



Featured 4-H Alumnus



Judy Hodge

Hometown: MacGregor, MB

4-H Club: MacGregor Mix n' Match 4-H Club

Years in 4-H: 11 as a member

Projects: Beef (11 years), sewing (6 years), Japan at a Glance (1 year), Junior Leadership (1 year)

Favourite Leader: Marion Butterfield because she was my leader for my sewing projects and I loved going there after school to work on my projects. Marion was very patient and encouraging if I got frustrated. I loved being creative with my projects, such

as bedazzling items or making matching accessories with leftover fabric. It was very satisfying at the end of each project to have something tangible, or to wear, that I had made. Although, in junior high I was too “cool” to wear my high-waisted skinny leg jeans very often, as the fashion of the time was low-rise bell-bottom jeans, haha!

Career History: Judy Hodge, BSc DVM MPH received her Bachelor of Science from Brandon University and her veterinary degree from The Western College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan. She has worked with both livestock and companion animals in Canada, where she worked for 2 years as a mixed-animal veterinarian in Dauphin, MB, as well as in India with Global Vets and in Uganda with Veterinarians without Borders. She completed her Masters of Public Health at New York University (NYU), where she worked in emerging zoonotic disease research both locally (conducting tick surveillance in NYC parks) and globally (sampling vampire bats for zoonotic pathogens in the Brazilian Amazon as part of the PREDICT program with EcoHealth Alliance). Understanding the importance of “One Health” and the social determinants of health, Judy has also worked on several interdisciplinary projects conducting program evaluations to determine community impact, for example with Naturopathic Medicine for Global Health on a community health worker project in Guatemala, Engineers Without Borders NYC on a water improvement project in Usalama, Kenya, and NYU Dental Outreach team on an oral health care program in Grenada. Judy is especially interested in connecting her training in infectious diseases with mental health, the social determinants of health, and social justice. Together with a medical anthropologist colleague who specializes in Indigenous Health, she established the consulting group Katrime Integrated Health (www.katrime.com), which conducts program evaluations and literature reviews, among other services, for clients such as the National Collaborating Centre for Infectious Diseases in Canada on topics such as the 2009 pandemic H1N1 influenza outbreak and antimicrobial resistance. After moving back to Canada in 2013, Judy worked as a foreign animal disease veterinarian with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and participated in the 2014 outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in British Columbia, where she conducted a study to talk with commercial poultry producers about their knowledge and experiences of HPAI outbreaks. Judy is currently working with Manitoba Agriculture as the One Health Operations veterinarian and is involved in managing zoonotic disease control programs, such as rabies. Having observed first-hand the close interactions between people, their livestock and wildlife, Judy is committed to applied research and community-driven change to create healthier people, animals and environments.



Science &
Technology

Current Employer/Position: Manitoba Agriculture, One Health Operations Veterinarian

My 4-H Story: I grew up on a mixed-livestock farm near MacGregor, MB. My parents had both been involved in 4-H as kids, my mom in the beef project and my dad in the sheep project, and so it was pretty much inevitable that my siblings and I would get involved as well! My brother, sister, cousin and I each had calves in the beef project and my parents were leaders. The 4 of us would practice showing our calves at home before the fair, with my aunt and grandma acting as “judges” and providing comments/advice on their “haircuts”! Grandma once thought my cousin’s calf should keep his “bangs” but the judge disagreed and so they were trimmed off between the grooming and showmanship events! Our interclub was at Portage fair and our families always camped. It was lots of fun and lots of work, and so hot in those black jeans, steel-toed boots and long-sleeve uniforms! Character building! In addition to the beef project, we were involved in other projects, CREW camp events, day trips to Winnipeg, other activities and public speaking. 4-H was a family affair, from driving through the pasture to pick out calves in the fall to finishing the record books after the fair. This was also the base for my lessons in economics, as once we had covered (most of) our expenses with our beef projects, we would reinvest our profits in buying sheep. My siblings and I always had different preferred breeds and we could compare their productivity! Selling lambs plus another year’s steer cheque profits meant I could buy my first purebred Shorthorn heifer at the Canadian Junior Show in 1996. The thrill of auction sales became addictive as did trading livestock!

Single Greatest Attribute: The most obvious advantage to participating in 4-H is the practice in public speaking. Not just at the formal public speaking events but also during every day. Other advantages I gained from 4-H include the ability to make or second a motion and run a meeting as an executive member. I also had the opportunity to meet 4-H members from other districts or regions at overnight events and work on district or regional committees. 4-H builds self-confidence as it keeps members on their toes, exposing them to new experiences and pushing the edges of their comfort zone. This sets a foundation for saying “yes” to new experiences later in life and continuing to push one’s own comfort zones, at university and beyond!

During university and throughout my career, I have been lucky to have many unique experiences and I credit 4-H for teaching me that even if it feels scary to try something new, the payoff of the experience (good or bad) is always worth it. In fact, with time, I have realized that the scariest new experiences will also likely provide the most memorable learning experiences.

The other important and related component to this is the values which 4-H membership promotes. Not only the work ethic required to prepare a calf for the fair and understanding the importance of giving back to the community, such as highway cleanup, but working with others in an inclusive, fair, and kind way and being accountable for upholding your promises, for example when working on committees. There are very few solitary careers in life; whether working with a Canadian farmer one-on-one or with a non-profit group based in Uganda, I am always interacting with people. Values established during my years in 4-H have translated into effective working and personal relationships across diverse cultures and backgrounds and I am lucky to now have a network of friends and colleagues across the globe.

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