



*NEWS  
for New Families  
Issue #2  
February 2024*

### What is Meadowlark Extension District???

Dear New 4-H Families,

Do you feel like you are on information overload in your first year of 4-H? Information should be coming to your family through the 4-H Newsletter, Meadowlark District website, this newsletter, your 4-H community clubs, 4-H Council and the Extension Office. When you receive information from the Extension Office, it most often times says or references Meadowlark District and you may be asking yourself “what exactly does that mean”?

- The Meadowlark District was started in July of 2006. The district includes Jackson, Jefferson and Nemaha counties. Extension Districts are formed to enhance the programming opportunities, staff specialization and support organizational structure stability. This change of structure allows Extension staff to focus on a particular subject matter area and offer that to a wider range of patrons within the borders of the Extension District.
- In a District, the Extension Board and Council are organized differently than in a county. In a District, the Extension Board (Governing Body) is elected and the Council (PDC members) are appointed by the Board. The Board is made of four citizens of each county and PDC is made of six members of each county. For the Meadowlark Extension District, the Board has 12 members and the 4-H Youth Development PDC has 18 members. These individuals help organize the District plan of work collaborating with staff to determine programming efforts.
- The Meadowlark District has 6 Agents with various responsibilities including: Community Development; Crops and Soils; Family and Community Wellness; Foods, Nutrition, Health & Safety; Horticulture; Livestock and Natural Resources; and 4-H Youth Development. The District also has 3 full-time office professionals and 3 full-time 4-H Program Managers located in the Holton, Oskaloosa and Seneca offices.
- With more staff, funding and volunteers; youth development programs and events can be developed to reach more youth in more areas. The District helps each local program expand and create a better 4-H experience for their members. If you have any questions about the Extension District or anything related to the 4-H program, don't hesitate to ask!

*Clay Roland – District Agent, 4-H Youth Development*

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#### 4-H Pledge

I pledge...

my HEAD to clearer thinking



my HEART to greater loyalty



my HANDS to larger service



and my HEALTH to better living  
for my club, my community, my  
county and my world.



#### 4-H Motto

To Make the Best Better!

#### 4-H Emblem



A green four leaf clover with a white “H” on each life. The four H’s stand for HEAD, HEART, HANDS and HEALTH.

#### 4-H Colors

##### Green and White

- **Green** is nature’s most abundant color and is emblematic of springtime, life, youth and growth.
- **White** symbolizes purity and high ideals.

## 4-H Events Council

During your club meeting there has likely been at least one 4-H Council report given by either youth or adults. 4-H Council is used as one way to pass information along to club members and is a great leadership opportunity for youth to take part in. Each county within the District has a 4-H Council that addresses local 4-H events.

4-H Council is an opportunity for youth and adults to take on a leadership role in your club. Your 4-H club has either elected or appointed certain youth and/or adults to be 4-H Council representatives. 4-H Council members work together to plan events that involve the entire local 4-H program. It is also an opportunity for Extension staff to inform clubs of changes, upcoming activities and other important information.

4-H Council is made up of equal numbers of youth and/or adults from each club within the county. These council members attend 4-H Council meetings to discuss information with all club representatives. Members of Council help pick out themes, plan 4-H events, discuss project trainings needs, decide details for certain local celebrations such as Achievement Nights and work to plan fundraisers such as a food stand at the local county fair.

Council members are asked to take part in committees to help make Council run smoothly, but are not required to do all the work. Council members go back to the club and inform their clubs of important information and get ideas from their local club. It is important for 4-H Council members to attend council meetings and make sure they communicate with their club to make 4-H Council successful. It is equally important for 4-H members and families to become actively involved in the local work of 4-H!

## 4-H Judging Opportunities

4-H offers multiple opportunities for youth to take part in learning experiences in a variety of subjects. One such opportunity is 4-H judging contests which can occur at the local, District, State or National level. Judging contests take place at various times throughout the year and at various locations, virtually or in-person.

