

4-H UPDATES



Official Newsletter of Meadowlark Extension District 4-H

September 2026

Re-Enrollment

Each new 4-H year begins on **October 1**. On this day, enrollment and re-enrollment opens via the Kansas 4-H Online system as well. All re-enrollments must be completed by **November 1**. If re-enrollment is not completed by this deadline, youth will become ineligible for the current year to receive exhibitor premiums or participate in premium auctions, hold a leadership position at the county or district level, and more! For additional information please visit the website at: <https://www.meadowlark.k-state.edu/4-h/enrollment.html>.

National 4-H Week

National 4-H Week in 2026 will be observed from **October 4-10**, centered around the national theme "Beyond Ready". The theme for the week is "Beyond Ready". The week aims to rally, inspire, and connect 4-H members, volunteers, and alumni, highlighting 4-H's role in preparing youth for life and careers.

48 Hours of 4-H 2026

Every 4-H Club is encouraged to join 4-Hers from across the state this fall in seeing just how much we can give back to our communities! The weekend after National 4-H Week is the perfect opportunity to set up a service project. Invite your friends, clubs, adult volunteers, potential 4-H members and 4-H alums too!

- **When: October 10-11, 2026**
- **Who:** 4-H Members, 4-H Clubs, Friends, Adult Volunteers, Parents, 4-H Alumni, Partnerships, Community Organizations, Potential 4-H Families

More information can be found at <https://www.kansas4-h.org/events-activities/conferences-events/48-hours-of-4-h/>.

Kansas Youth Leadership Forum

The **Kansas Youth Leadership Forum (KYLF)** is planned for **November 21-22, 2026** at Rock Springs 4-H Center. KYLF is for youth ages 14-18 years of age before January 1, 2027. KYLF will feature leadership workshops, Youth Council elections, and opportunities to learn and have fun. Registration link will open in August. Registration deadline is **October 15, 2026 by 11:59 PM**. For more information go to, <https://www.kansas4-h.org/events-activities/conferences-events/kansas-youth-leadership-forum/index.html>.

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Kansas State Fair

The Kansas State Fair is one of the largest events in Kansas. It is **September 11-20** in Hutchinson. This is the capstone event for many 4-Hers in their project work, but the Fair offers something for everyone. For information about the 2026 Kansas State Fair, please visit <http://www.kansasstatefair.com/>.

Please refer to your specific county newsletter page with information on when your 4-H entries need to be brought into the local Extension Office. 4-H results can be found at <http://www.kansas4-h.org/events-activities/fairs/kansas-state-fair/index.html>.

Important Due Date—September 30

September 30 is the last day of the 4-H year. This time of year is also a beneficial time to reflect on your year in 4-H: did you meet your goals, what have you learned, how can you improve for next year, have you grown as a young person through your 4-H work? The 4-H record book, especially Permanent Record and 4-H story, is a perfect place to journal this reflection. **LEADERS – September 30** is the date that completed 4-H Record Books, Achievement Pin applications (submitted to you by member), Club Seal Summary reports, Club Goal Summary reports, and other important local forms are all due to the Extension office. All of these forms can be found at www.meadowlark.k-state.edu/4-h/club_resources.html.

Youth Council and National Conference Applications

The Youth Council and National Conference application will be combined, with applicants indicating if they are applying for one or both opportunities. Any Kansas 4-H member between the ages of 14 and 18 before January 1, 2027 may apply as a Council Rep and those 15-18 before January 1, 2027 may apply for National Conference.

This year's KYLF delegation will elect representatives from the four extension program regions (NE, NW, SE, SW) for one-year terms on council. Up to six National Conference delegates will be selected through an interview process at KYLF and they serve a two-year term on council.

Application information for State 4-H Youth leadership Council and National Conference is available at <http://www.kansas4-h.org/4-h-programs/teen-leadership-opportunities/youth-leadership-council/index.html>.

The deadline to apply is **October 1, 2026, by 11:59 PM**.

Club Elections

The following are suggested guidelines for conducting the 2026-27 club election of officers:

- Nominate and vote for the member who would carry out the responsibilities of the office well.
- ***Election of officers should not be a popularity contest.***
- A nominating committee, made up of 4-H members & parents, should develop a slate of candidates, preferably two or more candidates per office.
- Vote on each office individually. It takes extra time but allows important learning time for members.
- Club members should be allowed the opportunity to nominate members from the floor for offices.
- A club needs to have a motion, a second and approval to close the nominations for each office.
- A nomination does not need to be a motion. It can simply be, "I nominate Sally".
- Voting should be done by ballot. Ballots should be counted by two to three members who are not running for office and preferably not by members who made the nominations or by parents.
- Each member should have one vote per office.
- In cases where the club may have more than one person in office, each member should vote for corresponding candidates.

