

# Vision To Action

## A Planning Process for Sawyer County 4-H

Proceeding Report  
November 10, 2006

Facilitator  
Sue Pleskac  
Volunteer Leadership Specialist

### Participants:

Carol Alcoe  
Gerry Berg-Sutton  
Wenonah Johnson  
Lori Laberee  
Julie Lindblad  
Elizabeth Metcalf

Pam Mueller  
Tena Shamro  
Deb Steiner  
Sue Swenson  
Lavinnia Williams

## Agenda for the Day

The following Agenda was reviewed and accepted as the group began. The times here reflect the actual process.

### Vision to Action Sawyer County 4-H Leader's Association November 10, 2006 9:00 a.m. - Noon Ramada Inn in Hayward, WI

- 8:30 a.m.      **Registration**
- 9:00 a.m.      **Welcome and Purpose of the Day:** Tena Shamro
- Introductions
  - Overview of the Process: Sue Pleskac  
Agenda and Ground Rules
- 9:14 a.m.      **Step One: Where are We Now?**
- Sawyer County 4-H Trends: Lori Laberee
  - Strengths & Concerns Activity: Sue Pleskac
- 10:15 a.m.      **Step Two: Where do We Want to Be?**
- Visioning Activity
  - Sorting and Organizing Visions
- 11:10 a.m.      **Step Three: Setting Priorities**
- Vote on top themes
- 11:15 a.m.      **Step Four: Next Steps and Commit to Action**
- 11:30 a.m.      **Step Five: Goals and Action Plan**
- Writing the action plan
- 11:50 a.m.      **Step Six: Reflections**
- Reflections on today's Workshop
- 12:00 Noon      **Adjourn**  
Please complete **Step Six Worksheet** and turn it in before you leave, Thank You

### Ground Rules

The group agreed the following meeting guidelines were acceptable to guide the work of the day

- Be open to new ideas by respecting the opinions of others
- Actively participate in this session and follow-up meetings
- Everyone is equal
- There are not right or wrong answers
- Be concise so everyone has an opportunity to participate
- Only one person talks at a time
- Start on time and end on time
- Have fun!

**STEP ONE:  
Where Are We Now?**

**Part 1:**

**The Local Situation**

Lori Laberee, 4-H Youth Development Agent, shared current 4-H Community Club statistics, Sawyer County demographics, and current issues and trends facing youth in Sawyer County. In synopsis is:

**Current 4-H Community Club Demographics:**

- There has been a steady increase of youth enrolled in 4-H for the last 6 years. There were 60 members in 2000 and 200 in 2005
- The number of volunteer adult leaders has grown from 5 in 2000 and 2001 to 59 in 2005
- Overall the number of non-farm kids is about 7 times of farm kids
- More females are enrolled than males
- About 25% of the membership are involved in school enrichment programs

**Current Sawyer County Demographics:**

- There are about 2,000 youth in Sawyer County according to the last census
- 17% of the youth population are Native American
- 25% of the youth in upper grades are disabled or involved in a special education program

**Current Issues and Trends Facing Youth in Sawyer County:**

- Drugs, especially marijuana use
- Alcohol use
- Obesity
- Gangs
- Poverty
- Kids home alone

**Part 2:**

**Strengths and Concerns (SWOT Analysis)**

To complete an environmental scan of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing Sawyer County 4-H included is two steps. First participants used a tool to personally reflect on ideas and then completed a round robin brainstorming session. The identified list the strengths and concerns affecting Sawyer County 4-H programs are as follows:

**Strengths and Opportunities**

- Good support from Agriculture and Extension Committee
- Willing adults
- Variety of project experience
- Community strong collaborative attitude willingness
- Well funded at this time
- Build character of kids and leaders
- New scholarship fund
- Money to pay leader training and youth attitudes
- History: the state, national, county and club connections as well as personal and county fair
- Fees waived for families
- County fair is thriving
- Parent support
- Media support
- Mentoring
- CPAG groups (Community Partnership Advisory Group)
- Teaching of life skills

### **Strengths and Opportunities Continued**

- Enthusiasm of people in the Extension office and in the Leaders
- The Community: the rivers, lakes, etc.
- If a child is interested, we have the resources
- Summer camp
- Schools are supportive
- Marketing program available—provides resources, opportunities and support
- Trips and leadership development opportunities for youth
- Sawyer County 4-H is a property owner
- Ownership of the leaders for the organization...a driving force
- Sense of belonging
- Backing of the 4-H Foundation
- Support and connection with the federal, state and county government
- Opportunity to communicate connections
- Youth population...potential for increasing membership

