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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

EDITOR'S NOTE: Members of the media may contact Jeannette Rea-Keywood, State 4-H Agent, Rutgers 4-H Youth Development Program by phone at 609-898-0928, ext. 11 or by email at reakeywood@njaes.rutgers.edu.

NEW 4-H YEAR BEGINS

4-H is gearing up for another year of fun, friends and learning. The new 4-H year starts September 1 and 4-H clubs throughout New Jersey are reorganizing and enrolling new members.

Youth, who are in Kindergarten through Grade 13 (one year out of high school) can join a 4-H club. 4-H participation is open to all youth, regardless of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender or disability.

What makes 4-H unique? 4-H is a real-life experience. Members learn how to do tasks and make decisions similar to those in adult life. These are called life skills. "Using life skills, members learn how to manage their resources, work together in groups, develop critical thinking skills and communicate with others", says Jeannette Rea Keywood, Rutgers Cooperative Extension State 4-H Agent.

Families are an important part of the 4-H program. Parents, brothers, sisters and other members of the family can learn new skills and adopt new ideas by being a part of the 4-H program. 4-H is adaptable to each individual, each home and each community.

4-H clubs also get involved in service learning or community service activities designed to improve the circumstances in their community. Through activities like cleaning up neighborhoods or assisting with local food pantries, 4-H members learn citizenship and leadership skills.

The 4-H Youth Development Program is part of Rutgers Cooperative Extension, a unit of the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station. 4-H educational programs are offered to all youth, grades K-13 (one year out of high school), on an age-appropriate basis, without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, disability, atypical hereditary cellular or blood trait, marital status, domestic partnership status, military service, veteran status, and any other category protected by law.

For more information about the New Jersey 4-H Program call the State 4-H Office at 848-932-3700 or visit the New Jersey 4-H website at <http://nj4h.rutgers.edu/>

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