



# Featured 4-H Alumnus



## Allan Preston

**Hometown:** Hamiota, MB

**4-H Club:** McConnell 4-H Beef Club

**Years in 4-H:** 14 as a leader & 2 as a volunteer

**Projects:** Market Steer, Beef Heifer & Continuation Heifer

**Favourite Leader:** Jack and Margaret Boyd - very long and storied careers as leaders, their dedication to 4-H is unparalleled in the Province.



Science &  
Technology

**Career History:** I volunteered in 1985 and then became a leader as my three children entered the program. I stayed engaged until my youngest daughter completed her 4-H career in 2000. I also introduced the Beef Heifer and Continuation Heifer projects to the long-standing Market Steer project that had been the cornerstone of the McConnell 4-H Beef Club.

**Current Employer/Position:** I am a semi-retired farmer, retired veterinarian and a management consultant on agricultural, agri-food, animal health and welfare projects.

**My 4-H Story:** Our family has been engaged in the purebred cattle breeding business for forty years, with all three of our children integrally involved in exhibiting these cattle. They were also involved for many years in the junior activities through the Young Canadian Simmental Association. The extension to the 4-H program was a natural fit and the introduction of the heifer projects made it easier for my daughters, in particular, to ease into the program without the unsettling aspects of having to send the market steer off at the end of the year. Apart from a room full of trophies and banners collected over the years, the primary benefits for my children have been the public speaking training, the organizational aspects including properly running a meeting, the timely completion of record books and scrapbooks and the overall exposure to the raising and production of beef cattle. I was especially proud as a parent to see each of my children deliver eloquent valedictory addresses at their respective high school graduations. From a personal leader's perspective, a highlight for me was attending the National 4-H Leaders Conference in Toronto in 1998.

**Single Greatest Attribute:** A question more keyed to the member rather than the leader. However, that said, I think the greatest attribute the program has had for many of my club members, is the slow, steady development of self-confidence in each member as they became ever-more comfortable participating in meetings, 4-H activities and many other school and community activities. Watching the so-shy six-year-old evolve into a quietly confident, mature eighteen-year-old, never grew old during my years in the program. I'm not sure that 4-H had a significant bearing on my career, but it has had a tremendous bearing on those members who graduated from the program and went on to successful careers, many in the agricultural world.

**Learn To Do By Doing**