

JANUARY 2026

Highlights:

- January 10: January Jamboree
- January 16: NE Region Record Book Judging, Manhattan
- January 19: Office Closed- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- January 29: Kansas Day
- February 1: Beef Tagging & Weigh-In

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Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

"To Make the Best Better!"

Dates to Remember:

- January 10: January Jamboree
- January 16: NE Region Record Book Judging
- January 19: Office Closed- Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- February 1: Beef Tagging & Weigh-In

Please send Chatterbox submissions to Lisa and Grace by January 26

Visit us on the Web:
www.shawnee.ksu.edu

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A Word From Your Agent...

Happy new year everyone! I hope you all had a restful break and enjoyed the holidays! We are looking forward to a fantastic 2026 here in the office.

County Club Day has been scheduled for February 22nd from 2-5 pm at Shawnee Heights Middle School. A sign-up sheet will be emailed out via 4-H Online soon, so be sure to keep an eye out for that. With an event coming up, it is a great time to double check your 4-H enrollment for 2026 and ensure that you are re-enrolled in the program.

Please also save the date for regional club day on March 21st. We will be at Baldwin Junior High School this year. 4-Hers who participate in county club day and qualify for the regional contest will be notified after the conclusion of the county contest.

We are in need of some new superintendents for the 2026 fair! Please be aware, that if a project has no superintendent, we will not be able to have that project. The list includes: Decorated Eggs and Home Environment. If you would like to volunteer for this, or know of someone who may be interested, please reach out to the office!

-Grace

Changes to 4-H Online Messaging

The 4-H Online broadcast system will no longer allow us to send text message notifications when we send emails. If you would like to be signed up for text messages about county events and activities, please join our county-wide GroupMe here:

https://groupme.com/join_group/102815469/5JDLs55L

Ambassador Information

Ambassador meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of even months, at 6 pm before Events Council. If you'd like to join, we'll see you on February 12th in the upstairs meeting room!

We are updating our email list for Ambassadors! 4-Hers who are program age 12 or older and who have been in 4-H for at least 3 years are encouraged to join the group. For email updates, please sign up for the official Ambassador's email list here: <https://forms.office.com/r/42n2ayuTaC>

Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

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County Notes

From the Fair Board

2026 Fair Theme Contest

Attention Shawnee County 4-Hers and clubs! The Shawnee County Fair Board needs your help picking a fair theme for the 2026 Shawnee County Fair! Themes submitted will be voted on by the board members and the winner will be the theme for the 2026 Shawnee County Fair. Themes must be submitted by January 26, 2026 to Candis Stiles at candism@ksu.edu.

Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who helped assemble bread kits for our Wheat Science program! These kits will go out to classrooms in January along with materials about wheat and the industry in Kansas. -Lisa



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January Jamboree



Open to everyone — come and explore!

Join us for family-friendly interactive arts and crafts activities guided by local 4-H members.



January 10th – 10 am–12 pm

**Countryside United Methodist Church
3221 SW Burlingame Rd
Topeka, KS 66611**

Most activities are free but some crafts may cost minimal to help cover supply cost (\$1–\$2)

This institution is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services, and activities. Program information may be available in languages other than English. Language access requests and reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, including alternative means of communication (e.g., Braille, large print, and American Sign Language), may be requested by contacting the event contact Grace Wiens four weeks prior to the start of the event (December 12) at 785-232-0062 ext. 120 or wiensg@ksu.edu.

Requests received after this date will be honored when it is feasible to do so. Language access services, such as interpretation or translation of vital information, will be provided free of charge to limited English proficient individuals upon request.

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Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge (YEC)

Feb. 19th, 2026

4:00pm

TCALC

500 SW Tuffy Kellogg Dr
Topeka, KS 66606



What is YEC?

A locally-organized youth entrepreneurship contest that brings students together to gain hands-on experience.

YEC has 3 judged parts:

- Executive Summary
- Business Presentation
- Tradeshow Booth

Youth can compete as individuals or teams (max 4 students).

The winners of the Shawnee County YEC advances to the state-wide competition known as the Kansas Entrepreneurship Challenge (KEC) which is held at Kansas State University in April.

- Youth can prepare on their own or at learning sessions
- Open to all Shawnee County 7th-12th graders
- Business pitched can be a concept or currently operational
- Businesses must be student created and student operated

Prizes

- 1st Place \$1,000
- 2nd Place \$800
- 3rd Place \$550
- 4th Place \$400
- 5th Place \$250

Contest and Learning Session Registration

To participate in the optional Learning Sessions, register by January 15th. Learning Session are Jan. 22, 28 and Feb. 5th at the Shawnee County Extension Office, 6:00-7:30pm.