### **Weaknesses/Concerns/Threats**

- Lack of staff support due to budgeting. This is affecting the energy of leaders and those here today
- Work ethic of the community
- Not enough knowledge in the population of what 4-H offers
- Perception that 4-H is for farm kids
- Kids have so many choice—sports, etc.
- Need for adults—especially those with young families
- Tend to lose kids to 4-H after elementary school
- Do not have a 5 year plan (need long range planning)
- Level of commitment in kids and adults/lack of life skills
- Families are different
- Need more “boy” stuff
- Recruitment of men to serve as leaders, mentors and support for youth programs
- Excitement to join...Expectation for follow through
- Size and diversity and needs in our county...what is our niche
- Time and setting priorities
- Longevity and sustaining the organization
- Family support for families in poverty
- Perception that 4-H is for a specific set of families exclusively
- Spend money and funds wisely for the future
- Youth reaching out to youth to belong and participate.
- Transportation...both throughout the county and in local communities
- Money to sustain the organization
- Retention and lack of knowledge of elected officials of the value of the 4-H program to the county
- Grant money comes and goes
- Non-contributing 4-H members...some are just not active
- Knowledge of funding
- Growth and balance of youth members with leaders.
- Leaders providing training and receiving support
- Mentoring not happening
- “Clueless” leaders who are unsure of the questions to ask or do not see the big picture of 4-H or how they fit into the total organization
- No exit interview for leaders
- Leaders Association not involved in scheduling
- No alumni association
- Land use: defined as the management of the 4-H owned property.
- Continued management of the 4-H property through conservation as well as development for use by 4-H youth

## **STEP TWO AND THREE:**

### **Where Do We Want Your Sawyer County 4-H Program To Be in 2011? Identification and Setting Priorities**

Participants reviewed the work completed to this point. Each participant identified at least 2 visions for the future of Sawyer County 4-H. They identified the issue and responded what they saw, heard and felt when this vision was reality. The visions were shared, sorted, categorized and prioritized. The following is the list of the identified visions, ranked by those receiving the most votes to the least votes. The ranking allows Sawyer County 4-H to identify the areas they need to be focusing their energies on.

- 1. Planning for Financial Security**
- 2. Developing Active and Committed Leaders**
- 3. Increasing Community Understanding and Support of 4-H**
- 4. Planned use of 4-H owned Land**
- 5. Increasing and retaining 4-H members**
- 6. Increasing numbers of male members and leaders**
- 7. Developing a positive work ethic**

Below are all visions under each of the major prioritized area. The visions are in no specific order.

#### **1. Planning for financial security (17 votes)**

- Solid sustained finances for 4-H. I see record numbers of 4-H folks and abundant variety of opportunities to learn. I hear community voice echoing support for growth and leadership. I feel part of a developing "better world."
- Wise use of our funds. I see our funds supporting scholarship, improving/having a building at the fairgrounds, building an outdoor education facility. I hear kids saying that the 4-H scholarship helped them get an education and families enjoying the entertainment at the fair. I feel the environment is key as our land becomes more fragmented; keeping our 120 acres in tact; education becomes more costly.
- Financial security. I see full support from our Extension office with budgets allowing for adequate support; Leaders Association has funds to support all we want to do without constant fundraising. I hear no one wondering or complaining about money. I feel wonderful
- No long term plan is in place. I see a plan in place and being implemented. I hear leaders and youth being happy and comfortable with the 4-H program. I feel secure in knowing the future of Sawyer County 4-H.
- County Support Staff. I see adequate office space for Lori, Reb, and maybe another. I hear help disseminated at the window; excitement in the voices; ideas and plans for the future that can be accomplished because of the help available. I feel calmer and more secure.
- Financial support. I see federal, state and local government money investing at high levels; youth programs are funded first. I hear stakeholders praising the accomplishments of 4-H and youth and adults. I feel pride and encouraged to continue.

#### **2. Developing active and committed adult leaders (15 votes)**

1. Commitment. I see strong, committed group of adults and leaders working together. I hear the community talking about youth and youth programs (i.e. 4-H). I feel that past planning has paid off 10-fold for youth, families and community.

