your experiences in preparing, planting, maintaining, and observing your food plot (it looks better if this can be done without prompts by an interviewer).
- What wildlife visited your plot?
- What did you learn?
- Make sure your video is under 3 minutes. The judges will not evaluate video recorded after 3 minutes.

Submitting Your Video

- Contact your county office and ask them to review the video. They may offer suggestions to improve your video resulting in more points!
- Include the name of the youth in the video file name. This will help with organizing the videos.
- The county office will upload the video to a Box file unless permission is granted to the youth.
- **County Office Instructions**: If you encounter difficulties, please email Rebecca McPeake (RMcPeake@uada.edu) about the issue.

SCORE SHEET
[To Be Completed by JUDGES]

Scoring Category	Points awarded or deducted
Part 1: Subject matter (45 pts) *Scale for scoring: 0 = very poor, no points; 15 = outstanding, maximum points*	
9-1. Knowledge of food plot concepts and terms	
9-2. Experience in preparing, planting, maintaining and observing food plot	
9-3. Description of what was learned	
Part 2: Presentation (25 pts) *Scale for scoring: 0 = very poor, no points; 10 = outstanding, maximum points*	
9-4. Appearance, poise, and body language	
Scale for scoring: 0 = very poor, no points; 15 = outstanding, maximum points	
9-5. Natural and unscripted voice (without visible notes or prompting)	
Part 3: Video submission & following directions	
9-6. Video longer than 3 minutes (deduct 10 pts and not judge beyond 3 minutes)	
9-7. Penalty for not submitting a video (deduct 75 pts)	
Maximum Total Score: 75 pts **Total points +/-**	

County Agent Assessment Score Sheet
[TO BE COMPLETED BY COUNTY AGENT]

Directions: The participant provides the County Agriculture Agent or representative a copy of this score sheet. The county agent will evaluate the food plot using this scorecard and sign the last page where indicated. The agent can either provide this scorecard to the youth or add it to the back of the project book before it is submitted in the Box folder. (If the food plot is in a different county than the youth's home county, send this scorecard to the youth's home county.) **This document is a mandatory part of the project book as testimony that the food plot exists, and rules were followed.**

Plot Parameters

<u>What the County Agent will need:</u> Bring a tool, or use a computer map, to measure the dimensions of the plot. A measuring wheel or a 100-foot tape measure will work. If you know your "pace," you can also use that as a field measurement. Alternatively, use an app or computer program to estimate area of the plot.

10-1. Shape of Plot *(please check the most applicable):* (2 pts)

_____rectangular or square   _____circular
_____linear   _____irregular shape, please sketch outline:
_____triangular

10-2. Estimated Size of Plot (in feet): (4 pts)

Length: _____
Width: _____
Area (length x width): _____

10-3. Is the plot between 4,628 sq. ft. and 6,262 sq. ft? (4 pts)

_____ Yes   _____No (disqualified from competition)

Distance to Cover

Cover is considered any place an animal can use for living space or provides the ability for an animal to hide. For the purposes of this project, cover can be defined as "non-open areas" lacking livestock including woods and thickets such that a person may have difficulty walking through. Components of cover include all forms of vegetation, forest, and any physical entities such a brush piles, fallen logs, snags.

10-4. Distance from center of food plot to the nearest cover:
_____ Greater than 500 feet (0 pts)
_____ 250 feet to 500 feet (2 pt)
_____ Less than 250 feet (4 pts)

10-5. Percent of food plot within 250 feet of dense woody cover, escape cover or ungrazed woodland:
_____ 25% or less (0 pts)
_____ 26 – 50% (2 pt)
_____ 51 – 75% (4 pts)
_____ Greater than 75% (6 pts)

Plant Health and Vigor

10-6. From your knowledge of local conditions, describe what factors influenced the health and vigor of plants that <u>could not be controlled</u> (e.g., drought, abundant rainfall yielding optimal growing conditions, feral hog damage).

10-7. From your knowledge of local conditions, describe what factors influenced the health and vigor of plants that <u>could have been prevented</u> by using proper practices. (e.g., not following Soil Test Report, locating food plot where there is excessive shade from trees.)

10-8. Considering factors from Questions 10-5 and 10-6 above, rate the health and vigor of the food plot. For example, if drought conditions adversely affected germination even though practices were followed, a score of 10 is possible in this assessment.

   RATING:_____ (*Apply a score from 0 to 10 points*.)

   0 = plants displayed extremely poor health and vigor because of food plot practices, not local conditions.
   5 = plants displayed moderate health and vigor given local conditions and food plot practices.
   10= plants displayed exceptional health and vigor given local conditions.

Discussion of Food Plot with 4-H Participant

Informally discuss the food plot with the participant. Feel free to offer recommendations upon request or as the opportunity presents itself.

10-9. How knowledgeable was the 4-Her about the food plot and the work involved? *(Check one.)*

   _____Exceptionally knowledgeable (10 pts)
   _____Very knowledgeable (8 pts)
   _____Moderately knowledgeable (6 pts)
   _____Somewhat knowledgeable (4 pts)
   _____A little knowledgeable (2 pts)
   _____Not at all knowledgeable (0 pt)

10-10. Based on your discussion with the 4-Her, to what degree were agronomic practices followed for establishing a food plot (even if no seeds germinated)?

   RATING:_____ (*Apply a score from 0 to 15 points.*)

   0 = no agronomic practices were followed.
   1 – 3 = almost no agronomic practices were followed.
   4 - 7 = a few agronomic practices were followed.
   8 – 11 = many agronomic practices were followed.
   12 – 14 = almost all agronomic practices were followed.
   15 = all agronomic practices were followed.

Other Miscellaneous Features (tie-breaker bonus questions)

10-11. If the participant goes above and beyond to ensure the success of their food plot, we want to give credit. Report features or additional practices they conducted.

   _____More than one exclosure cage: how many? _____
   _____Trail (game) camera: how many? _____
   _____Agronomic practices in addition those recommended: please describe below.
   _____Installed nest boxes near food plot
   _____Constructed brush piles near food plot
   _____Other habitat improvements near food plot: please describe

Comments:

Documentation

I visited a wildlife food plot prepared by the 4-H member _____ (NAME)

who was present during the site visit. The food plot was located in _____ County.

This assessment accurately reflects the work of the 4-H member.

County Agent Name (Printed): _____

County Agent Signature: _____

Agent's County: _____   Date of site visit: _____