

TEXAS 4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

DATE: May 19, 2021
TO: County Extension Agents
FROM: Jheri-Lynn McSwain, Ph.D.
4-H Extension Program Specialist – District 5
SUBJECT: 2021 4-H Virtual Catfish Skill-a-thon hosted by District 5

District 5 is pleased to announce a 4-H Virtual Catfish Skill-a-thon to be hosted statewide and within districts desiring to participate. This memo is an internal document for agents and county staff. Please distribute the Catfish Rules of Play to your 4-H families. A marketing flyer is attached for your use. **As this is a virtual skill-a-thon with fishing pictures to be posted on Facebook, be sure to add this flyer to your social media outlets and county websites.**

General Information

What is a Skill-a-thon?

The Virtual Catfish Skill-a-thon is comprised of two parts:

1. **Learn and Earn Educational Opportunities** – to provide information in which youth participants and adults can gain knowledge on fishing tips and techniques, healthy cooking with fish, safety situations, laws and regulations, and trivia fun. These opportunities will be posted on the 2021 4-H Fishing Facebook page. No fee to participate.
2. **Fishing and Wishing to Win Tournament** – scheduled dates for youth to fish at their location with the chance of winning weekly and overall tournament awards and prizes based upon fish length. See entry fees below for participation.

Participation Requirements

- Be enrolled in 4-H as a youth member or Clover Kid for the 2020-2021 year.
- Join the 2021 4-H Fishing Facebook page by clicking [here](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1202432833284039/) or going to <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1202432833284039/>
 - Youth may use an adult's Facebook account to join and participate.

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Entry Limitations

- There are no limits on the number of individuals or teams entered by county.
- Note that timely COUNTY approval is imperative to allow youth participation in 4-H events. The purpose of a county level approval is for agents to review the entry and ensure the youth member is eligible to participate in a particular event, via contest rules, age division, or other restrictions.

Awards and Prizes

- Awards for State entries will be mailed to your county Extension office after completion of skill-a-thon.
- Awards for District events will be provided by your District office.
- All awards and prizes to be determined by the 4-H Fishing committee. (**Awards are determined by the number of individuals/teams registered for this tournament.**)
- Prizes will also be awarded for each date of fishing.
- Clover Kids participate for bragging rights and earning ribbons.
- Entry via 4-H Online gives permission to the District 5 office to use the participant's name and photograph as needed for marketing and promotion purposes.

Part I: Learn and Earn Information

Educational Opportunities

- Posted on the following days for three weeks on the 2021 4-H Fishing Facebook page:
 - Monday: Fishing Techniques and Tips
 - Tuesday: Cooking with Catfish: Healthy Food Demo and Recipe
 - Wednesday: A Visit with the Game Warden
 - Thursday: Fishing Safety
 - Friday: Fun Facts, Trivia and 10 for 10 Catfish Game



- Participate to LEARN new knowledge and EARN prizes! Weekly trivia contests posted on Fridays offer anglers the opportunity to win additional prizes based upon participation in the Monday-Thursday education components.

Part II: Fishing Tournament Information

Registration

- Registration will open on 4-H Online at 8:00 a.m. on **May 20, 2021**. Go to 4-H Online at <https://texas.4honline.com> and select **2021 4-H Virtual Fishing - Catfish hosted by D5** from the event list and submit your entry fee(s).

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- After each tournament event date closes, changes to registration as an individual to team or big fish cannot be modified. Ensure you are registered in each event **BEFORE** the tournament date. **There are NO refunds from the state office for incorrectly entering an event.**
- Entry to 4-H Online is due by **June 9, 2021** to participate in the June 12-13th tournament. Only those registered on 4-H Online by the deadline will be eligible to participate.
- 4-H Online will reopen again on June 14th for registration for the June 19-20th tournament (you only need to register if you did not register for the first tournament) and close at 11:59 pm on June 18th.
- 4-H Online will reopen again on June 21st for registration for the June 26-27th tournament (you only need to register if you did not register for the first or second tournament) and close at 11:59 pm on June 25th.

