



**4-H FAMILY NEWSLETTER**  
Nebraska Extension in Madison County  
1305 South 13th Street Norfolk, NE 68701  
Phone: 402-370-4040  
Website: [www.madison.unl.edu](http://www.madison.unl.edu)  
Like Us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/UNLMadisonCounty](http://www.facebook.com/UNLMadisonCounty)



**2026**  
**95 Days until Fair**

## **4-H PRE-ENTRY FORMS FOR THE MADISON COUNTY FAIR ARE AVAILABLE TODAY!**

An email detailing the guidelines for the pre-entry forms for the Madison County Fair will be sent separately. These forms are accessible in both digital and paper formats.

**Start filling yours out today.**

**FORMS due June 15.**

**NO LATE ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED.**



### **We appreciate our 4-H volunteers!**

Thank you to all of our 4-H volunteers for supporting and helping our 4-H youth in Madison County!

Be sure to reach out and



**Thank your 4-H leaders and volunteers during  
*National Volunteer Week, April 19-25!***



Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture. University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension educational programs abide with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln and the United State Department of Agriculture. 2026



# Announcing Changes to Events for the 2026 Madison County Fair 4-H/FFA!



We are excited to present the schedule of events for the 2026 Madison County Fair! For the complete schedule, please refer to the front section of the 2026 fairbook found at <https://extension.unl.edu/statewide/madison/4-h/madison-county-4-h-fairbook/>.

Below are the significant changes that all need to pay attention to!

- **Monday, July 6**
  - 8am-12pm - Static Judging Day of all 4-H Static Exhibits except Foods and Gardening.
- **Tuesday, July 7**
  - 8am-12pm - 4-H Judging of Foods and Gardening
  - 2:00pm to 5pm - Stalls and Pens available for Livestock to arrive
  - No trailers are allowed to enter the grounds after 5:00pm
  - 4-H Building Open, 5:00p.m. - 9:00p.m.
- **Wednesday, July 8**
  - 9:00am Swine Check in and Weigh-in
  - 10:00am Dog Show
  - 12:00pm - All animals must be in place.
  - 1:00pm - Sheep and Goat Check-in and Weigh-in
  - 1:00pm - Bucket Calf Check-in and Weigh-in
  - 2:00pm Beef Cattle Check-in and Weigh-in
  - 4:30pm - 4-H Livestock Judging Contest
  - 7:10pm - 4-H Night - Join us to be recognized during the Mid-States Rodeo
- **Thursday, July 9**
  - 1:00pm - 4-H Rabbit Show
  - 2:00pm - 4-H Bucket Calf Interviews
  - 5:00pm - Dairy Educational Event
- **Friday, July 10**
  - 12pm - Stocker Feeder Weigh-in
  - 1:30pm - Beef Show
  - 3:00 pm - Companion Animal Show
- **Saturday, July 11**
  - 9:00 am - 4-H Bucket Calf Show
  - 10:00am - Poultry Show
  - 3:00pm - 4-H Fashion Show
- **Sunday, July 12**
  - 8am - Release of Animals
  - 4-H Funday



# MADISON COUNTY 4-H UPDATES

## APRIL 2026



***Join 4-H Today at [v2.4honline.com](https://v2.4honline.com)***

Welcome to the Madison County 4-H Program! Please be sure to enroll as soon as you can to ensure you receive all the information needed to be a part of the 4-H program and participate at the Madison County Fair! Follow this link above for more information about 4-H, clubs in Madison County and how to enroll! Reminder: you only have to choose one project to continue. All project selections will be put on your pre-enrollment form which will be available in soon. Pre-entry forms will be due June 15.

## ***Digital 2026 4-H Fairbook is Available!***

Check out the fairbook at <https://extension.unl.edu/statewide/madison/4-h/madison-county-4-h-fairbook/> to see project areas you are interested in this year! **(printed books will be available soon)**

## ***4-H Camper Spots - April 6, 8am***

Reserve your camper spot for the 2026 Madison County Fair and Rodeo. Open to 4-H families on Monday, April 6 beginning at 8:00 a.m. Call the Madison County Fairgrounds at 402-454-2144. (will open to the public on April 29, so be sure to call)

Prices are:

- \$150/week for 30amp
- \$175/week for 50amp

Credit card transaction fee is \$4 if you choose to pay with a card.

