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Hamilton County 4-H Website: <https://hamilton.unl.edu> Nebraska 4-H Website: <https://4h.unl.edu>

## Important Dates

- January 15 - Ag Society Meeting
- January 19 - Office Closed
- January 17 - Target Archery Contest
- January 20 - 4-H Council Meeting
- January 25 - JR. Leader Meeting
- February 1 - Volunteer Training



- |          |           |
|----------|-----------|
| Asher H  | Deacon W  |
| Blake B  | Elsa D    |
| Taylin P | Abigail T |
| Mattie A | Simon D   |
| Isabel J | Abby P    |
| Ty S     | Grady M   |
| Boaz O   | Gabriel K |
| Axon B   | Trynley H |
| James B  | Kendall S |
| Chance G | Whitney J |
| Aydenn S |           |

## 2026 YQCA

Missed YQCA in January? Be sure to get signed up for YQCA on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2026 from 6 p.m. - 7 p.m.

To register, scan the QR code or visit <https://go.unl.edu/yqca2026>



Hamilton County  
YQCA will be due  
by June 15th,  
2026!

## 2026 4-H Enrollment

4-H members must re-enroll annually to maintain their membership. Returning families/members should not create a new family profile, but instead, log into their existing profile, update any contact information, and sign permissions. All are encouraged to enroll in 4-H Online - including adults. **Re-enroll by February 28<sup>th</sup> to continue to receive Hamilton County 4-H communications.**

To enroll, visit [4honline.com](http://4honline.com) or scan the QR code.



## 2026 Beef Weigh-In

**Please note that the 2026 Beef Weigh-In date, time, and location have changed.** It will now take place on **Sunday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2026** from **1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.** at the Central City Vet Clinic. **All trailers must be in line by 3:15 p.m. in order to be weighed!**

2026

## LIVESTOCK WEIGH-IN DATES

BE SURE TO MARK YOUR CALENDARS NOW FOR THE 2026 HAMILTON COUNTY 4-H LIVESTOCK WEIGH-IN DATES!

BEEF WEIGH-IN  
SUNDAY, FEB. 22ND, 2026  
1:30 PM - 3:30 PM  
Central City Vet Clinic  
(1701 5<sup>th</sup> Ave, Central City, NE)

NOTICE - THERE HAS BEEN A DATE, TIME & LOCATION CHANGE TO 2026 BEEF WEIGH-IN!

WILL ALSO INCLUDE DNA TESTING FOR STATE FAIR!

\*NEW IN 2026 - NE STATE FAIR AND AKSARBEN DNA TESTING ARE SEPARATE PROCESSES



QUESTIONS? CALL OUR OFFICE AT 402-694-6174



## 2026 Special Garden Project

The Special Garden Project is open to all youth of 4-H age and will give them the opportunity to learn about growing, harvesting, and exhibiting this unique flower. The Special Garden Project lets 4-H members try their hand at growing unusual vegetables, flowers, and herbs. The 2026 plant will be the ALUMNIA VANILLA CREAM MARIGOLD.



In August of 2025, the Hamilton County Commissioners approved a new Extension Office to be built on the Hamilton County Fairgrounds. We are excited to show you the progress and have you follow along. This new building will allow us so many more opportunities to continue growing our incredible 4-H program!



## 2026 PASE

PASE will take place May 27-29<sup>th</sup>, 2026. For more information, visit [4h.unl.edu/pase](http://4h.unl.edu/pase).

PASE (Premier Animal Science Event) features a variety of state-level animal science contests. The 3-day event is held annually at the Nebraska Animal Science Complex on East Campus in Lincoln. Youth explore issues related to the animal industry, discover college and career opportunities, and work with other youth from across the state. Youth have the opportunity to participate in the following contests

- Livestock Judging
- Meat Judging
- Poultry Judging
- Livestock Quiz Bowl
- Livestock Skill-a-thon
- Animal Welfare Judging
- Essay Contest
- Demonstration Contest
- Cat Skill-a-thon Contest
- Companion Animal Skill-a-thon Contest
- Art Contest
- Photography Contest



Junior Leaders is for youth enrolled in 4-H that is 4-H age 13-18. Junior Leaders allows youth to gain leadership opportunities while serving in their communities and acting as mentors and role models to other members.



# 4-H Club Updates

## Shooting Sports

Archery will be coming to an end this month with the fair competition being on **January 17th**. We are working with Ag Society to determine the location - more information to come.

BB Gun and Air Rifle/Pistol will begin with first shooter practice on **January 25th**.

