



RILEY COUNTY 4-H NEWSLETTER

January 2026

2025-2026 4-H Enrollment and Re-Enrollment

4-H Enrollment opened on **October 1** and is done via [4-H Online](#). If you have forgotten your password, 4-H Online can set you up with a temporary one. If you have forgotten your email log-in, PLEASE do not create a second account. Contact Brandy and she can assist you. The deadline to enroll and update projects is May 1.

Riley County 4-H Scholarships Available

Local scholarships are now available at www.riley.ksu.edu —> 4-H Youth Development —> Forms and Resources —> Scholarships

Local 4-H scholarships need to be turned into the Riley County Extension office **by 5 pm on Thursday, February 5**. If you have questions about filling out the applications, please do not hesitate to call John at the Riley County Extension Office for assistance 785-537-6350.

State 4-H Scholarships Available

The Kansas 4-H Scholarship for the 2026 academic year are here <https://www.kansas4-h.org/resources/awards-and-recognition/scholarships.html>

Youth who should be applying for this scholarship should be in their Senior year in High School OR OLDER (there are scholarships available for former 4-Hers who are Freshman-Senior in Post-Secondary Education and some that are available to Vet Med Students). **Applications are due January 5, 2026**

Reference Letters for Scholarships

Now is the time to ask for reference letters (teachers, club leaders, coaches, etc.). Here is a great resource <https://summer.harvard.edu/blog/how-to-ask-for-a-letter-of-recommendation/#Why-are-Letters-of-Recommendation-Important>

Mark Your Calendar Plant Science 4-Hers!

There will be free growing media for container gardens to be given out on **Saturday, April 25, 2026**. While it lasts. There will be some containers available or plan to bring your own. The pick up will be at the fair grounds near or in the **Wreath barn** where the garage sales take place. Stop-by between **8:30 – 11 am**. There may be some plants and seeds available that would go in the containers. Yet to be determined.

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The Riley County Extension Office will be closed December 24 and reopen on January 5

If you have something for the 4-H newsletter, please submit it to jajobe@ksu.edu by the 10 of the month.

How to Reach Us:

Riley County Extension

110 Courthouse Plaza, RM B220

Manhattan, KS 66502

785-537-6350

John: jajobe@ksu.edu

Brandy: brandymarie@ksu.edu

4-H Info: 4hinfo@rileycountyks.gov

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 7:30 am to 5 pm

Friday 7:30 am to noon

4-H Council Dates for 2025-2026

Monday, November 3, 2025; Monday, January 5, 2026; Monday, March 2, 2026; Monday, May 4, 2026; Monday, July 6, 2026; Monday, August 31, 2026.

Each club is allowed to have 5 voting representatives: 3 youth and 2 adults.

Importance of attending 4-H Council

Our Riley County 4-H Council serves as a vital component to our month-to-month programming. Club representative to take vital information back and report to their club. 4-H Council plans and implements county-wide events, oversees funding request, and votes to make necessary changes to our program. Each club is allowed to have (5) voting representatives (3) youth and (2) adults. I would strongly encourage you to exercise that right throughout the year. You don't have to be a Council Representative to attend. It is open to all 4-Hers and parents. The 4-H Council dates are **ABOVE**. **Starting in January, we will be serving pizza starting 6:30 pm for all 4-H Council meetings.**

4-H Showcase Event 2026

Our 4-H Showcase event will take place on **Saturday, February 14** at Riley County grade school, with events beginning at 8:30 am go until early afternoon. As part of the event we will have photography, horticulture, and livestock skillathon. Pickle Talks will be back again this year! **For this years event we will offer a project showcase expo in the gymnasium for the first time ever!** Pre-registration can be found here. Start the planning process now for the February event. See you there!
https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1vMprqtHt-zHa6mwZQg951paTyy_1t1mOd0GyJUF9WO8/edit?usp=sharing.

4-H Showcase STEM Challenge!

Test your speed, strategy, and engineering skills at the STEM Relay – new this year at the 2026 4-H Showcase (**RCGS February 14**)! It's a race against the clock to complete a series of building, balancing, and puzzle solving challenges. Bring your friends and see who the STEM Relay superstar will be! The STEM Challenge and all STEM activities will be in the gym.

Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge (YEC) 2026

Are you a high school-age youth living or attending school in Riley County? Have you ever had an idea for a business or product, but haven't had the outlet or guidance to put together a business plan or prototype? Well HERE is your chance to make it happen...and earn some MONEY!