To compete in the contest register by February 5th. Register at:

<https://forms.gle/DnJzbnXoNn8NVw2JA>

Registration QR Code:



Presented by:



KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY

Extension
Shawnee County

Kansas State University is committed to making its services, activities and programs accessible to all participants. If you have special requirements due to a physical, vision, or hearing disability, contact Candie Stiles, 785-233-0002 ext. 110.
Kansas State University Agricultural Experiment Station and Cooperative Extension Service
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Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

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Livestock Corner

2026 Weigh-In and Tagging Dates

Please note, all county fair animals must be tagged by the Friday following their species tagging date. Any 4-Her wishing to participate in the Rate of Gain contest must have their animal present at the tagging date for official weigh-in. Animals that are only going to State Fair or KJLS have a later deadline. Arrangements must be made with Grace for tagging state animals.

Beef

Sunday, February 1, 1-3 pm at Gleason's Farm (Address will be sent to project members)

Small Animal (Bucket Calf, Meat Goat, Sheep, Swine)

Sunday, April 26, 1-4 pm at Blythe Farms (Address will be sent to project members)

Livestock Educational Sessions

Attendance of at least 2 of 3 educational meetings hosted by the 4-H Livestock Committee is required to sell animals at the Shawnee County Fair Livestock Sale. Meetings will be recorded this year in the event that a 4-Her needs to make up the session.

February 25: Extension Meeting Room, 6-7 pm

May 20: Extension Meeting Room, 6-7 pm

K-State Junior Producer Days

These are one-day, educational events for families to learn about the selection and management of youth livestock projects.

Registration information will be released in the next few weeks. Once released, updates will be posted on the youth livestock program Facebook page, as well as at <https://www.asi.k-state.edu/extension/youth-programs/events/ks-jr-producer/>.

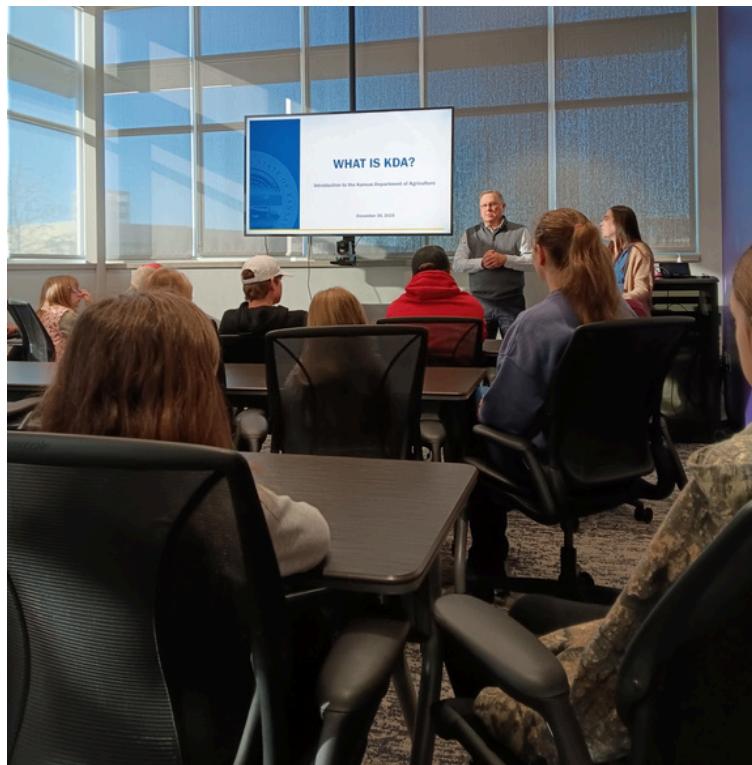


Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

"To Make the Best Better!"

Winter Agriculture Field Trip

Several 4-Hers were able to attend the field trip to the Kansas Department of Agriculture over the holiday break! We are so thankful to the Livestock Committee for arranging this!





Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

"To Make the Best Better!"

4-H Horse Judging Contest

The 2026 Kansas State 4-H Horse Judging Contest will be held January 23, 2026, at EquiFest of Kansas in Topeka. Entry information will be released this month. **Final registration is due January 9, 2026. Registration for the contest will not be accepted after January 9.** Information will be posted on the [4-H Horse Judging website](#).

State News



Citizenship in Action

Registration: Here-

Due to Hotel room constraints, we will be capping the number of attendees so get registered soon.

