

August 2009



Lawn Tractors

4-H Science & Technology
Project for All Ages Levels in 4-H

The 4-H Lawn Tractor Project is part of the Science and Technology Program. The contest gives you a chance to show what you know about the care and operation of compact or garden tractors and riding mowers, lawn care, business management and safety.

What You Will Learn

- **The Lawn Tractor Project** will help you learn safety on and around lawn tractors.
- **The Lawn Tractor Project** will help you develop skills in mowing different size and contours of lawns.
- **The Lawn Tractor Project** will help you learn to identify lawn care problems and how to handle those problems.
- **The Lawn Tractor Project** will help you develop business skills so that you can set-up a service to help others.

Who Can Participate

Any Alabama young person may participate in any 4-H competitive event. However, you must be a member of an Alabama 4-H Club. It's easy and quick to join – just call or e-mail your county Alabama Cooperative Extension System Office for information (for contact information, go to www.aces.edu/counties).

If you and your friends are interested, you might wish to start a 4-H Project Club. It could focus on Arts and Design. Or it might be about Sewing, Making and Selling Crafts, or Computer-Aided Design. For information, see **Starting a 4-H Club** (www.Alabama4H.com).

The Lawn Tractor Project is a 4-H Event. Your local Extension Office has information on local and regional/area **Lawn Tractor** events, as well as other 4-H activities.

Levels of Competition

Look at **General Event Policy** for eligibility.

http://www.aces.edu/fourh/docs/programs/General_Contest_Policy.pdf

Check the **Alabama 4-H Age and Eligibility Chart** to determine the divisions of 4-H Membership.

http://www.aces.edu/fourh/docs/programs/Eligibility_Chart.pdf

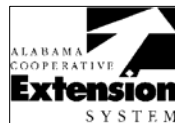
The Rules for Lawn Tractor

- Compete by yourself. This is not a team event.
- Written Examination (20 minutes) The written exam will consist of at least 20 questions. The exam is made up of questions about tractor operation, maintenance, safety, and lawn management.
- Identification of Lawn Mower Parts (15 minutes) At least 10, and no more than 25, numbered items will be identified by each contestant. The items will include compact tractor parts and lawn care equipment.
- Identification of Grasses and Weeds (15 minutes) Identify at least 5 common Alabama grasses and weeds.
- Safety and Operation (driving skills) The lawn tractor driving portion gives 4-H members an opportunity demonstrate their skills in the operation of lawn and garden tractors. Safety work habits and safe equipment operation are stressed throughout the event. There is a time limit of 8 minutes to complete the course.

Disqualification: Unsafe habits and poor operation of the machine will result in disqualification.

Identification of Entry

Name(s), county and level of participation should be displayed with each entry. 4-H Project Exhibit cards are available, but not required



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Parents' and Volunteers' Guide

Like all 4-H projects, this activity is just for young people. . The role of adult helpers is to support and encourage youth in their efforts, to ask and answer questions about the project, and to help youth learn specific techniques that they might use in their project.

The Day of the Big Event

Each county or region will schedule its own **Lawn Tractor** competition. It may be part of a County Round-Up or Regional/Area Congress.

Designated judges will preside over the event and their decision will be final. Contestants must abide by the rules and requirements. Any judge may disqualify a contestant because of unsafe practices or for acts unbecoming a 4-H member.

A contestant will accumulate penalty points by adding the points missed in each part of the contest.

Each participant will be given a few minutes to study and get acquainted with the machine and its controls. The tractor may be operated in the immediate area of the contest but not through the course. A lawn tractor will be provided at the contest. Safety is scored throughout the driving part.

A few steps to remember:

- The first item on the score sheet is a pre-start check. You'll complete this according to the contest facilitator's instructions before the contest begins. You will then mount the tractor and let the judge know you're ready to begin driving.
- Using what you have learned from your review of the course diagram and the contest facilitator's instructions, enter the course. Remember to be safe. One of the judges will put an obstacle in front of the machine to test your alertness and reaction to unsafe conditions. This will be done at random points in the course and will be done only one time for each participant.

- Continue through the course to the finish point which represents a shed for the machine. You will back the machine into this location, turn it off and dismount. The judge may ask you to move the lawn tractor back to the starting line for the next participant.

Advancing Through Competition

Congratulations! The judges recognize that you have come up with a really good project and made great choices. Your hard work and your skill created something wonderful.

4-H Regional/Area Awards will be determined by the planning committee for that event. Notice will be sent to each county involved.

State Competition and Awards

Each county may register one Senior Level I and one Senior Level II individual in each event that is offered.

On the state level, ribbons will be awarded to 50% of the participants in a contest using ordinal rankings up to a tenth place ranking. Example: If there are 10 participants, first place will receive the Alabama State Trophy and a first place ribbon; placing ribbons will be awarded for the next four ranked participants for placing of second through fifth. The other five participants will receive honorable mention ribbons.

Career Connections

Skills that are developed through this project have direct connections to a number of exciting and rewarding careers. These include lawn care service and maintenance, landscape designs, lawn mower repair and other exciting careers.

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Lawn Tractor Operation Score Sheet

Name of Contestant: _____

Date: _____ County: _____ Region: _____ State: _____

Level: ___ **Junior** (Age 9-11) ___ **Intermediate** (Age 12-13) ___ **Senior I** (Age 14-15) ___ **Senior II** (Age 16-18)

Driving: (Penalty Points)

Type of Penalty	Times of Penalty	Penalties
Each stop or interruption in the continuous movement of the machine, where not required by the course	X 10	
Each reverse change of direction other than necessary.	X 10	
Each occurrence where any part of the machine extends over the boundaries of the course.	X 10	
Each occurrence of hitting a marker.	X 20	
Each occurrence of knocking a marker over.	X 40	
Riding the clutch: Continuously	X 100	
Riding the clutch: Occasionally	X 10	
Each grating of gears.	X 10	
Each engine stalled or raced	X 10	
Each failure to follow directions	X 5	
Each marker passed when operating outside of the two inches allowed mowing around the curb.	X 10	

Measurements: (Penalty Points)

Type of Penalty	Inches of Penalty	Penalties
Inches (to the nearest inch) from the stop-stake over 1-inch (measured from the most forward part of the tractor)	X 2	
Inches (to the nearest 1/2 inch) the tractor is off center in the shed.	X 2	
Time in excess of 8 minutes. 100 points.		

Total Penalty Points _____

Disqualification: Check as appropriate

- Unsafe practices operating the tractor
- Not following the instructions given by the contest facilitator or judge