In partnership with the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce, Riley County Extension, Network Kansas, SPARK and generous donations from local donors, we will be hosting our 8th Youth Entrepreneurship Challenge (YEC) event on Wednesday, March 4 at the Manhattan Town Center Mall. Participants will have the opportunity to compete against other young entrepreneurs for \$3,000 + in cash.

The competition consist of (3) components including; the submission of a simple business plan, the creation of a tabletop trade show booth, and finally a 5-6 minutes formal presentation in front of a panel of judges. All three of these components will be judged based on a specific set of predetermined criteria.

If this sounds like something you would like to be a part of, I would love to get you started by sharing event specifics, including the scoring rubrics use by judges, but also the template for creating a solid business plan.

To recap, if you're high school age, living or attending school in Riley County, are interested in business or entrepreneurship, and are willing to create a business plan, tradeshow booth, and present a 5-6 minute presentation, you will have the chance to win a portion of the \$3,000 + in cash. Call the Riley County Extension office or email me at jajobe@ksu.edu to get started today.

Take on the Heaviest Onion Challenge for Fair 2026

Congratulations to Brianna Britt on winning the Largest Pepper Challenge at the 2025 Riley County Fair. The 2026 fair will look to host the heaviest onion (any kind) contest. Contact the Riley County Extension office if you have any questions, 785-537-6350.

Riley County 4-H Showcase: Youth Livestock Skillathon

Rules: The livestock skillathon contest is a fun and challenging way for youth to test their livestock knowledge. The contest is an individual contest, but adult helpers will be available to assist with any questions. Adults will be at each station to help 4-Hers get started and answer any questions. Parents are not allowed to help 4-Hers and cell phones are not allowed throughout the contest.

Location: The event will be hosted at the Riley County 4-H Showcase on February 14, 2026 at the Riley County Grade School in the Gym.

Possible Classes:

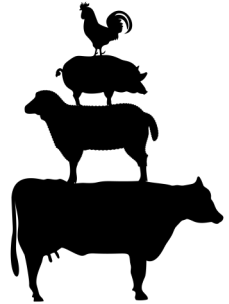
- Livestock Equipment Identification
- Retail Meat Cut Identification
- Animal Anatomy
- Breed Identification
- Meat Judging
- Written Exam Questions
- Quality Assurance Exercise
- Feed and Forage Identification
- Animal Health and Management

Age Divisions:

- Junior (7-9)
- Intermediate (10-13)
- Senior (14-18)
- Adult

Tie Breakers: Ties will be broken on the tiebreaker question set. If that does not break the tie, the individual with the highest written exam score will be declared the winner.

Awards: Scores will be tabulated after the contest concludes and shared via email. Champions will be announced in the next month's 4-H newsletter, and belt buckles will be placed in the club boxes for leaders to present to individuals at their next club meeting. The champion of each age division will receive a belt buckle sponsored by community donors. The winner of the adult division will receive a certificate and bragging rights for the year.



Riley County 4-H Horse Judging and Horse Panorama

Kansas 4-H, Kansas Quarter Horse Association, and EquiFest of Kansas are teaming up to host the 2026 Kansas State 4-H Horse Judging Contest. The Contest will be held **January 23, 2026**, in conjunction with EquiFest of Kansas in Topeka.



Kansas 4-H members age 9-18 are invited to participate in the 4-H contest, and may also participate in the open contest. Youth of any age are eligible to participate in the open contest hosted by Kansas Quarter Horse Association. Cost to enter the 4-H contest is \$25. Registration for the open contest is \$15. Coaches should register teams and individuals [here](#). Please be sure to read all rules prior to entry- [4-H Horse Judging rules](#).

Riley County plans to put together a team(s). They plan to host practices. Those will be announced soon.

Interested in being a part of the Horse Judging/Panorama team? Please contact Jenny Bormann minickbormann@gmail.com

Leaders and Parents

Consider in January

- Encourage families enroll/re-enroll via 4-H Online
- Make sure families are receiving emails from the Extension Office (at least weekly)
- Create club goals for the new year
- Start talking to families about attending the Annual Showcase event (February 14; RCGS)
- Encourage seniors to apply for county and state 4-H scholarships
- Invite Mr. Jobe to a club meeting
- Make sure 4-H Council Reps are attending meetings as voting representatives of your club
- Check on progress/needs of committees & parent volunteers/leaders.
- Start the conversation about exhibiting at county fair with new families

Area Project Report Form Due Dates

Project Reports attending the NE-AREA screening need to be turned in to the Riley County Extension office by **5 pm on Monday , January 5**. They will be screened on January 16 at Pottorf Hall.