Entry Fees

- 4-H youth members, including Clover Kids, may enter the statewide, district and Big Catfish tournaments.
 - Clover Kids participate for bragging rights and earning ribbons. There is no fee for their participation, however, they must be registered on 4-H Online.
 - Participation at the state level is **REQUIRED** (individual and/or team).
 - District and Big Catfish entries are optional.
- Competing teams are comprised of 2 to 4 members of any 4-H age division (Junior, Intermediate or Senior – see below for Clover Kid team participation).
 - Mixed 4-H age-division teams are permitted.
 - Teams with members from other counties are also permitted.
 - Clover Kids may participate on a team; however, they are eligible for placing only within this designate group and will be provided ribbons for their participation.
- Three separate fishing dates are provided (June 12-13, 19-20, and 26-27).
 - Pay one time entry fee and then compete by fishing one, two or all three dates.
 - Prizes will be awarded for each fishing date and overall tournament.

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REQUIRED ENTRY

State Events - \$25 per individual per category (you must enter one of these categories)

Categories:

- **State individual** – Exhibit your skills against all entered 4-H'ers across the state.
- **State team** – Exhibit your skills as a 2-4 member team against all entered 4-H'ers across the state. Each team member must register and submit their participation fee on 4-H Online to compete as a team.

OPTIONAL ENTRY

District Events - \$15 per individual per category

Categories:

- **District individual** – Exhibit your skills against other registered district participants in YOUR district for separate awards and prizes.

- **District team** – Exhibit your skills as a 2-4 member team against other registered district participants in YOUR district for separate awards and prizes. Each team member must register and submit their participation fee on 4-H Online to compete as a team.

OPTIONAL ENTRY

Big Catfish Events - \$10 per individual per category

Categories:

- **State Big Catfish individual** – Exhibit your skills against all entered 4-H'ers across the state for the biggest Catfish.
- **State Big Catfish team** – Exhibit your skills as a 2-4 member team against all entered 4-H'ers across the state for the biggest Catfish. Each team member must register and submit their participation fee on 4-H Online to compete as a team.
- **District Big Catfish individual** – Exhibit your skills against all entered district participants in YOUR district for the biggest Catfish.
- **District Big Catfish team** - Exhibit your skills as a 2-4 member team against other registered district participants in YOUR district for the biggest Catfish. Each team member must register and submit their participation fee on 4-H Online to compete as a team.

Example Registration Fees

- Registered in state event (required) as an individual - \$25
- Registered in optional district event as an individual - \$15
- Registered in option big Catfish event as an individual - \$10
- **TOTAL Participation Fees \$50**

Fishing Schedule

- **Dates:** June 12-13, 19-20 and 26-27 (you may participate in one, two or all three fishing dates).
- **Times:** 8:00 am on Saturday to 3:00 pm on Sunday - postings before or after contest times will mean a disqualified post.

Participation Species for ALL Events

Any Catfish species permitted by law.

- You may enter all of one variety or a combination of varieties for judging.
- **An individual or team may post a maximum of 5 catfish caught by registered youth, only one can be a flathead, but a flathead isn't required just a limit of one per individual or team per week.**
- See link below to learn how to identify specific fish species in Texas.
<https://tpwd.texas.gov/landwater/water/aquaticspecies/inland.phtml>

Supplies Needed for Participation

- Rod and reel
- Bait or lure
- Phone or tablet with internet
- Official Check-it-Stik[®] (can be purchased at Academy stores or via online shopping venues)
- **First 50 registered 4-H members by May 28th will receive a FREE official Check-it-Stik[®] (you are eligible if you did not receive one during 2021 Bass or Crappie program). Check-it-Stiks will be mailed to your District office for distribution via your local County Extension office.**

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Location

- Fish anywhere permitted by law (freshwater, ponds, stock tanks, rivers, lakes, etc.).
- Fishing from a pier, edge of pond/lake/river, or boat is allowed for this event as long as the location is permitted by law.