- BB Gun practices will be held on **Monday evenings at 5:30 p.m.** (Mather Building)
- Air Rifle/Pistol practices will be held on **Sunday afternoons at 2:00 p.m.** (Mather Building)

Outdoor skills has a speaker (Kyle) coming on **January 11<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m.** to talk about trapping. Kyle visited with our group 4 years ago and it was impressive!

**Congratulations** to our new club officers:

- President - Chase McKay
  - Vice President - Evan Glass
  - Secretary - Kyler Comer
  - Treasurer - Colt Aycock
- Christi Aycock, Club Leader*



**HAMILTON  
COUNTY  
JR. LEADERS**

Junior Leaders is for youth enrolled in 4-H that are 4-H age 13-18. Junior Leaders allows youth to gain leadership opportunities while serving in their communities and acting as mentors and role models to other members.

This month we will be choosing our philanthropic project for the year and developing a plan to carry out the project. We will also be electing officers for the upcoming year.

**Join us for our next meeting**

**January 25, 2026  
6:00 PM-7:00  
Hamilton County Extension Office  
111 13<sup>th</sup> St., Aurora, NE**

Nebraska 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. The 4-H Youth Development program abides with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture. 2026

Does your club have anything that you would like to be highlighted? Email it to us at [hamilton-county@unl.edu](mailto:hamilton-county@unl.edu)





## ***Farrowed and Owned Swine Cohort***

A Farrowed and Owned Breeding and Market Swine division for youth interested in learning more about the swine industry is available for youth statewide in 2026! The Nebraska 4-H Farrowed and Owned Swine Cohort is designed to enhance the traditional 4-H swine project and cultivate the next generation of leaders in the swine industry by providing opportunities focusing on swine production as a goal of the 4-H member's project, along with accurate and complete record-keeping, industry knowledge, and engagement by the 4-H member. In order to participate, youth must be 4-H age 8-18 as of January 1, 2026, complete YQCA, farrowed their project animal(s) and participate in monthly virtual educational meetings.

Youth participating in the Farrowed and Owned Cohort will:

Network with 4-H members across the state who are also participating in the cohort experience.  
Participate in learning opportunities hosted by Extension Swine Specialist Benny Mote about biosecurity, meat science, economics of raising swine and more.

The cohort will meet virtually the first Sunday of the month at 7:00 p.m. CT, the months of February, March, April, May and June.

Gain knowledge related to their project and the swine industry as a whole.

Maintain records related to swine management and basic care.

Exhibit their Farrowed and Owned project animals at a 2026 Nebraska county fair or the Nebraska State Fair. All cohort members will participate in an interview at the 2026 Nebraska State Fair.

Exhibiting your animal at the Nebraska State Fair is not a requirement for the record book and interview portion of the cohort. Join the first session in February for more details!

- **NEW for 2026:** virtual tour of the UNL swine teaching facility will be a featured topic!

**Register [here](#) by January 30, 2026!**

**\*\*Optional special virtual education session on farrowing will be held on January 4, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. CT**

**Register by January 2nd to participate!\*\***

After the registration deadline, youth will receive more detailed information via email. For questions, contact Nebraska Extension Swine Specialist Benny Mote at [bmote8@unl.edu](mailto:bmote8@unl.edu) or 402-310-9878.

# HEARTLAND TRIPLE CROWN



## LIVESTOCK JUDGING SERIES



JUNE 17-19, 2026



JOIN US FOR THE THREE-DAY LIVESTOCK JUDGING SHOWDOWN!  
CELEBRATE THE END OF THE GREAT PLAINS JUDGING CIRCUIT WITH  
THREE EXCITING DAYS OF COMPETITION, FUN, AND RECOGNITION.



AWARDS FOR EACH AGE DIVISION AND SPECIES

10 PLACING CLASSES

PRICING DETAILS ON REGISTRATION



### DAY 1 — COLUMBUS, NE

📍 LOCATION: AG PARK  
822 15TH ST.

COLUMBUS, NE 68601

REGISTRATION: 8:15-9:00 AM

CLINIC: 8:45 - 9:45 AM

🕒 JUDGING BEGINS: 10:00 AM

### DAY 2 — BLADEN, NE

📍 LOCATION: FAIRGROUNDS  
459 N CRESCENT ST.