Welcoming New Families

As new families come into your club, please make sure you have assigned someone to greet these families and make them feel welcome. Feeling welcome can be the difference between a family staying with the 4-H program for years to come, or dropping out after a few meetings. New Family Handbooks are available at the Extension Office to share with your new families.

4-H Project Day Ideas?...Let us Know.

Riley County 4-H is currently looking for passionate individuals to host project days during the next year. Do you have a skill or hobby you would be willing to share with other 4-Hers across the county? In addition, we are always looking for touring ideas for 4-Hers and families. Contact Brandy or John if this is of interest, 785-537-6350.

Now Accepting Credit Card Payments!

We're pleased to announce that the Extension Office is now able to accept credit card payments for 4-H-related fees and services! This added payment option offers more convenience for our 4-H families. You can now use most major credit cards to pay for: Event registrations, project registrations, and more!

Payments can be made securely in person, in the office, or over the phone. For some of our events, the link to pay will be in the confirmation email.

Please note: A 2.5% convenience fee will be added to all credit card transactions to help cover processing costs.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact the Extension Office—we're happy to assist!



Citizenship In Action



REGISTRATION IS
NOW OPEN!

- WHEN - February 15-16, 2026
- COST - \$225
- WHO - Youth ages 13-18
- WHERE - Hotel Topeka City Center,
1717 SW Topeka Blvd,
Topeka, KS 66612
- SPACE IS LIMITED SO GET OUT AND
REGISTER!



K-STATE
Research and Extension



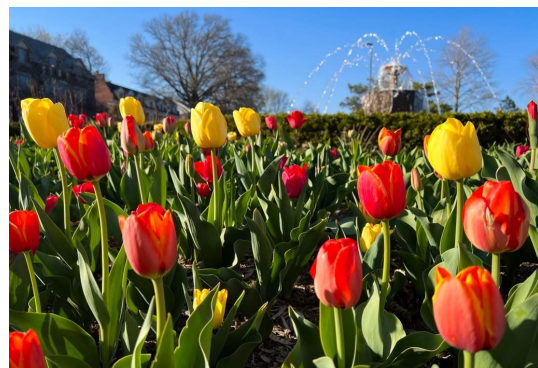
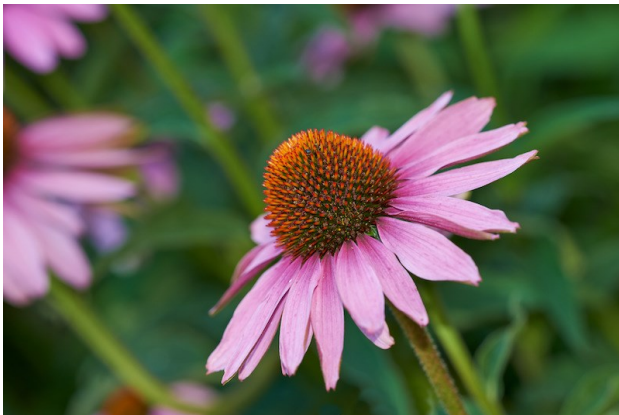
4-Hers hosted a toy drive at the Manhattan Public Library on December 14th. Thank you to all those who donated!



Riley County Fair 2026 Open Class Challenge

“Scenes of Riley County”

Join us for the Riley County Fair 2026 Open Class “Scenes of Riley County” Challenge. This year the Riley County scene will focus on **“Flowers of Riley County”**. All pictures must be taken in Riley County and a description of the flower(s) and location must be included on the back of the photo. The winning photo will receive a special ribbon and will be hung in the Riley County Courthouse for one year. Cropping is allowed, but no digital manipulation. Only **ONE** entry per person. Please refer to the 2026 Riley County fair book for additional requirements when it comes out. Contact the Riley County Extension office with any questions about the challenge 785-537-6350.