Youth who are interested in the 4-H judging contests will need to read the 4-H newsletter for upcoming contests. Youth of any age can compete in most contests at the local level, but to compete at State 4-H events, you need to be at least nine (*some contests fourteen*) before January 1st. State judging contests include: Crops, Family Consumer Science, Livestock, Meats, Dairy, Horse, Horticulture, Photography, Poultry and Rabbit.

4-H judging contests include various ways to test youth knowledge of a particular subject. Most 4-H judging contests offer a question or problem and youth rank four answers/items from the best to the worst.

Some contests include an identification portion. Youth are shown various plants or cuts of meat and they must identify the plant type or cooking method for the meat cut.

Many contests also require reasons. Youth must justify to a judge and explain why they placed one choice over another choice. Youth are challenged in these ways to show their logical reasoning skills.

Judging contests are a great chance for youth to learn about a project they already enjoy or would like to learn more about. You do not have to be enrolled in the projects related to the contests, but do have to be enrolled 4-H members.

Youth can start practicing these skills at an early age, which may lead into opportunities later in life. Visit the District Website for more information and links to contest. We try to maintain an available list as we learn about opportunities. We are trying to offer virtual practice contest throughout the year at: [https://www.meadowlark.k-state.edu/4-h/virtual\\_judging\\_contests.html](https://www.meadowlark.k-state.edu/4-h/virtual_judging_contests.html)



## Animal Weigh-In/ID

Livestock projects have some special days that new families need to be aware of if you are involved in those project areas. Livestock weigh-ins and ID dates are important deadlines that need to be met to exhibit animals at the local county fair. These dates are usually set at the beginning of the 4-H year and are not very flexible.

Weigh-in and ID dates occur for a couple of reasons. These dates are used to prove ownership of the animal by a certain date. 4-H is about the experience of raising the animal, not just how good the animal looks or does at the fair. If youth receive the animal the day before the fair, what do they learn? The process of caring for an animal teaches youth valuable life skills. For this reason, youth need to own and raise the animal and the weigh-in or ID dates is one way we can prove ownership.

Weigh-in dates are also used to teach youth about how their care at home affects the animal. Classes at the 4-H fair calculate how well the animal gained weight from the weigh-in until the 4-H fair. Youth learn how they fed, watered and raised their animal can help to determine the quality of animal they bring to the 4-H fair.

Weigh-in and ID dates are in place to help youth learn about their livestock project and are followed strictly. Families that do not take part or miss deadlines often times will not get to participate in their local 4-H fair. These dates usually occur from February until May depending on the species. Read your 4-H newsletter carefully so you do not miss these important deadlines.

### MEADOWLARK DISTRICT 4-H - QUICK FACTS

Meadowlark District is one of the largest 4-H Units in the state of Kansas, in terms of youth enrollment number. 2023 enrollment data shows 765 4-H members, including 71 Cloverbuds (ages 5-8) enrolled in one of the 29 clubs within the District. There are 211 registered volunteers working directly with these youth. In addition to the Community 4-H Club enrollment, many youth are involved in school enrichment activities in school or after school. Here are some quick facts.

#### Member Facts

Male Members	358
Female Members	407
Rural Residence	486
Town/City Residence	267
Average 4-H Age	10.5

#### Top Five Projects by Enrollment

1. Foods and Nutrition—322
2. Photography—270
3. Swine—203
4. Visual Arts & Crafts—253
5. Beef—299



#### Jackson County 4-H Clubs

Delia Early Birds  
Denison Builders  
Hoyt Livewires  
Lucky Stars  
Mayetta Mustangs  
North Jackson Jets  
Ontario Busy Bees  
Pleasant Valley Rustlers  
Solider Boosters  
Straight Arrows

#### Jefferson County 4-H Clubs

Billtown  
Clover Power  
Fairview  
Grantville  
Jolly Juniors  
Lucky 4  
Mooney Creek  
Prosperity  
Valley Victors  
Winchester

#### Nemaha County 4-H Clubs

Achievers  
Busy Jayhawkers  
Centralia Aces  
HHHH  
Kelly Twilighters  
Pony Express  
Red Rustlers  
Stateliners  
Woodlawn Meadowlarks