2. Active leaders. I see Super Saturdays, Many leaders and youth; bustling fairgrounds; variety of projects. I hear families, laughter, Lori organizing and keeping the day on track. I feel a sense of community, club and belonging.
3. Leader Organization scheduling project leaders/mentoring. I see Leaders schedule their meetings and confirm with their Extension office. I hear Leaders positively sharing with each other and mentoring new leaders. I feel good about the number of project leaders and projects occurring.

### **3. Increasing community understanding and support of 4-H ( 11 votes)**

- Entire community understands and support 4-H. I see record number of families/youth in 4-H (75% of the population.) I hear community voices echoing the message of youth, our greatest resource and backing it up with support. I feel safe and secure with less crime, less isolation, strong sustained atmosphere of “community.”
- Commitment from County to support the 4-H program. I see 4-H youth active everywhere and every place in our County that calls for “community involvement.” I hear a sense of strength in the County; 4-H is present and empowering to all families.

### **4. Planned use of 4-H owned land. (8 votes)**

- Use of our property. I see our acres developed into an outdoor workshop. I hear kids enjoying trails, overnights, bonfire stories, birding, tree and plant identification. I feel our environment is at risk—let’s preserve and conserve what we have.
- Our property land use. I see picnic areas, walking trails, horse trails. I hear children laughing, families playing. I feel happy – good about how the Leaders Association has spent funds.

### **5. Increasing and retaining 4-H members. (7 votes)**

- Retention. I see 4-H growing at a steady even pace. I see community acknowledgement of 4-H. I hear 4-H as a “buzz” word. I feel all the hard work and commitment paying off.
- Youth involvement. I see all youth members and leaders coming to a club meeting and not just projects. I hear youth doing demonstrating and being youth leaders. I feel a sense of belonging and caring people.
- All children having an opportunity to participate. I see other youth helping others understanding 4-H. I hear people talking about 4-H and the fair. I feel more community involvement to better children lives.
- 4-H clubs throughout the county, with active leader teams. I see 4-H clubs in all populations areas including Hayward, Stone Lake, Winter, LCO, Exeland—with aspects of 4-H “happening” supported by the community. I feel satisfaction, appreciation, excitement.
- More equality among projects (Junior Livestock). I see every child has the opportunity to raise an animal of their choice. I hear that everyone is involved in their area, not just the select ones. I feel less stress and conflict.
- Perpetuity of 4-H is intact. I see dedicated leaders more in the wings and dedicated youth more in the wings. I hear happy voices of leaders and youth. I feel happy!.
- More empowered families in 4-H. I see increased youth leadership in Sawyer; increased percentage of youth enrolling in higher education. I hear more youth reaching out to other youth; even more solid community support for 4-H. I feel secure knowing the youth have developed life skills/leadership and improve community and support economy.

### **6. Increasing numbers of male members and leaders. (7 votes)**

- More male youth –non-farm---from town involved. I see non-farm-town youth involved in non-animal activities. I hear some youth have followed an education/career path that they learned – experienced in a 4-H project. I feel youth have learned positive ideas they may not have learned elsewhere.
- Getting more male involvement using our natural resources (environmental center, land use as the methods). I see youth creating a woodland train on our land parcel, teaching about nature. I hear youth teaching other youth about environmental issues. I feel excited about this opportunity.

- More male leadership. I see stronger male youth future-oriented strong community leaders. I hear respect, honor, dignity and compassion in community for family life. I feel supported, part of a self-sustaining successful community.
- Male involvement. I see all the youth going on a planned hunting/fishing trip. I hear laughing, sharing, learning. I feel an appreciation for men.
- More male project opportunities. I see more male project leaders, more projects not animal related for boys. I hear the boys are having fun, active, learning. I feel that due to make involvement, more boys' involvement, some boys have been directed in a positive direction.

**7. Developing a positive work ethic. (1 vote)**

- Positive work ethic. I see everyone doing their part until the job is done. Respect for everyone. I hear people offering to help one another to fill gaps or assist. I feel youth are doing a job that they are proud of and want to share.