Registration Deadline: January 26, 2026 at midnight OR when we reach our CAP
Cost: \$225 per attendee

Times for this years event will run very similar to last years, so please use that agenda until the new one is posted.

BANQUET will be Sunday evening, if you are asking your legislators to join, please email dsratlif@ksu.edu by Feb 3 with any additional attendees. The cost is \$35 for additional attendees.





Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

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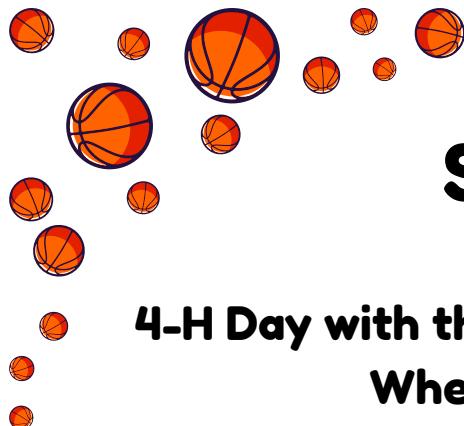
Communications Projects Resources and Information

As you prepare for 4-H Day, please remember there are great resources for project talks, illustrated talks, demonstrations, public speaking, and preparing visual aids on the [4-H Communications Project Page](#) under project materials.

Purple or top blue ribbons of those age 9 and older (before January 1) can take their project talks, demonstrations, and illustrated talks to the Kansas State Fair. Poetry entries can also be entered.

Public Speaking entries are welcome at the State Fair; however, regardless of the topic used locally, all contestants at the State Fair will use the same topic: "How has your journey in 4-H contributed to being Beyond Ready for current challenges and future goals?" More details will be available soon.

Note from Shawnee County: Make sure to review our current Club Day Guidelines before our event February 22nd. They may be different from Kansas State Fair guidelines.



Save the Date

**4-H Day with the K-State Women's Basketball Team
When: Sunday, March 1 at 1 pm
Opponent: Iowa State**

**Details are still being finalized and more
information will be available soon!**



Why participate in International Exchanges with 4-H?

Sarah E. Maass, State 4-H Youth Development Program Leader

Why participate in International Exchanges with 4-H?

Have you ever wondered what life is like in another country—or how 4-H connects youth across the globe?

Traveling to another country or hosting a delegate from another country through 4-H offers an incredible opportunity for families to learn, grow, and make lifelong memories.

Why It Matters for Youth

- See the World Differently

Travel abroad or host a student from another country. You'll experience new traditions, foods, and ways of life—far beyond what you see online.

- Make Friends Around the Globe

Imagine having a friend in Japan, Costa Rica, Norway, or another country! These connections often last a lifetime.

- Level Up Your Skills

Adapt to new situations, learn to communicate across language barriers, and grow as a leader. These experiences will help you succeed anywhere, and a bonus is that they look great on college applications.

Why Parents Love It

- Expand Their Worldview

Experiencing life in another community firsthand helps youth appreciate different perspectives and develop empathy—skills essential for success in today's global society.

- Build Independence and Confidence

Living in a new environment or hosting an exchange delegate teaches adaptability, problem-solving, and resilience.

- Safe and Supported

Programs in 4-H prioritize safety and provide guidance every step of the way, so you can feel confident your child is in good hands.

Shared Benefits for Families

- Create Lifelong Connections

International exchanges often lead to friendships that span continents, providing your family with a global network of support and opportunities.

- Share Your Story

You'll represent your community and 4-H while learning how youth programs work in other countries.



Applications Open for 2026 4-H International Exchange Host Families



States' 4-H International Exchange Programs has opened online applications for next summer's exchanges. Families have begun applying to host Japanese youth who represent Labo and LEX organizations and Taiwan teens representing Taiwan 4-H. The applications from the international organizations will be arriving in February with placements assigned in host families shortly thereafter. Families wishing to host should apply early for a teen placement who best fits their children's ages, genders, and interests. Host families in this program should have a family member who is the same gender and with a couple of years the age of the exchangee.

Families who have hosted previously in the program need simply to update their existing applications online. The Taiwan group will be in the U.S. from June 28 to July 26. Kansas will host Japanese from July 21 to August 16. To locate the host family application, visit the [Global Citizenship tab](#) on the Kansas 4-H website.

For information on the Japan Inbound Exchange contact Pam Van Horn pvanhorn@ksu.edu. Contact Mary Kay Munson regarding the Taiwan Exchange at mkm2@ksu.edu.

Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

"To Make the Best Better!"