RILEY COUNTY 4-H

Performing Arts

JOIN US FOR PERFORMING ARTS PROJECT EVENTS ALL YEAR.

you do NOT have to be enrolled in performing arts to participate

Sunday – Nov. 16, 2025 – 5-6 pm – @GVCC

"Take the Stage!" (Introduction to Performing Arts)

Sunday – Dec. 14, 2025 – 2 pm – @Manhattan Arts

*FIELD TRIP – **additional ticket purchase to see Annie at MAC*

Sunday – Jan. 25, 2026 – 5-6 pm – @GVCC

"The Power of Story" (Acting & Improv Skills)

Sunday – February 22, 2026 – 5-6 pm – @GVCC

"Find Your Voice" (Music, Speech, and Expression)

Sunday – March 29, 2026 – 5-6 pm – @GVCC

"Move to the Music" (Dance & Movement for the Stage)

Sunday – April 3, 2026 – 2 pm – @MHS

*FIELD TRIP – **additional ticket purchase to see Newsies at MHS*

GVCC – Green Valley
Community Center
3770 Green Valley Rd,
Manhattan

*for questions or to RSVP – contact
morganroberts51210@gmail.com*

Are You Ready For a RABBIT?

Come learn what it takes to get started in the 4-H rabbit project and its many benefits. Or, if you're already started and want to learn more, come ask questions and learn from and with other experienced members.

Why rabbits?

The rabbit project offers all of the perks and learning opportunities of an animal project without the overhead!

- Develop responsibility in caring for an animal
- Learn the science around animal nutrition, anatomy, and basic vet care
- Improve skills while communicating about interests

Other advantages of rabbit projects:

- Limited space needed (no acreage or fencing necessary)
- Can be raised "in town"
- Easily maintained
- Minimal mess
- Reasonable expenses for feed and supplies

Interested? Come learn more!

This group will be led by **Alena Wiebers**, a 9-year Riley County 4-H member in the rabbit project, 2024 state winner in the 4-H rabbit project, and competitor in national-level youth educational contests.



Riley County 4-H Rabbit Project Group

WHO: Anyone interested in the rabbit project

WHAT: Topic TBD

WHEN: Will meet in January

WHERE: Pottorf Hall Clover Room

2026

K-STATE JUNIOR BEEF PRODUCER DAY

Program

Join us on March 7, 2026, for the biennial K-State Junior Beef Producer Day! This event is a fun-filled educational day for youth, parents, beef project leaders, ag teachers, and extension agents to expand their knowledge of youth beef projects. Presentations by K-State faculty, staff, K-State livestock judging team members, students, and guest speakers will cover topics that may include selection, nutrition, daily care, meat science, reproduction, health, grooming, and showmanship. An optional YQCA certification class will be offered at the end of the day. A complimentary lunch and t-shirt will also be provided for those who register by the deadline. The registration fee is \$20 per person for those who sign up by February 13. The fee will increase to \$30 per person for those who register after the deadline. Only those who register by February 13 will receive a t-shirt. This is a family event! Anyone attending the event must register, including youth and adults.

Registration

Deadline: February 13

Fee: \$20/person

Registration Link: <https://bit.ly/BeefJrProducer>

Late Registration: \$30/person (after February 13)

*All attendees must register, including youth & adults.

**Late registrants will not receive a t-shirt.



Scan Me!

Tentative Schedule

8:00AM	Check-in
9:00AM	Welcome
9:15AM	Project Selection
10:00AM	Morning Breakout Sessions -Nutrition, Meat Science, Daily Care, Grooming & Fitting
Noon	Lunch
1:00PM	Afternoon Breakout Sessions -Health, Reproduction, Showmanship
3:15PM	Dismissal
3:30PM	Optional YQCA Class

Questions?
Lexie Hayes

☎ 785.532.1264 ✉ adhayes@ksu.edu

Registration Due
February 13



K-State, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperating. All educational programs and materials available without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY
Extension

2026

K-State Junior Sheep Producer Day



Date

4.11.2026

Manhattan, KS



Scan Me!



Registration

Due: 3.20.2026

Cost: \$20/person

<https://bit.ly/SheepJrProducer>

**All adults & youth must register to attend.*

***Only those registered by 3/20/26 will receive a t-shirt.*

****Late registration is \$30/person.*



Questions

Lexie Hayes



785.532.1264



adhayes@ksu.edu

Program

Join us for the biennial K-State Junior Sheep Producer Day on Saturday, April 11, 2026. Presentations will be provided by featured guests, as well as K-State faculty, staff, and students. This event will be an educational day of activities in which youth, parents, extension agents, ag teachers, and sheep project leaders can increase their knowledge of youth sheep project selection and management. A variety of topics will be shared, including an optional YQCA certification at the end of the day. All ages and skill levels are invited! Lunch and a t-shirt are included. The registration fee is \$20/person for those who sign up by March 20 or \$30/person for those who register after that date. Only those who register by the deadline will receive a t-shirt. This is a family event! Anyone attending, including both youth and adults, must register. There will be an optional tour of the sheep and meat goat center offered on Friday evening and Saturday after jr. day.