Must pay at reservation. Office will be open from 8am-12pm.

## 2026 4-H Fair Book

The newly updated fair books are ready to view on the website! Check them out at [madison.unl.edu](http://madison.unl.edu) or use the QR Code to get to the 4-H Book!



\*links for information tags/livestock ID's coming SOON. Printed copies available at the office.



## 4-H Speech, PSA, and Presentation Contest - Tuesday, April 21

Submit your PSA and sign up for the speech contest by Monday, April 20 at noon!

Call in to our office or REGISTER HERE: <https://go.unl.edu/4irf>

See age divisions and details in the March newsletter.

Open to all 4-H members ages 5+



The contest will take place Tuesday, April 21 at 7:00 p.m. at the Extension Office.



## 51st Anniversary - 4-H Special Edition

We are looking for 4-H members to sell ads in Madison County to help support the printing of the 2025 4-H Special Edition with the Norfolk Daily News.

A few routes are available. Please contact Sarah for more information!



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MADISON COUNTY 4-H COUNCIL INVITES YOU TO...

# THE 2026 4-H FUN EVENT

JOIN US AT THE YMCA POOL AND FIELD HOUSE IN NORFOLK  
FOR AN AFTERNOON OF GAMES AND FUN WITH YOUR  
FELLOW MADISON COUNTY 4-H FAMILIES.

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MONDAY  
**APRIL 6TH**

1PM - 2PM - POOL  
2PM-3PM - FIELDHOUSE

This event is open to members and families of the  
Madison County 4-H Program.  
It is hosted by the Madison County 4-H Council.

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**TO HELP US ESTIMATE ATTENDANCE,  
PLEASE RSVP TO: [SPOLACEK2@UNL.EDU](mailto:SPOLACEK2@UNL.EDU)  
(NOT REQUIRED)**



# 4-H Animal Tracking and Scat Workshop

Join us on April 6th at 3:15 PM for the 4-H Animal Tracking and Scat Workshop, immediately following the YMCA 4-H Fun Day events!

Workshop presented by: Mikayla Martensen

*Weather Permitting, location might change to Extension Office.*

Get a jump on your conservation and wildlife exhibits by learning about wildlife through tracks and scat! In this hands-on workshop, participants will explore how wildlife biologists and conservationists identify animals by studying the clues they leave behind in nature. Students will learn how to recognize common animal tracks, understand track patterns, and discover how scat can provide important information about an animal's diet, habitat, and behavior. Participants will examine examples of tracks and scat from different wildlife species and practice identifying them while learning why tracking is an important tool used in wildlife conservation and management. During the workshop, each participant will also create their own plaster of Paris track cast, just like wildlife researchers do in the field, allowing them to preserve a track and take home a keepsake while gaining a better understanding of how scientists study wildlife without always seeing the animals themselves. This is a free workshop!

Please register at: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSderqhYzcbI-qnXo6ppR0xBgk7jnkI2Y3RaClyz85I1jmYccQ/viewform?usp=sharing&ouid=107097166922450723612>



## 4-H Building Monitors:

Looking for individual or club participation on taking shifts to watch the 4-H building during the 2026 Madison County Fair - sign up below. We need all the help we can get from families!

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1CyoyYJjt6\\_Eyl7BiTc9AqD1AGFIQSjOwfwrm\\_Hl18ja4/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1CyoyYJjt6_Eyl7BiTc9AqD1AGFIQSjOwfwrm_Hl18ja4/edit?usp=sharing)



# 4-H Cat Showmanship Workshop

April 11, 2026 | 10 am  
at the Madison County Vet Clinic  
802 W 8th St, Madison, NE

Welcome to bring your cat, but not required!

