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 & 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 six Agents with various responsibilities, including: Crops and Horticulture, Community Development, Family Life and Child Development, Foods and Nutrition, Livestock and Natural Resources & 4-H Youth Development. The District also has three full-time office professionals, and three full-time 4-H Program Managers in the Offices of Holton, Oskaloosa and Seneca.

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!

Ross Mosteller – District Agent, 4-H Youth Development
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 contest 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
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 till 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. 2021 enrollment data shows 716 4-H members, including Cloverbuds (ages 5-8) enrolled in one of the 29 clubs within the District. Two hundred twenty four registered volunteers work directly with these youth. In addition to the Community 4-H Club enrollment, many youth are involved in school enrichment activities in school or afterschool. Here are some quick facts. (duplicates in clubs and school removed)

### Member Facts
- Male Members: 319
- Female Members: 396
- Rural Residence: 459
- Town/City Residence: 257
- Average 4-H Age: 11.1

### Top Five Projects by Enrollment
- Foods and Nutrition – 307
- Visual Arts and Crafts – 273
- Photography – 257
- Swine – 188
- Beef – 141

### 4-H Clubs in Jackson county
- Delia Early Birds
- Denison Builders
- Hoyt Livewires
- Lucky Stars
- Mayetta Mustangs
- North Jackson Jets
- Ontario Busy Bees
- Pleasant Valley Rustlers
- Solider Boosters
- Straight Arrows

### 4-H Clubs in Jefferson county
- Billtown
- Clover Power
- Fairview
- Grantville
- Jolly Juniors
- Lucky 4
- Mooney Creek
- Prosperity
- Valley Victors
- Winchester

### 4-H Clubs in Nemaha county
- Achievers
- Busy Jayhawkers
- Centralia Aces
- HHHH
- Kelly Twilighters
- Pony Express
- Red Rustlers
- Stateliners
- Woodlawn Meadowlarks
Just For Fun!!!

**Fruit Word Search**
Fruits are delicious and nutritious! See if you can find the 14 kinds of fruit that are hidden across, down, diagonally, and backwards in the puzzle below.

- Cherry
- Strawberry
- Grapefruit
- Watermelon
- Pineapple
- Tangerine
- Cantaloupe
- Banana
- Apricot
- Orange
- Kiwi
- Peach
- Apple
- Pear

**Beef Word Scramble**
See if you can unscramble the names of 10 beef breeds. Then spell out the hidden message using the marked letters.

Word Bank
- Angus
- Brahman
- Devon
- Gelbvieh
- Hereford
- Limousin
- Pinzgauer
- Salers
- Simmental
- Shorthorn

- Word Bank
  - WDCHEERRYFSEATGB
  - MAUYJLTHTPXRRJ
  - BXTCKPRXPIZEAJ
  - RRWEYGAPLWNTPX
  - MOENRLAPEPPOEN
  - XMRBMXCTENVCFB
  - CGPEAZEVYGNFIRY
  - IBRCNEBLRPCIRUF
  - BRIWKPYOEENPIQ
  - YAPENIREGNATA
  - CANTALOUPECYSGU
  - LAYAWCIIBPHYNIR
  - DKICNZTSOKAILP
  - UPQLASJKVRJCTW
  - CSWMWYLYSOCRHXYC