4hOnline

With another year of experience in 4hOnline, we hope that your interaction with the site went well! With that being said, now is a great time to review your 4hOnline account to make sure your data is accurate. This can mean your contact information, but years in each project and other data needs to be corrected prior to the end of the current 4-H year. September is the month for staff to do reviews, reports and maintenance; so please let us know of issues or corrections as soon as possible.

Screened and registered 4-H adult volunteers who do not have an active enrollment in 4hOnline will need to get this done as soon as possible! You could be in jeopardy of losing your status as a registered Kansas 4-H Volunteer. Members, as a reminder, club and project enrollment will not automatically propagate in your accounts, so please watch carefully come enrollment time. Stay tuned for more information, but please note that the enrollment process for the **2026-2027** year will not begin until **October 1**.

Setting S.M.A.R.T. Goals

As you begin to think ahead about the new 4-H year, you may have things you want to improve, change, or accomplish as the year progresses. A great way to quantify these thoughts would be setting goals. All in all, these tactics will help you set goals that will increase your likelihood of successfully achieving your goals.

Setting goals is an important aspect of success, and how we can measure success. It can help guide focus and help trigger new behaviors. Ultimately, they help manage your focus and success.

Goals need to be S.M.A.R.T. which stands for:

- **Specific** – This is where you want you should be thinking about what you want to accomplish. This is where you would have to ask yourself the “W” questions; who is involved, what are you accomplishing, where is this, when will this be done, and why are you doing this?
- **Measurable** – What are you measuring to determine if you have met the goal? This will help make more quantifiable and provides a way to determine the progress of your goal.
- **Achievable** – This will focus on the importance of the goal. Additionally, you should think about how to accomplish the goal and if you have the skills and tools to accomplish the goal.
- **Relevant** – This should be focused around what makes sense for the broader picture at hand.
- **Time-bound** – A target finish date should be set for your S.M.A.R.T. goal. Additionally, you should have other check-in dates as well to ensure that you are on track to achieve your goal.

Here are two examples of S.M.A.R.T. goals that I pulled from 4-h.org:

1. Learn how to use my DSLR camera by completing the photography 4-H project and enrolling in the Clover County Library’s basic photography class this June.
2. Apply to be a 4-H Camp Counselor for this summer and complete all required training by **June 1**.

I encourage you and your family to sit down and reflect on the last year. Next, I encourage you to think about the future year and develop S.M.A.R.T. goals to track your success as a 4-H family. These can also be included in your Record Books!



Tell Your Story: 4-H Record Books

4-H Record books can be what we love to hate. This is especially true if they are just getting started. It is easy to say that they should have been started back in January, but that isn't helpful at all right now and only spoken with an ironic smile. The purpose of 4-H projects is to grow in knowledge through hands-on applications, "Learn by Doing." Record books are how growth within a project is documented and shown. Reflecting on your year of learning is a large part of 4-H; it is a large part of life. Learning how to accurately keep records can help prepare youth for future scholarship and job applications, money management, and goal evaluation.

So where do you get started? There are two formats that can be used for 4-H record books. The first one, the preferred one, is ZBooks. This program has been purchased through the Kansas State 4-H Program and funded with 4-H yearly fees. This is accessed online on the ZSuites website, www.kansas4-h.org/resources/awards-and-recognition/ZBooks.html. This platform requires the same login as 4HOnline. If you don't remember the password, simply click on the "Forgot Password" and reset it. There will be drop-down menus to assist with creating and completing the record book.

The second option is to download PDF pages which are located on the Meadowlark 4-Her Resource page. These can then be handwritten for the Junior 7-9 Age Group or completed with Adobe on a computer and printed. Both options are available and can be competitively judged.

So, what constitutes an official record book? According to the Guide to Kansas 4-H Recognition, a complete record book is the personal page, general 4-H story, permanent record, and at least one completed project record. You are encouraged to complete a project record for each enrolled project. However, please don't hate 4-H and life because of record books. It is better to focus on completing a few amazing project records than to hurriedly patch together many. Achievement Pin applications are also found on the Meadowlark Project Records page, https://www.meadowlark.k-state.edu/4-h/project_records.html.

This is what needs to be turned in to your club leaders by the appropriate deadline:

- Achievement Pin Application
- Record Check Sheet
- Personal Information Page
- Kansas 4-H Project Report(s): General or Animal
- Permanent Record

If there are any questions or assistance needed, reach out to your local extension office. I am also glad to help!

Why 4-H???