Have you ever wondered how you show a cat at the fair? Then this workshop is purr-fect for you! Whether you're a beginner or an experienced cat exhibitor, join us for a meow-nificent time as we explore all things cat-related. Don't miss out on this chance to sharpen your skills and have a furry good time!

Workshop is open to 4-H members and non-4-H members! Will have an opportunity to learn how you can join 4-H too!

Register by visiting:

<https://forms.gle/fa1wCq2wPi3HcbxG8>

or calling the Nebraska Extension in Madison County  
402-370-4040.

Sponsored by the  
Madison County Vet Clinic





# 4-H Dog Workshop

April 11, 2026 | 1-3 pm

at the Madison County Fairgrounds

Indoor Arena - Madison, NE

Please bring your dog if you'd like to practice!

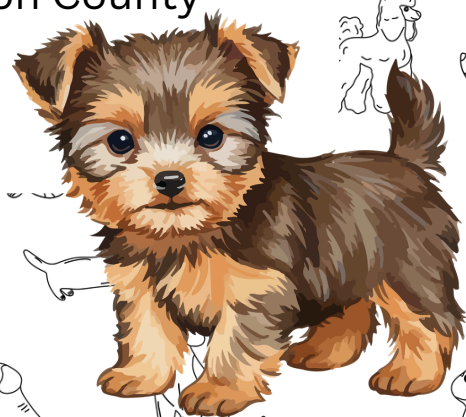
Have you ever wondered how you show a dog at the fair? Then this workshop is paw-tastic for you! Whether you're a beginner or an experienced dog exhibitor, join us for a great time as we explore all things dog-related. Don't miss out on this chance to sharpen your skills and have a furry good time!

Workshop is open to 4-H members and non-4-H members!  
Will have an opportunity to learn how you can join 4-H too!

Register by visiting:

<https://forms.gle/DhiGoWR8khjRKngT8>

or calling the Nebraska Extension in Madison County  
402-370-4040.





# 4-H Livestock News



LAST CHANCE for instructor led training:

April 6th - Madison County  
Extension Office - 11am!

All 4-H and FFA livestock exhibitors must complete this certification before being able to show at the county and / or state fair.

\*Cloverbuds are not required to complete the training!

## **YQCA Deadline is June 15, 2026**

If you have completed an instructor led training, be sure to register and pay for the training so we can complete the certification.

This must be completed by deadline. \*you may attend other counties YQCA sessions as well!

If you still need to get certified please visit [yqcaprogram.org](http://yqcaprogram.org) and complete the course. Be sure to select the correct age group and then send a copy of your certificate to [jroberts41@unl.edu](mailto:jroberts41@unl.edu).

## **Livestock Affidavits/ID Sheet**

- required for all livestock and small animals for county fair
- print copies on [madison.unl.edu](http://madison.unl.edu) or pick up at Extension Office

## **Bucket Calf Record Books-FREE**

- due June 26 - pick up at Extension Office

## **DNA Samples**

- pick up envelopes and return to Extension Office by June 15
- \$7 each to be paid online when you nominate your animal on Show Stock Manager (will inform when available!)

## **Livestock ID Information**

Available at Extension Office:

• Ear tags required for county-only market beef, swine, bucket calves-\$2.00/each (price increase from previous years)

• EID Tags will be required for market, feeders, and swine attending the State Fair - \$3.00 each (price increase from previous years)

DNA samples- required for market and breeding livestock and feeder calves to show at the Nebraska State Fair

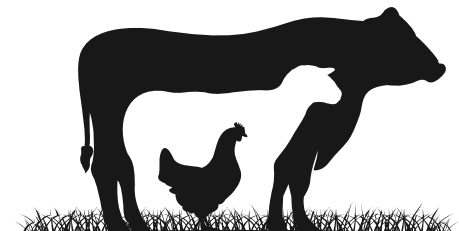
• Tattoos OR ID type that is accepted by the breed association required for registered breeding beef attending the State Fair or EID Tags for commercial breeding beef attending state fair. Breeding beef only attending the county fair can either have a county ear tag and / or tattoo.