**STEP FOUR:  
Next Steps and Commit to Action**

The participants discussed the need for commitment by Members, Leaders, and Parents in order for the visions to be reached. Below are the steps that were identified. This is a critical step to make sure the action plans are implemented and the organization moves forward. Actions toward commitment included:

- Presentation and Approval by the Leader's Board.
- Communication to 4-H Club members, volunteer leaders and parents with some acknowledgement to commitment. This is best done by the Leader's Board members doing presentations, writing articles for the 4-H Newsletter and local newspapers, and radio presentations.
- Engagement of 4-H Clubs, Project Committees, etc. in implementing action plans. Again, having Leader's Board members attend club and project committee meetings to explain the visions and the priority work, asking individuals to sign a statement of commitment and identify the area they want to work with.
- Establishing a system to keep priorities and action plans before the organization. Ideas discussed included keeping the Vision to Action Priorities on each Leaders Board/Association meeting to identify progress made and next steps. An article in the 4-H Newsletter will keep the members, leaders and parents up to date.
- Develop a time line for assessing of progress on action plans. This could be done at an upcoming Leaders Board meeting.

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Sawyer County 4-H Prioritized Visions for Action are:

- 1. Planning for Financial Security**
- 2. Developing Active and Committed Leaders**
- 3. Increasing Community Understanding and Support of 4-H**
- 4. Planned use of 4-H owned Land**
- 5. Increasing and retaining 4-H members**
- 6. Increasing numbers of male members and leaders**
- 7. Developing a positive work ethic**

Commitment of those present today:

\_\_\_\_\_ Sign me up! I'm excited to continue to be part of this process. I'd like to attend the next meeting.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Club \_\_\_\_\_

The Vision (or Visions) I want to work on is (are) \_\_\_\_\_

Time of week that's best for me to meet: \_\_\_\_\_

**STEP FIVE:  
2011 Goals & Action Plan**

Once a consensus was reached on the identified and prioritized the issues, participants divided into 3 groups to begin the process of developing preliminary goals and action plans for the top three issues. The next pages outline the preliminary work. This is only a beginning. The draft action plans need to be reviewed, clarified, additional people identified that need to be part of the action plan development and implementation and a process to monitor results needs to be put into place.

**PRIORITIZED ISSUE NUMBER 1:**

**Writing Goal Statements**

Work on the goal statements. Think about specific, important, tangible, concrete results that are measurable. Complete this sentence that describes a goal statement for your work group. Use this worksheet for drafting your ideas, then use markers to write them on flip charts and post them to your group.

**Theme/topic:**     *Planning Financial Security*    

**Goal Statement:**

By 2011, members in the Sawyer County 4-H program will:  
    *Have a sustainable Financial Plan*    

**Names of those at the Table:**

    *Sue Swensen, Carol Alcoe,*    

**Observable Indicators/Outcomes:**

How do you know if you have reached your goal?

Write 2-3 observable indicators for each goal statement that indicates you have achieved your goal.

**Outcome 1:**

If expenditures are adequately funded:

- \*Budget ( including the scholarship)
- \*Building/maintaining expenses

**Outcome 2:**

Need for fundraising is minimal

**Outcome 3:**

## TEAM ACTION PLAN

[Develop an action plan for *each* of your Observable Indicators/Outcomes]

**Goal Statement:**

By 2011, the Financial work team will: (fill in the goal statement)  
have a sustainable financial plan

**Observable Indicator/Outcome:** Expenses are adequately funded

Steps to reach this goal:	By whom? Or what group?	By when?
1. Develop yearly budget	Financial Committee	January
2. Investing funds for yield A. Decision on endowment fund with Wisconsin 4-H Foundation. B. local advisor	WI 4-H Foundation Financial Committee	April 2007 ?
3. Feasibility Study for a building or special project	Financial Committee	Start in 2007

**Persons who helped develop this plan [list names below]**

**STEP FIVE:  
2011 Goals & Action Plan**

**PRIORITIZED ISSUE 2**

**Writing Goal Statements**

Work on the goal statements. Think about specific, important, tangible, concrete results that are measurable. Complete this sentence that describes a goal statement for your work group. Use this worksheet for drafting your ideas, then use markers to write them on flip charts and post them to your group.

**Theme/topic:** Develop Active Committed Leaders.

**Goal Statement:**

By 2011, members in the Sawyer County 4-H program will:

**TO BE COMPLETED**

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**Names of those at the Table:**

Lori, Joey, Liz, Deb

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**Observable Indicators/Outcomes:**

How do you know if you have reached your goal?

Write 2-3 observable indicators for each goal statement that indicates you have achieved your goal.