Safety and State Fishing Regulations

- Be sure to follow all Texas regulations regarding fishing licenses, bag limits, length requirements and other rules <https://tpwd.texas.gov/regulations/outdoor-annual/fishing/>
- Each 4-H family entered is responsible for the safety of youth anglers during the tournaments.

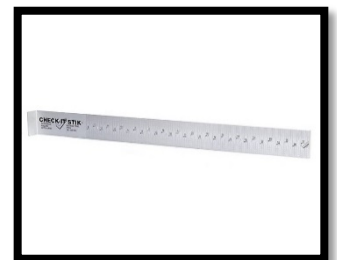
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Judging Criteria for All Events - IMPORTANT

1. Posting Limits: Catch up to a daily bag limit of catfish during event hours. No more than 5 catfish should be posted.

- If more are posted than permitted, only the first 5 posts will count.
 - a. Individual participant: post up to 5 fish
 - b. Team participant: post up to 5 fish as a team



Check-It-Stik[®]

2. **Photograph of fish WITH tournament card:** (see last page for card) must be posted to the 2021 4-H Fishing Facebook page between 8:00 am on Saturday and 3:00 pm on Sunday. You must receive approval to join this group before the tournament begins. Photographs posted before or after tournament times will be non-scoring. **Note: This may mean that you change locations before time is up to ensure you have internet service.**
- Fish must be photographed laying on an Official **Check-It-Stik®** brand measuring board. Check-It-Stiks® can be purchased at Academy, on-line and at other fishing gear stores (be sure tournament card is also in the picture; fish pictures without cards will not count).
 - Photograph must be able to be clearly seen and measurement on board must also be legible.
 - You may hold your fish on the board, just be sure to NOT cover the mouth and tail with anything that blocks these views.
 - Fish must be laying with its left side up and in full view of photograph. Fish photographed on right side will be non-scoring.**
 - It should be observable from the photograph that the fish was caught during tournament timeframe (examples: bright scale color, noncloudy eye color, healthy/fresh appearance).
 - Pinch the tail fins together to get accurate length in photograph.
 - Mouth of fish **must** be closed and touching the board. If measurement cannot be read from photograph, the entry will be disqualified. See example below:

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- You will be given a unique six letter/digit code for each day an event is held to display on an index/note card, or you may use the preprinted tournament card below in your fish photograph.
- The code will be revealed on the 2021 4-H Fishing Facebook page one hour before the tournament begins.
- Tournament card must have District, County, youth name(s) (if a team), fish number, and six-digit code. Cards that cannot be read will be disqualified. Suggestion: Place each card in a Ziplock bag so it remains dry and ink does not run.
- For teams, place the angler who caught the fish on the top line.** Team posts can count for your individual entry and team entry if you entered as an individual and on a team.

Fish measuring longer than Check-it-Stik

- Fish longer than the length of a Check-it-Stik should be measured on a 6-foot long 2x4 or 2x6 piece of wood. Lay the fish, left side up, on the board and mark its length with a pen/pencil (see example below). Then measure from the beginning of the board to the mark using a tape measure or a yard stick in addition to a completed note card or the optional form below.
- Adding a close-up photo of the tail and measurement if longer than the check-it-stik is recommended. If a tail picture with ending measurement is posted too, card needs to be in the picture.

**Optional State Big Catfish Event Judging Criteria**

- Youth entered in the optional State Big Catfish contest will compete against other 4-H anglers across the state. Must be entered on 4-H Online before start of the tournament.
- Awards/prizes will be given to the top big Catfish from entire tournament for individual and team.

2021 Catfish Tournament Card

Please print – must be legible!

District _____ County _____

Fish Number (1 –5) _____

6-digit code: _____

(posted 1 hour before tournament on 2021 4-H Fishing Facebook group page)

Angler Name 1: _____

(Team member that caught this fish if registered on a team)

(Complete below if registered as a team)

Angler Name 2: _____

Angler Name 3: _____

Angler Name 4: _____