• Registered breeding heifers need their registration papers for check-in at the County and State fair.

• Rabbits are required to be tattooed.

• County-only tags: \$2.00  
• EID tags (State Fair): \$3.00

• All sheep and goats require scrapie tags for County and State Fair.



## 4-H Horse Information - County Fair & the State Horse Show

- Need to complete your Horse Advancement Level Test? Just contact the office to set up a visit! To prepare for the test:
  - visit: <https://4h.unl.edu/horse/advancement> for guidelines, study guides, practice tests, and more.
- Interested in showing at the Nebraska State Horse Show:
  - July 11-15 at Fonner Park | Grand Island, NE
  - eligible for ages 8-18
  - entries due June 1 - no late entries accepted.
  - (level testing must be completed by June 1 as well)

<https://4h.unl.edu/horse-expo-show>



### GOVERNOR'S AG EXCELLENCE AWARD– Due May 31

Sponsored by the Nebraska Investment Finance Authority, the purpose of the award is to recognize 4-H clubs for the work of the individuals in the club and the community service work of the entire club. Applications are due May 31. Check out the following link for more information! [ne4hfoundation.org/governors-ag-excellence-award/](http://ne4hfoundation.org/governors-ag-excellence-award/) for more information.

Please direct any questions to Lindsay Shearer by email [lshearer2@unl.edu](mailto:lshearer2@unl.edu) or by calling 402.472.9019.



### Wayne County 4-H Timed Event Rodeo



Nebraska Extension in Wayne County  
March 6 at 2:57 PM · 🌐

The Wayne County 4-H Timed Event Rodeo is July 25, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. in the Horse Arena at the Wayne County Fairgrounds (301 Pheasant Run Wayne, NE 68787). Entries are... See more

Check out the Wayne  
County 4-H Timed Event  
Rodeo 2026 Facebook Page  
for more information!

The Wayne County 4-H Timed  
Event Rodeo is July 25, 2026, at  
9:00 a.m. in the Horse Arena at  
the Wayne County Fairgrounds  
(301 Pheasant Run Wayne, NE  
68787). Entries are accepted until  
June 30, 5:00 p.m. Enter at

[https://go.unl.edu/  
waynerodeoentry](https://go.unl.edu/waynerodeoentry).

# ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION GUIDELINES- 2026 (4-H/FFA Families)

Read identification instructions under each specie.

## ANIMAL IDENTIFICATION GUIDELINES- 2026 (4-H/FFA Families)

ID sheets for County Fair livestock entries can be found at <https://extension.unl.edu/statewide/madison/4-h-animals-and-livestock-information/>. Read identification instructions under each specie.

