



## The Story Behind the 4-H Clover Emblem

The first thing we think of when someone mentions 4-H is the green 4-H clover emblem. The emblem has become a familiar symbol to Americans over the past 75 years. The four-leaf clover is a symbol of growth for 5 million members and more than 36 million 4-H alumni in the USA.

During the early 1900's, what is now 4-H was given various names -- boys' and girls' clubs, agricultural clubs, home economics clubs, corn clubs, tomato clubs, cotton clubs, canning clubs, etc.

The first emblem design used for boys' and girls' clubs was a three-leaf clover, introduced in 1907 by O.H. Benson of Iowa. The emblem was being used at that time on posters, badges, canning labels, plus other things. In 1909 this emblem was used on pins and the three H's stood for head, heart, and hands.

Around 1908, Benson and others began using a four-leaf clover design rather than the previous three-leaf. Benson said that the H's should stand for "head, heart, hands, and hustle...head trained to be useful, helpful and skillful, and the hustle to render ready service to develop health and vitality..."

At a meeting in Washington, DC in 1911, club leaders adopted the present 4-H design, a green four-leaf clover with a white H on each leaf. O.B. Martin, South Carolina, suggested that the 4-H's stand for head, heart, hands and health to represent the equal training of each in every child.

The term 4-H was first used in a federal publication written in 1918 by Gertrude Warren. In the early 1920's, a group at a conference in Washington, DC discussed the need to give the boys' and girls' club work a distinctive name that could be used nationally. Several people, including Miss Warren, favored 4-H as the name for the organization. In 1924 boys' and girls' club work became known as 4-H.

Also, in 1924 the 4-H clover emblem was patented. At the end of the 14 year patent term in 1939, Congress passed a law to protect the use of the 4-H name and emblem. The law was slightly revised in 1948.

The 4-H emblem is still protected by Congress from commercial or unauthorized use.