Tentative Schedule

Friday, April 10

5:00-7:00PM Optional Tour of Sheep & Goat Center

Saturday, April 11

8:00AM Check-in

9:00AM Welcome

9:15AM Selection

10:00AM Nutrition

10:45AM Morning Breakout Sessions

-facilities & equipment, reproduction, project management purchase to show

NOON Lunch

1:00PM Health

1:45PM Afternoon Breakout Sessions

-wool, showmanship, clipping & grooming

3:45PM Dismissal

4:00PM Optional YQCA Class

4:00-6:00PM Optional Sheep & Goat Center Tour



K-State, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperating. All educational programs and materials available without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability.



2025-2026 Riley County 4-H Calendar

December

14 Riley County 4-H Toy Drive; 1:30-3:30
24-Jan 5 Christmas Holiday, Office Closed

January

1-2 NYE Holiday, Ext. Office Closed
5 4-H Council, 7 pm Pottorf Hall
5 Area 4-H Project Reports DUE
5 State 4-H Scholarship DUE
16 NE Area PRF Screening, Pottorf Hall
19 MLK Jr. Day, Extension Office Closed
23 State Horse Judging
TBA 4-H Showcase Pre-Entry DUE
TBA Riley County 4-H Rabbit Project Meeting

February

5 Scholarships DUE to Extension office
14 Riley County Showcase, RCGS
15-16 Citizenship in Action, Topeka
16 Presidents Day, Extension Office Closed
21 Beef Weigh-In; Fairgrounds 1-3 pm
21-22 Horse Panorama, Rock Springs
22 Performing Arts Project Workshop; 5-6 pm

March

1 State PRFs DUE
1 Red Wheel Sales Begin
2 4-H Council, 7 pm Pottorf Hall
7 Junior Beef Producer Day
29 Performing Arts Project Workshop; 5-6 pm
Late March Red Wheel Sales DUE
TBA YQCA, 6-8 pm, Clover Room

April

11 Junior Sheep Producer Day
18 State Shooting Sports Match
25 Red Wheel Pick-Up, Pottorf Hall 9-9:30 am
25 Spring into Volunteering Workshop
25 Plant Science Project Workshop
TBA Discovery Days Registration DUE
TBA Fair Royalty Applications DUE
TBA State Shutterbug Event

May

1 Project Add/ Drop Deadline
4 4-H Council, 7 pm Pottorf Hall
4 Sheep & Goat Weigh-In/ Tagging, Hulbert Arena, 5-7 pm
TBA Dog Agility Workshop
TBA Fair Royalty Interview; Pottorf Hall
TBA Emerald Circle Banquet

June

1 Horse ID Papers DUE
3-5 Discovery Days, KSU Campus
12-14 State Geology Field Trip
19-20 Insect Spectacular; Yates Cents
TBA Dog Show (Disciplines TBA)
TBA Dog Show (Disciplines TBA)

July

1 Fair Pre-Entries DUE Online
6 4-H Council, 7 pm Pottorf Hall
15 State Fair Livestock Entries DUE
15 Fair Fashion Review
18 4-H Horse Show
20 Fair Work Night, Pottorf Hall
21 4-H Photography Judging
21 4-H Pet Show
21 Cloverbud Judging (No Clothing/ Fashion Revue)
22 4-H Visual Arts Judging
22 4-H Foods Judging
23-27 Riley County Fair, Cico Park
28 Fairground Cleanup

August

4 State Fair Entry Forms DUE
15 State Horticulture Judging
22-23 State Livestock Judging
31 4-H Council, 7 pm Pottorf Hall
TBA KJLS Entries DUE

September

7 Labor Day, Extension Office Closed
10 State Fair Project DUE to Extension Office
11-20 Kansas State Fair
18 Project Report Forms & Awards DUE



**Beyond
Ready**

Updated 11/25/2025

K-State Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.