Project Area	Nomination Process		Pre-Entry Deadline		
	** All County Fair Animals will need to complete ID Sheets/Ownership Affidavits. Link found above.	State Fair*** Any animal that carries EID tag must obtain a Premises ID to show at the Nebraska State Fair! To nominate animals for State Fair visit <a href="https://showstockmgr.com/">https://showstockmgr.com/</a>	County Fair Due Date	State Fair Nomination Due Date *Show Stock Manager Site	State Fair Show Entry Deadline @ PM
<b>BEEF</b>					
Market	4-H Ear Tag or EID Tag	EID Tag, DNA & Animal Info Submitted Online	June 15	June 15	August 10
Registered Breeding	Tattoo or 4-H Ear Tag and Registration Papers	Tattoo or ID type that is accepted by the breed association, DNA, Animal Info Submitted Online, Registration Papers	June 15	June 15	August 10
Commercial Breeding	Tattoo or 4-H Ear Tag	Tattoo or EID Tag, DNA & Animal Info Submitted Online		June 15	August 10
Feeder Calves	4-H Ear Tag or EID Tag	EID Tag, DNA & Animal Info Submitted Online	June 15	June 15	August 10
Bucket Calf	4-H Ear Tag	No Class	Record Books- June 26	-----	---
Cow/Calf	4-H Ear Tag	No Class	June 15	-----	-----
<b>DAIRY</b>					
Cattle	ID Sheet Drawing and picture	ID Sheet Drawing – only submit at State Fair Check In	June 15		August 10
Goat	ID Sheet Drawing and Scrapies Tag	No Class	June 15	-----	---
<b>GOAT</b>					
Breeding	USDA Scrapies Tag	USDA Scrapie Tag, DNA & Animal Info Submitted Online	June 15	June 15	August 10
Market	USDA Scrapies Tag	USDA Scrapies Tag, DNA & Animal Info Submitted Online	June 15	June 15	August 10
<b>HORSE</b>					
Market	ID Sheet Drawing	ID Sheet Drawing	June 15	June 1	June 1
<b>SWINE</b>					
Market	4-H County Ear Tag	EID Tag, DNA & Animal Info Submitted Online	June 15	June 15	August 10
Breeding	4-H County Ear Tag	EID Tag, DNA & Animal Info Submitted Online	June 15	June 15	August 10
<b>SHEEP</b>					
Breeding	USDA Scrapies Tag	USDA Scrapie Tag, DNA & Animal Info Submitted Online	June 15	June 15	August 10
Market	USDA Scrapies Tag	USDA Scrapies Tag, DNA & Animal Info Submitted Online	June 15	June 15	August 10
<b>RABBITS</b>					
Breeding & Market	ID Sheet and Tattoo	No ID Required	June 15	June 15	August 10
All Poultry	ID Sheet	No ID Required	June 15	June 15	August 10

# 2026 CALENDAR

Subject to change.

More activities and workshops will be added in the future!

## April

- 6 - YQCA, Extension Office, 11am
- 4-H Fun Day 1-3pm - Norfolk YMCA
- Animal Tracking and Scat Workshop 3:15pm
- 11 - Cat workshop, AM - Dog workshop, PM
- 21- Speech, PSA, & Presentation Contest, Extension Office
- 28- 4-H Council Meeting, Extension Office, 7pm

## May

- 25- Office Closed - Memorial Day
- 27-29 - PASE (premier animal science event, UNL East Campus)

## June

- 15- County Fair Deadline Day!**
- 15- Fashion Show Entry Deadline
- 16-17 - State Premier Communication Event - Lincoln
- 20- Barn Quilt Workshop, Madison Co. Fairgrounds
- 25- 4-H Council Meeting & Fair Clean Up, Madison County Fairgrounds, 6-8pm
- 26- Bucket Calf Record Books Deadline

## July

- 3- Office Closed- Independence Day
- 6-12 Madison County Fair!
- 6- Judging Day (Static Exhibits), 8-noon
- 7- Judging Day (Foods/Horticulture), Madison County Fairgrounds, 8am-noon
- 11- Public Fashion Show, Indoor Arena, (3pm or after)
- 11-15- State Horse Show, Fonner Park, Grand Island

## August

- 17-25- State Fair Drop Off, Extension Office
- 24 - Extension Office open until 6:30pm for State Fair Exhibit including horticulture, floriculture and foods.
- 26- State Fair Judging Day, Grand Island
- 28- State Fair Begins, Grand Island
- TBA- 4-H Council Meeting, Extension Office, 7pm
- TBA- 4-H Achievement Ceremony Nomination and Application Deadline

## September

- 7- State Fair Ends
- 9- State Fair Projects Ready for families to pick up from Extension Office
- 28 - 4-H Council Meeting, Extension Office, 7pm

## October-National 4-H Month

- TBA - 4-H Council Meeting, Extension Office, 7pm

## November

- 26-27 - Office Closed - Thanksgiving

## December

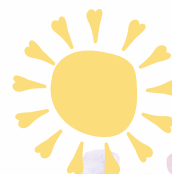
- 24-Jan. 1 - Closed - Holiday Shutdown
- \*\*will return to office on Monday, Jan. 4



Sarah Polacek  
4-H Educator



Jayd Krueger  
4-H Assistant



Leo Gonzalez  
4-H Educator

