NC STATE EXTENSION

N.C. Cooperative Extension
Caldwell County Center
caldwell.ces.ncsu.edu

120 Hospital Ave, STE 1
Lenoir, NC 28645
P: 828-757-1290

NRA Grant Proposal

Appalachian Aces 4-H Youth Shooting Sports Program

The NRA Foundation State Fund Grant Program provides funding to eligible organizations that promote marksmanship and shooting sports education across the United States. Each year, local Friends of NRA committees raise funds through community events, and those proceeds are distributed within the same state through this grant program.

The goal of the NRA Foundation's State Fund Grant is to support programs that teach safe and responsible shooting practices, foster youth development through structured training, and preserve America's shooting sports traditions. Grants may fund equipment, supplies, training materials, and other resources directly tied to educational and safety-focused activities.

By applying for this grant, the Appalachian Aces 4-H Youth Shooting Sports Program seeks to partner with the NRA Foundation in fulfilling its shared mission: to provide hands-on education that builds confidence, discipline, safety awareness, and respect for shooting sports among youth participants.

Program Overview

The Appalachian Aces 4-H Youth Shooting Sports Club of Caldwell County, North Carolina, is entering its fifth year serving youth ages 10-18 at no cost to participants. Practices are held weekly from May through October on a local farm, averaging 25 youth participants with an equal balance of male and female members and four certified coaches (two male, two female).

The Aces began with archery in year one and added additional disciplines in year two. The club operates under the umbrella of the National 4-H Shooting Sports Program and NC 4-H Shooting Sports, offering high-quality, safe, and educational opportunities for local youth.

<u>Safety is the cornerstone of our program.</u>
4-H Shooting Sports is recognized as one of the safest youth programs in the nation, with fewer than three serious injuries recorded since 1985, despite reaching over one million youth participants each year. All leaders and instructors are required to complete nationally approved training and undergo a comprehensive background check before working with youth. This ensures every participant practices and competes in a safe, positive, and closely supervised environment.

Approximately 75% of participants rely on club-provided equipment, including Genesis compound bows and PSE recurve bows. Much of our current gear is aging and heavily used, which can impact both safety and skill development. Adding new, reliable equipment will allow our youth to train more effectively and safely.

Participants represent a diverse cross-section of Caldwell County youth, including public, private, and homeschool students, ages 10-18, from a variety of economic and ethnic backgrounds. Many develop a deep interest in shooting sports, eventually purchasing their own gear and competing in district and state competitions. In 2024, 10 members competed at the district level, and 5 to 10 qualified for the state competition.

Beyond marksmanship, members learn equipment mechanics, shooting sports history, and sportsmanship. They also give back through community service, assisting at local 4-H events, teaching younger youth, and volunteering at community festivals.

Project Purpose and Goals

This proposal requests **$5,000 in NRA grant funding** to expand and strengthen the Appalachian Aces 4-H program. Funds will be used to:

- **Replace worn-out equipment**: Purchase new archery target cores, ammo, 3-D shooting games, and arrows.
- **Improve competition readiness**: Provide high-quality equipment that gives members a fair opportunity to excel at district and state events.
- **Enhance engagement**: Introduce shooting sports games and develop a 3D archery course to provide off-season practice and outdoor learning.
- **Increase accessibility**: Offset costs of arrows and targets for families and continue offering the program at no charge.

Through these goals, the Appalachian Aces will continue to build confidence, discipline, and responsibility among Caldwell County youth while promoting safe, educational experiences in shooting sports.

Expected Outcomes and Evaluation

Program success will be measured by:

- Increase total club membership by at least five members.
- Tracking and comparing pre- and post-season accuracy scores and competition results.

- Introducing all participants to 3D archery shooting and outdoor range skills.

These measurable outcomes will demonstrate both skill growth and the expansion of youth engagement in responsible shooting sports education.

Sponsorship and Recognition

If awarded, the NRA Foundation will be recognized as a primary sponsor of the Appalachian Aces 4-H Youth Shooting Sports Program through:

- Display of an NRA recognition certificate at the Caldwell County 4-H Extension Office.
- Inclusion of the NRA Foundation name or logo (pending approval) on club shirts and equipment cases.
- Acknowledgment in local news, social media, and promotional materials.

Budget

Requested Amount: $5,000

Current Sponsors:

- Pepsi: $300 donation (2024)

Item	Description	Cost
Archery target cores	6 high-density replacement cores	$1,500
Arrows & target supplies	Shared club supply	$1,200
3D archery targets & range setup	Outdoor course materials	$1,800
Equipment cases & maintenance	Safe storage, minor repairs	$500
Total Request		**$5,000**

The program remains free to youth participants, with parents only asked to supply arrows or small accessories when possible. Grant funding will directly reduce these out-of-pocket expenses and sustain the club's growth for years to come.

About the Grantor: The NRA Foundation

The NRA Foundation is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organization dedicated to supporting educational programs that promote marksmanship, safety, and youth development across the United States.

Tax ID (EIN): 52-1710886

Mailing Address: 11250 Waples Mill Road, Fairfax, VA 22030-9400

Phone: 800-554-9498

Website: www.nrafoundation.org

The Foundation distributes State Fund Grant awards through its network of local Friends of NRA committees, ensuring funds raised within each state directly benefit local programs and youth education efforts.

Conclusion

The Appalachian Aces 4-H Youth Shooting Sports Program empowers youth through hands-on education, safety, mentorship, and skill development. By investing in this program, the NRA Foundation will be helping to:

- Strengthen youth leadership and confidence,
- Promote safety and respect in shooting sports, and

Preserve America's outdoor recreation heritage for future generations.

We are proud to be raising responsible, capable, and community-minded young citizens who appreciate their freedoms and use them wisely.