(Noting the IMPACT of the 4-H Program in the lives of young people, in their own words.)

"I love being in 4-H because I get to see all my friends and get to help the community. The meetings teach me how to be in a group setting and I get to help make decisions as a whole. Not one ever feels left out as we all work as a team."

Meadowlark District Encourages YOU to Volunteer!

We invite you to make a difference in the life of a young person. Volunteers make 4-H possible through the passion, skills, and talents they share with young people. 4-H volunteers are screened and receive ongoing training.

How do you get started? Talking to your local extension office is your first step in the volunteer process. You will then complete your application through 4hOnline. All Kansas 4-H volunteers must complete the Kansas 4-H Volunteer Screening process to work with Kansas 4-H youth.

Training and networking opportunities are available. The **Kansas Volunteer Leaders Forum, November 21-22** at Rock Springs 4-H Center, is an opportunity for volunteers from around the state to learn and network together. Participants will have the opportunity to dive into interactive content they can use to engage their youth members, connect with state and local extension staff to learn about new and exciting 4-H happenings, and engage with the Kansas Association of 4-H Volunteers as a support system for volunteering efforts throughout the year. Registration for this event will open in **September** and closes **October 15 at 11:59 PM**.

Kansas 4-H offers a wide variety of involvement opportunities for adult volunteers, from a one-time event or program to a multi-year experience as a club or project leader. There are many roles for volunteers. Check with your local club and/or Extension Office for more information.

Jackson County News

Thank You

A **GREAT BIG THANK YOU** to all the 4-H'ers, families, 4-H Ambassadors, Fair Board members, and volunteers who made the **2026 Jackson County Fair** a success! Be proud of your accomplishments—no matter the ribbon or premium, you are **ALL winners** because you worked hard and learned along the way!

Special Thanks to the Livestock Sale Crew

A huge **THANK YOU** to the Denison State Bank crew, sale clerks, and livestock haulers for their hard work behind the scenes!! Special thanks to **Dan Harris, Cody Askren, and Garrett Harris** for serving as ringmen and auctioneers. **We couldn't have done it without ALL of you!**

To Make the Best Better Award

During fair week, a generous 4-H supporter offered to recognize 4-H'ers who were "going above and beyond." The county Ambassadors created the **"To Make the Best Better" Award**, inviting nominations through a QR code.

By Friday morning, we received **25 nominations**, with 20 unique 4-H'ers receiving cash awards. Congratulations to: **Cyrus Harding, Kyson Reutzel, Drake Mellies, Halle Holaday, Carly Terry, April Slipke, Abigail Milroy, Blake Morris, Brooke Slipke, Hannah Lock, Waylon Walder, Jereth Howard, Jace Doyle, Christian Kucan, Paisley Askren, Harper Mitchell, Branch Ribelin, Emberlee Allen, Hudson Reutzel, and Reece Burns!**

Herdsmanship Winners

Bucket Calf -Delia Early Birds	Swine -Straight Arrows
Beef -Mayetta Mustangs	Meat Goats -Lucky Stars
Dairy Goats -Straight Arrows	Sheep -Lucky Stars

The Fair is Complete; Now What?

Remember to send Thank You Notes or Cards.

Without our **trophy sponsors, food auction buyers, and livestock buyers**, we wouldn't have the trophies and premiums we do. Please thank sponsors, buyers, volunteers, superintendents, and others who helped make the fair a success. **Let them know how much we appreciate their support!**

Trophy sponsor information is on the thank-you cards and our website or call the Extension office for more information.

Premium & Livestock Checks

Leaders may pick up **Premium & Livestock Checks** from the Extension Office after **August 31**. No checks will be mailed or given to anyone other than the 4-H leader. Please make arrangements with your leader to receive your check.

An explanation of the checkoff & deductions will be included with the livestock checks.

State Fair Exhibits

Non-perishable exhibits are due to the Extension Office on **Tuesday, September 1**. Perishable exhibits need to be in the Extension Office by noon on **Wednesday, September 9**.

If you entered an item for the State Fair & plan to attend, we have gate admission tickets available at the Extension Office.

Ambassador Applications

Ambassador applications are due **September 4**. Anyone age 14 or older can apply. This is a great opportunity to build your leadership skills! We will set an interview date shortly after applications are received.

The application can be found on our website under [Resources](#).

Judging of Record Books

Record books are due to the Extension Office by **September 30**. Adult or teen leaders (age 13+) interested in judging can contact Cara. It's a great learning opportunity and a chance to see ideas from other 4-H'ers.

Judging: **Monday, October 12** from **10:00 AM-4:30 PM** and **Sunday October 18** from **1:00-5:00 PM** at the Northeast Kansas Heritage Complex.