**Outcome 1:**

Create a leader directory

**Outcome 2:**

Develop a mentoring program through projects

**Outcome 3:**

Conduct a bi-annual leader networking session

**TEAM ACTION PLAN (1 of 3)**

[Develop an action plan for *each* of your Observable Indicators/Outcomes]

**Goal Statement:**

By 2011, the *\_Developing Active Committed Leader\_* work team will: (fill in the goal statement)  
*Develop Active Committed Leaders.*

**Observable Indicator/Outcome:**

Create a leader directory

Steps to reach this goal:	By whom? Or what group?	By when?

Persons who helped develop this plan [list names below]

**STEP FIVE:  
2011 Goals & Action Plan**

**PRIORITIZED ISSUE 3**

**Writing Goal Statements**

Work on the goal statements. Think about specific, important, tangible, concrete results that are measurable. Complete this sentence that describes a goal statement for your work group. Use this worksheet for drafting your ideas, then use markers to write them on flip charts and post them to your group.

**Theme/topic:** Increasing Community Understanding and Support of 4-H

**Goal Statement:**

By 2011, members in the Sawyer County 4-H program will:

*Have sustainable active community support*

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**Names of those at the Table:**

*Gerry Berg Sutton, Tena Shamro, Pam Mueller*

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**Observable Indicators/Outcomes:**

How do you know if you have reached your goal?

Write 2-3 observable indicators for each goal statement that indicates you have achieved your goal.

**Outcome 1:**

Increased youth and adult involvement

**Outcome 2:**

More involvement in Southern Sawyer County

**Outcome 3:**

4-H is a "Buzz Word"

**TEAM ACTION PLAN (1 or 3)**

[Develop an action plan for *each* of your Observable Indicators/Outcomes]

**Goal Statement:**

By 2011, the Community Support work team will: (fill in the goal statement)

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**Observable Indicator/Outcome:**

Increased youth and adult involvement

**Steps to reach this goal:**

- 1. Increase awareness
  - media
  - civic groups
  - work groups (ie youth advisory)

**By whom? Or what group?**

**By when?**

**Persons who helped develop this plan [list names below]**

**STEP FIVE:  
2011 Goals & Action Plan**

**Worksheet**

**Writing Goal Statements**

Work on the goal statements. Think about specific, important, tangible, concrete results that are measurable. Complete this sentence that describes a goal statement for your work group. Use this worksheet for drafting your ideas, then use markers to write them on flip charts and post them to your group.

**Theme/topic:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Goal Statement:**

By 2011, members in the Sawyer County 4-H program will:

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**Names of those at the Table:**

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**Observable Indicators/Outcomes:**

How do you know if you have reached your goal?

Write 2-3 observable indicators for each goal statement that indicates you have achieved your goal.

**Outcome 1:**

**Outcome 2:**

**Outcome 3:**

## TEAM ACTION PLAN

[Develop an action plan for *each* of your Observable Indicators/Outcomes]

**Goal Statement:**

By 2011, the \_\_\_\_\_ work team will: (fill in the goal statement)

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**Observable Indicator/Outcome:**

**Steps to reach this goal:**

**By whom? Or  
what group?**

**By when?**

**Persons who helped develop this plan [list names below]**

## STEP SIX: NEXT STEPS AND REFLECTIONS

The participants identified the following next steps:

### 1. Proceedings Report

- Sue will have the draft to Tena and Lori by November 16, 2006
- Edits and comments are due back to Sue by November 23, 2006
- Final document ready for distribution and review by the Leaders Board and all at this table by November 30, 2006. Document to be mailed from UW-Extension Sawyer County Office

### 2. December Leaders Board Meeting

- Review the plan
- Adopt the plan
- Finalize communication and commitment process for members, leaders, parents, clubs and project commitment
- Review draft action plans...are they written to the outcomes identified, should other outcomes be added, who else should be involved, planning how and who should ask people. Please note, the draft plans in this document are incomplete. Each needs to be reviewed and clarified. Make sure each Goal has specific individual outcomes. Outcomes are observable and specific indicators that can be measured to insure you are reaching the prioritized goals. Then each outcome needs to have an action plan. This is where you outline each specific step that must be done, who needs to do it and the deadline. Be very specific, so that anyone reading this page knows exactly what is going on, by whom and when. It makes recruitment of volunteers and measurement of success much easier. Each of the provided draft goal and action plans need revising.

### 3. January Board Meeting

- Assess progress on communication and action plans
- Establish a time table for reporting and monitoring
- How have we engaged youth into the process