Everyone likes to be appreciated for doing a good job. Recognition activities need not be formal, public, or expensive. Following is a list of informal recognition ideas, which are either inexpensive or no cost, which can be utilized to recognize 4-H volunteers.

Send cards for achievements (birthday, new arrivals, anniversary, promotion, graduation, etc.) Write a news article for the local newspaper, highlighting a 4-H volunteer’s contribution or impact.

Write a news article for the 4-H newsletter.

Send a thank-you note.

Smile.

Send a holiday greeting card.

Say “thank-you” during a meeting or gathering.

Ask a 4-H volunteer for their input about a program.

Utilize a 4-H volunteer suggestion box.

Ask a 4-H volunteer to serve in a leadership role.

Present service stripes, or candy canes with the message - You’ve earned your stripes!

Ask a 4-H volunteer to conduct a program.

Have a soft drink party.

Ask a 4-H volunteer to coordinate a program or event.

Shake hands.

Plan a theme party (toga, costume, western, etc.)

Give a pat-on-the-back.

Invite 4-H volunteers to staff meetings.

Encourage them to contribute and participate.

Ask a 4-H volunteer to develop a display.

Send a 4-H volunteer to a conference.

Ask the 4-H volunteer to present a report, or workshop, on some aspect of the conference.

Cultivate special interests. Find ways for 4-H volunteers to utilize their special interests.

Utilize 4-H volunteers’ unique special talents.

Be flexible.

Share the success or impact of one 4-H volunteer with others at a meeting or gathering.

Provide certificates, plaques, pins, etc.

Provide "perks" (free admission, parking, etc.)

Take an interest in their personal lives.

Have a “4-H volunteer of the month” award.

Host a banquet, luncheon, dessert, tea, or reception in the 4-H volunteers’ honor.

Invite a 4-H volunteer out to lunch.

Reimburse gas money for club activities.

Establish a 4-H Honor Roll.

Provide educational resources for the 4-H volunteers to utilize (videos, pamphlets, books, and curriculum)

Be motivational and challenging.

Ask effective 4-H volunteers to each recruit another 4-H volunteer who is “just like them”

Debrief with 4-H volunteers following a conference, program, or activity, in which they participated.

Always use a person’s first name.

Nominate a 4-H volunteer to teach a workshop at a conference or symposium.

Assist with workshop preparation.

Label the coffeepot. (“Vicki pours herself out for us!” or “Joe keeps things perking!”) Greet each 4-H volunteer with enthusiasm and appreciation.

Ask an effective 4-H volunteer to mentor a new recruit.

Send Hershey’s Kisses.

Provide useful and effective orientation for each 4-H volunteer position.

Send peppermint candies with the message "You're worth a mint!"

Develop leadership skills and self-confidence.

Ask 4-H volunteers for their input or opinions.

Recognize and share innovative suggestions or programs.

Be patient.

Recognize community service activities.

Take time to explain.

Send get well cards.

Recognize 4-H volunteers for financial and philanthropic contributions.

Build consensus and support.

Recognize tenure.

Practice the "Platinum Rule." ("Do unto others as they prefer being done unto.")

Recognize the impact of the number of hours contributed to the organization or program.

Ask a 4-H volunteer to speak on behalf of the program to an outside agency.

Ask a 4-H volunteer to speak to a donor.

Hold a rap session.

Ask a 4-H volunteer to speak at a 4-H volunteer meeting.

Run a photograph and story in the local paper.

Ask a 4-H volunteer to write a news article or news release.

Foster personal growth.

Ask a 4-H volunteer to make a television appearance or radio announcement.

Provide scholarships to conferences.

Promote a 4-H volunteer to expanded or higher-level responsibilities.

Recognize the achievements or accomplishments of those with whom the 4-H volunteer works.

Ask the 4-H volunteer to direct a volunteership recruitment campaign.

Share the 4-H volunteer’s personal success story

Provide 4-H volunteers their own work area.

Be respectful.

Schedule monthly birthday bashes.
Have a program participant share a success story about the 4-H volunteer.
Provide transportation.
Write letters of reference.
Surprise a 4-H volunteer with a birthday cake.
Utilize a 4-H volunteer as a consultant.
Send flowers.
Nominate 4-H volunteers for awards.
Attend personal celebrations (birthdays, anniversaries, etc.)
Take note of 4-H volunteers’ children’s accomplishments. Recognize them.
Make home visits.
Make sure that each 4-H volunteer is a "good fit" with their leadership role.
Let his/her 4-H volunteer know they were missed.
Make telephone calls.
Encourage clientele to send thank-you notes.
Plan an organizational outing (picnic, theater, ball game, family day, pool party, etc.)
Praise in public - especially in front of family and friends.
Encourage program participants to send birthday and anniversary cards.
Have a birthday column in your 4-H newsletter.
Send a note of congratulations for personal and professional achievements.
Send a thank-you note to the 4-H volunteer’s parent.
Recognize an employer of a 4-H volunteer.
Send a thank-you note to the 4-H volunteer’s employer acknowledging the employee’s contribution.
Encourage others to express appreciation.
Send 4-H volunteers an "Encouragemint."
Ask 4-H volunteers to chaperone trips.
Ask 4-H volunteers to judge competitions.
Provide child care.
Send hand-written notes.
Give complimentary gift certificates.
Print business cards for 4-H volunteers.
Ask a 4-H volunteer to co-present a workshop.
Stage a potluck dinner in a 4-H volunteer’s honor.
Attend 4-H volunteers’ activities and sporting events.
Bounce new ideas off of a 4-H volunteer.
Involve 4-H volunteers in problem-solving efforts.
Organize a card shower for a 4-H volunteer.
Plant a tree or flowerbed in a 4-H volunteer’s name.
Contribute to a charity in a 4-H volunteer’s name.
Send spices with a note: "You’re the spice of life!"
Print and distribute bumper stickers.
Provide caps or shirts to promote unity.
Provide a golf cart for a 4-H volunteer to utilize during a fair, festival, golf outing, etc.
Organize a holiday open house.
Feature a 4-H volunteer in a slide show.
Provide reserved seating at any event.
Provide favors at meetings or events.
Direct newspaper reporters to worthy 4-H volunteers when writing a news story.
Send balloons.
Send candy.
Surprise everyone by bringing donuts.
Send cookies.
Encourage 4-H volunteers to provide leadership in their community.
Give a 4-H volunteer a light bulb or candle with the message "You light up my life."
Send valentines.
Give calendars, notepads, pens, or pencils.
Be pleasant and appreciative.

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