New 4-H year - Enrollment opens October 1

4-H is a network of families working together to grow great kids. One of the best things about 4-H is that it has something to offer **city & country kids**. Now is the time to invite new families to get involved as we prepare for the new 4-H year!

SAVE THE DATES

- **November 1, 3:00 PM** – Achievement Program at Northeast Heritage Complex
- **November 12, 7:00 PM** – 4-H Council meeting at Northeast Heritage Complex

Jefferson County News

As we begin to look back on another **Jefferson County Fair**, we want to take a moment to thank everyone who helped make it a great fair. The hard work of our youth, parents, and volunteers does not go unnoticed. Our 4-H office staff have been busy finalizing and publishing fair results, completing year-end paperwork, and looking ahead to next year.

According to the results tabulated in the system, **more than 1,900 projects** were entered and judged at the Jefferson County Fair. Congratulations to all exhibitors!

This year, we posted QR codes around the fairgrounds linking to a feedback form. If you didn't have time to complete the form during the fair, we would still love to hear from you! **Use the link below to share your feedback:**

https://kstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_cSbstVlfoFlr7OC.

The Fair is Complete; Now What?

Write thank you notes!

Handwritten thank-you notes are a great way to show appreciation to our generous donors for their support, awards, and contributions during the fair. A thoughtful note can brighten someone's day and let them know their support is valued.

The **2026 Donor Book** is available on the Jefferson County 4-H website under **"More Fair Information."** Exhibitors can use the book when writing thank-you notes to ensure donors receive proper recognition. A simple thank-you may be the encouragement someone needs to continue supporting 4-H.

Thank-you notes are also a great way to recognize club leaders, project leaders, and anyone who helped with project preparation throughout the year.

Prepare Record Books

Record books are due to the county office by **September 30**. Check with your club leaders for individual club deadlines.

Resources for building project records and completing record books are available on the Meadowlark Extension District website at https://www.meadowlark.k-state.edu/4-h/project_records.html.

Monday, October 12 has been set as the record book judging day. We will be doing this out at the fair grounds starting at **1:00 PM** and go until we are finished. We are seeking volunteers to assist with the process. More information will be shared soon.

Anticipate Premium Checks

As fair results are finalized, premium checks are being prepared for distribution through club leaders. **Livestock Premium Sale checks** will be mailed directly to exhibitors. A nominal fee is deducted from sale checks for buyer plaques, accounting, and other sale expenses.

Kansas State Fair

State Fair Exhibits: Pre-entered exhibits must be at the Extension Office by **noon Wednesday, September 9**, for transportation to Hutchinson. Families must transport large or heavy projects.

Review **State Fair rules** for project requirements. Exhibitors are eligible for **general admission tickets**; check with the Extension Office to receive yours.

Upcoming Events

September Council Meeting

The Jefferson County 4-H Council will meet at **7:00 PM on Monday, September 28**, at the fairgrounds. In addition to the regular September business, the agenda will include the election of officers, a fair evaluation, and setting dates for the coming year.

Achievement Banquet

Mark your calendars for the annual **4-H Achievement Banquet on Saturday, November 7**, at **6:00 PM** at Oskaloosa School! We look forward to celebrating our members and volunteers.

Qualified leaders and 4-H'ers who submit required reports or record books will receive a **complimentary meal**. Pre-registration is required for all attendees.

Registration: October 1-26. Use the link or QR code to register:

https://kstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ezGsXNZLqnAh9Qi.



Registration information will be shared at September club meetings and on the website and Facebook page. **Meal payments must be physically submitted to complete registration.**

Jefferson County Farm Bureau Pizza Party

Jefferson County Farm Bureau invites 4-H'ers to its **4-H Appreciation Party on Saturday, October 10**, at **5:00 PM** at the Ozawie Township Community Center.

RSVP: Tabi Johnson at 573-619-2668 or jeffersonfb@kfb.org. Clubs must send at least one youth to receive a Farm Bureau donation.

Nemaha County News

Thank You

The **2026 Fair** was a great success, thanks to the support of many! We would like to express our gratitude to all the Fair Board members, volunteers, superintendents, and 4-H members who helped make the **Nemaha County Fair** a success.

Please Thank Sponsors

More than 150 businesses and individuals generously contributed thousands of dollars to the fair, excluding the livestock auction. If you received an award of any kind, please take the time to write a thank-you note to the sponsor. It's always a good idea to express your gratitude multiple times throughout the year! If you're unsure whom to thank, please contact Deb.

Extra-Special Thank You

Be sure to personally thank each Fair Board member. They invested a significant amount of time and effort to ensure that you, our 4-H members, had a wonderful fair experience. A list of all Fair Board members can be found at the front of the fair book.