Club Chatter

Deer Trail

The Deer Trail 4H club had a meeting on December 8th at 6:30pm at the extension office. We made winter crafts and had holiday snacks. Our next meeting is January 12th at 6:30pm at the extension office.

-Arlo Odgers



Riverside

After our December meeting, members made Birthday Boxes for Harvesters. Families donated decorations and supplies to make cakes. We also enjoyed a taco bar. Our next meeting is January 12 at 7pm at Berryton United Methodist Church.

-Willa Tucker



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Auburn

The Auburn 4-H Club had a truly magical December, filled with the joy of giving and holiday cheer. We rang bells for the Salvation Army at Dillons Urish, and during our monthly meeting, we gathered at SLI group homes to share Christmas carols and deliver food baskets. What a heartwarming way to wrap up 2025—spreading kindness, music, and community spirit all season long!

-Harley Brossard



Silver Lake



Congratulations to the members of the Silver Lake 4-H community club who were elected as an officer for the Shawnee County Events Council: Vice president – Hanna Myers, Treasurer - Mary Leigh Myers, and Secretary – Moriah Rubino. Several members had fun ringing the Salvation Army bell at Sam's Club before Christmas. Our next meeting will be held January 11th at 4 pm at the Silver Lake United Methodist Church.

Happy New Year!!

-Clara Thomas



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Dover

In October the Dover 4-H Club had our 4-H fall party at the Bergin's house. At the party we installed officers. We had football, corn hole and a pulled pork meal. Austin Sage is now our new president and Rachel Garmin is our new vice president. At our November meeting we played a game that taught us about the meanings of each "H" in 4-H.



Bunny Bunch

We did not have a meeting in December due to the weather. Our next meeting will be on January 5th 2026 in the upstairs meeting room at 7pm. Our February meeting will be Monday the 2nd at 7pm. Our youth only ARBA sanctioned show is January 17th at the armory in Manhattan. We hope to see you there. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

-Brooklynn Powell

Rossville Rustlers

The Rossville Rustlers 4-H Club met December 14, 2025, at Citizen Potawatomi Community Building. Prior to the meeting the club sang Christmas carols to residents of Oakley Place of Rossville. At the conclusion of the meeting the members wrapped gifts they purchased for their adopted family. The next club meeting will be in January 2026.

-Valencia Crawford

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"To Make the Best Better!"

Topeka Trailblazers

We sang at a nursing home. Then we went back to the meeting place to have cookies and a merry good time.

-Max Diehl



Grove

For the December meeting the Grove 4-H Club had a potluck dinner, meeting, and we assembled 20 baskets for our supporters and community members. It was fun to spend time together with each other.

-Chane Nolte



Shawnee County 4-H *Chatterbox*

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Shawnee County 4-H Calendar

January 2026

1 Office Closed- New Year's Day

4-H Exchange, EMR, 7 pm

5 Bunny Bunch Club Meeting, EMR, 7 pm

6 Air Pistol, EMR, 6 pm

15 Shooting Sports II, EMR, 6 pm

16 NE Region Record Book Judging,
Manhattan

19 Office Closed- Martin Luther King Jr. Day

20 Air Pistol, EMR, 6 pm

21 Livestock Committee Meeting, Downstairs
Conference Room, 7:15 pm

22 Horse Club Meeting, EMR, 7 pm

26 Chatterbox Submissions Due

Paw Prints Dog Club Meeting, EMR, 7 pm

27 Shawnee County Fair Board, EMR, 7 pm

28 Shooting Sports I, EMR, 6 pm



February 2026

1 Beef Tagging & Weigh-In, 1- 3 pm, Gleason's

2 Bunny Bunch Club Meeting, EMR, 7 pm

4 Air Pistol, EMR, 6 pm

5 4-H Exchange, EMR, 7 pm

12 4-H Events Council Meeting, EMR, 7 pm

15-16 Citizenship in Action, Topeka

17 Air Pistol, EMR, 6 pm

18 Shooting Sports I, EMR 6 pm

Livestock Committee Meeting, Downstairs
Conference Room, 7:15 pm

19 Shooting Sports II, EMR, 6 pm

21-22 Horse Panorama, Rock Springs Ranch

22 Shawnee County Club Day, 2 pm, SHMS

23 Paw Prints Dog Club Meeting, EMR, 7 pm

24 Shawnee County Fair Board, EMR, 7 pm

25 Shooting Sports I, EMR 6 pm

26 Horse Club Meeting, EMR, 7 pm

Chatterbox Submissions Due



EMR= Extension Meeting Room at Extension Office

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All dates and activities are subject to change.



**Beyond
Ready**