BLADEN, NE 68928

REGISTRATION: 9:00-9:30 AM

🕒 JUDGING BEGINS: 10:00 AM

🍔 EVENING AFTER PARTY:  
5:00 PM — BBQ & GAMES

### DAY 3 — NELSON, NE

📍 LOCATION: FAIRGROUNDS  
1256 RD 3300

NELSON, NE 68961

REGISTRATION: 9:00-9:30 AM

🕒 JUDGING BEGINS: 10:00 AM

🍷 EVENING BANQUET &  
AWARDS CEREMONY: 5:00 PM

FOR QUESTIONS OR REGISTRATION DETAILS, CONTACT:

PLATTE COUNTY EXTENSION: 402-563-4901

WEBSTER COUNTY EXTENSION: 402-746-3417

SOUTHERN PLAINS COUNTY EXTENSION: 402-225-2381 OR 402-768-7212

Register here:

<https://go.unl.edu/lj26>

FIND MORE DETAILS ON OUR BROCHURE



# SPECIAL GARDEN PROJECT

»» 2026 ««



## ALUMIA VANILLA CREAM MARIGOLD

### WHAT IS THE SPECIAL GARDEN PROJECT?

This project is open to all youth of 4-H age and it will give them the opportunity to learn about growing, harvesting, and exhibiting this unique flower.

The Special Garden Project lets 4-H members try their hand at growing unusual vegetables, flowers, and herbs. The project allows experienced 4-H gardeners to grow something fun, new, and different while letting those new to gardening get their feet wet in this project area.

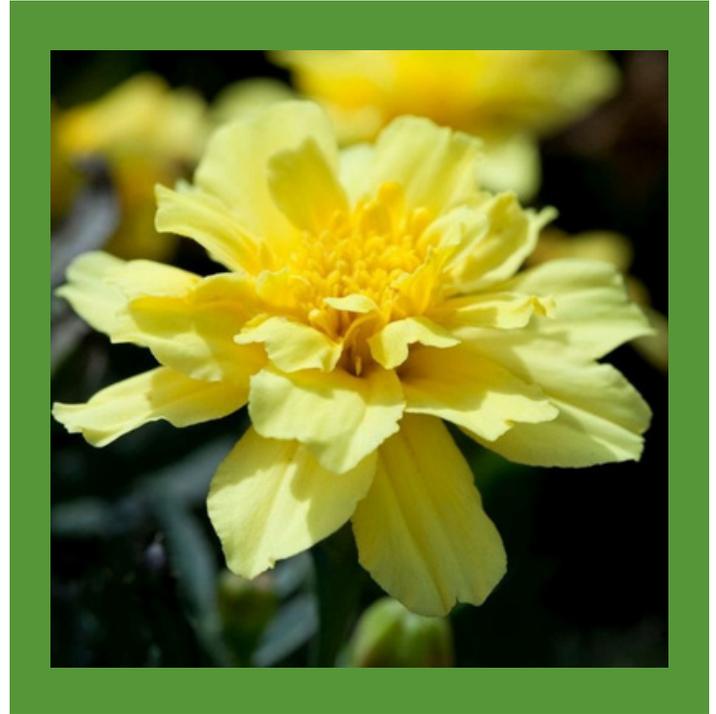
The focus of the 2026 project is the Alumia Vanilla Cream marigold. This marigold produces creamy, yellow flowers on compact plants. This variety not only has a unique color, but it also has a very long bloom time.

**2026  
SPECIAL  
GARDEN  
PROJECT**

# WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THE PROJECT

4-H members participating in the Special Garden Project will:

- Receive a 'packet' of Alumia Vanilla Cream marigolds (one packet per youth) in March/April
- Receive a newsletter about:
  - Planting & growing marigolds
  - Marigold problems & insects
  - Harvesting & using marigolds
- Be able to exhibit this unique flower at County and State Fair
  - State Fair Special Garden Project Educational Exhibit Class G-775-001
  - State Fair Special Garden Project Fresh Cut Flowers or Harvested Vegetables & Herbs Class G-775-002
  - Other fun county-only ways to exhibit this unique flower are with a story, poem, or poster. Each county is different so be sure to check with your local Extension Office.
- Complete an evaluation about their growing experience: <http://www.go.unl.edu/2026SGPsurvey>



## HOW TO ENROLL

Enroll in Horticulture in 4-H Online and contact your local Nebraska Extension Office to order packets of seeds. The local Extension Office will order and distribute the seeds.

If you have questions, contact Elizabeth Exstrom at [eexstrom2@nebraska.edu](mailto:eexstrom2@nebraska.edu) or 308-385-5088

## CONTACT