Fair Premium Checks

Premium checks will be sent to club treasurers in **September** for distribution at club meetings.

Livestock premium checks and checks for decorated cakes, cookie jars, and bread baskets will be mailed directly to members.

A small deduction covers banners, buyer meals, accounting, and other sale expenses.

Don't forget to thank your buyers! A note, cookies, baked goods, or a meat and cheese tray are great ways to show your appreciation.

4-H Record Books

All 4-H members should complete their record books to document their accomplishments, learning, and goals. Record books are available on our website:

https://www.meadowlark.k-state.edu/4-h/project_records.html.

Complete **one form per project**, not per fair exhibit. Submit your **2025–2026 records** to your club leader in a 1-inch, 3-ring binder with a cover page showing your name and club. Check with your club leader for deadlines; **DO NOT drop record books off at the Extension Office.**

Remember to also submit your **Achievement Pin Application** and **Event Scholarship Application**. Contact Abbie or Deb with questions.

UPCOMING EVENTS

State Fair Entries

All exhibits going to the State Fair must be at the Extension Office by **noon on Wednesday, September 9**. We strongly encourage you to bring in non-perishable State Fair exhibits before **September 8**. State Fair entries may be picked up any time after **September 22**.

Time to Enroll

The new 4-H year begins **October 1**. Returning members need to re-enroll through their existing 4-H Online account by **November 1** to avoid any penalties.

National 4-H Week

Mark your calendars for **October 4–10** for National 4-H Week! We encourage all 4-H members to wear a **4-H shirt to school on Wednesday, October 7**.

Record Book Judging

Jefferson County record books will be judged on **October 12, beginning at 9:00 AM** at our office and continuing until completion. All clubs are required to provide at least **two adult volunteers or a total of eight hours of judging time**. The more adult volunteers or older 4-H members who participate, the faster the judging process will go.

If you plan to arrive later in the day, please call the office beforehand to check on the workload.

4-H Council

Our next 4-H Council meeting will be **October 26 at 7:30 PM**. This meeting is for the **2026–2027 club representatives**. Please come prepared with ideas for the **“Friend of 4-H” Award** and suggestions for the fair theme.

We ask that each club have at least two 4-H members present at each council meeting. However, anyone is welcome to attend and participate in council committees.

4-H Achievement Event

Save the date for the **2026 Nemaha County 4-H Achievement Event on Tuesday, November 24, at 6:30 PM** at the Nemaha County Community Building. More details will be provided in the next newsletter.



Holton Office

114 W 5th St.
Holton, KS 66436

Address Service Requested

Calendar of Events

Sept. 1: Premium & Livestock checks available for pickup
State Fair non-perishable exhibits due to office, JA

Sept. 4: Ambassador applications due to office, JA

Sept. 7: Extension Office closed for Holiday, JA, JF & NM

Sept. 9: State Fair perishable exhibits due to office, JA
State Fair pre-entered exhibits due to office, JF
State Fair exhibits due to office, NM

Sept. 11-20: Kansas State Fair, Hutchinson

Sept. 28: 4-H Council meeting, JF

Sept. 30: Last day of 2025-2026 4-H year
Record books due to office, JA & JF

Oct. 1: 4hOnline Open Enrollment
Youth Council/National Conference applications due

Oct. 1-26: Achievement Banquet registration, JF

Oct. 10: 4-H appreciation party, JF

Oct. 4-10: National 4-H Week

Oct. 7: Wear 4-H shirt to school, NM

Oct. 10-11: 48 hours of 4-H

Oct. 12: Record book judging, JA, JF & NM

Oct. 15: Kansas Youth & Volunteer Leadership
Forums deadline

Oct. 18: Record book judging, JA

Oct. 26: 4-H Council meeting, NM

Nov. 1: Achievement Program, JA

Nov. 7: Achievement Banquet, JF

Nov. 12: 4-H Council meeting, JA

Nov. 21-22: Kansas Youth Leadership Forum

Nov. 24: Achievement Event, NM

Holton Office

114 W 5th St.
Holton, KS 66436-1778
785-364-4125

Oskaloosa Office

100 E Washington
Oskaloosa, KS 66066-0326
785-863-2212

Seneca Office

1615 Branch St.
Seneca, KS 66538-1504
785-336-2184

District Office Hours:

Open Monday-Friday; 8:00 AM-Noon & 12:30-4:30 PM

Closed on designated holidays

Websites:

<https://www.meadowlark.k-state.edu/>

<https://www.facebook.com/KStateExtensionMeadowlarkDistrict>

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