

# 2014 Tennessee 4-H Program Protective Headgear Policy Information

Effective January 1, 2014, all riders at 4-H events and activities will be required to wear properly fitted ASTM/SEI-certified helmets with chin straps properly fastened while mounted or while in a vehicle being pulled by equine.

## 1. Is protective headgear required to be worn at all 4-H sponsored mounted or driving activities?

Yes. Properly fitted ASTM/SEI approved protective headgear intended for equestrian use is required to be worn by all participants, including adults, while riding or driving an equine vehicle at any Tennessee 4-H sponsored activity.

## 2. Many open horse shows that are NOT sponsored by 4-H have classes for 4-H members only. Are helmets required to be worn by 4-H members if they participate in such classes?

The Tennessee 4-H Protective Headgear Rule is in effect for 4-H sponsored shows and activities only.

## 3. Does protective headgear have to be worn in showmanship classes?

No, with the exception of hunter classes which require ASTM/SEI approved headgear as part of that division's attire (hunt caps are not permitted). Properly fitted ASTM/SEI approved protective headgear intended for equestrian use is required when a youth or adult is riding or driving an equine vehicle during any 4-H activity, not when exhibiting an equine in-hand (exception: Hunter In-Hand and Hunter Showmanship). However, the use of protective headgear intended for equestrian use is encouraged in all classes, and any exhibitor may wear protective headgear in any class without judging discrimination.

## 4. What style protective headgear should be used for western classes?

Any style of ASTM/SEI approved protective headgear intended for equestrian use is allowed in western classes, including western, english, or schooling helmets. It is the responsibility of the rider, or the parent or guardian of the youth participant, to make sure that the headgear worn complies with appropriate safety standards for protective headgear intended for equestrian use, is in good condition, and is properly fitted with the chin harness fastened at all times while riding or driving.

## 5. Are helmets required when riding outside the show ring?

All participants, including adults, in any 4-H equestrian activity, are required to wear properly fitted ASTM/SEI helmet intended for equestrian use with the chin harness securely fastened at all times while riding or driving an equine anywhere on the competition grounds. Any exhibitor found in violation of this rule at any time will be prohibited from participating until proper safety headgear is in place.

## 6. Are bicycle or other helmets with a harness allowed?

No, bicycle helmets or hunt caps with a single chin strap are NOT acceptable. Only ASTM/SEI approved protective headgear intended for equestrian use is allowed.

## 7. May protective headgear be modified in any manner?

No, other than to adjust the fit with pads supplied by the manufacturer.

## 8. May helmet covers be used?

Covers may be used provided they can be removed for inspection of the helmet if necessary.

## 9. How should show committees or officials enforce the rule?

The Tennessee 4-H protective headgear policy should be included in the show/event program or in the event rules. The show committee or officials are not required to inspect protective headgear *unless* the appropriateness of such headgear is questioned. In such cases, the show committee or officials have the authority to inspect the headgear and enforce the rule as stated in the current Tennessee 4-H Horse Championships Handbook. Any exhibitor found to be in violation of the rule will be prohibited from further participation until appropriate headgear is properly in place.

## 10. How should a show committee or official respond if it is questioned that an exhibitor is riding with headgear that is not in compliance with current rules (i.e. currently riding in a class or riding on the show grounds)?

If it is brought to the show committee's or official's attention that a youth's headgear is questionable, the show committee must immediately investigate and determine the accuracy of the report. If the headgear is not in compliance with the protective headgear rule, the show committee or official must prohibit the exhibitor from further riding/driving until properly fitted ASTM/SEI approved headgear is in place. The show committee or officials may investigate the appropriateness of headgear without a formal protest.

## 11. Should counties or 4-H clubs buy helmets for use by 4-H members at 4-H sponsored events?

No. Protective headgear should only be purchased or owned by the 4-H member or their parent(s) or guardian(s). It is the responsibility of the rider, or the parent or guardian of the youth participant, to make sure that the headgear worn complies with appropriate safety standards for protective headgear intended for equestrian use, and is properly fitted and in good condition.

## For more information on ASTM/SEI approved headgear and Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI):

American Medical Equestrian Association

[www.emsaonline.net/Equestrian\\_Safety\\_Program.html](http://www.emsaonline.net/Equestrian_Safety_Program.html)

Identification of ASTM/SEI approved headgear and proper headgear fit:

US Equestrian Federation website at: [www.usef.org](http://www.usef.org) – Go to Rules or Safety

Suppliers of ASTM/SEI approved headgear

[www.seinet.org](http://www.seinet.org)

Tennessee Disability Coalition, Project BRAIN Resources on Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI)

[http://www.tndisability.org/coalition\\_programs/project\\_brain](http://www.tndisability.org/coalition_programs/project_brain)

Helmet replacement program for damaged helmets

[www.horsehelmets.com](http://www.horsehelmets.com)

University of Connecticut Helmet Safety Program

<http://animalscience.uconn.edu/equine/helmetSafety/>

Equestrian Safety: A Guide to Promotion of Helmet Use for Riding Clubs and Communities

[http://content.wsulibs.wsu.edu/utills/getfile/collection/cahnrs-arch/id/395/filename/72147182432004\\_em4849.pdf](http://content.wsulibs.wsu.edu/utills/getfile/collection/cahnrs-arch/id/395/filename/72147182432004_em4849.pdf)

Choose a Riding Helmet That's Right for You

[http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/\\$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/aet13711/\\$file/Choose\\_a\\_helmet.pdf?OpenElement](http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/aet13711/$file/Choose_a_helmet.pdf?OpenElement)

**\*This information was adapted from the Pennsylvania 4-H Horse Program Protective Headgear Policy – Questions and Answers and Ohio 4-H Horse Program Protective Headgear Policy Frequently Asked Questions**