



4-H FAMILY NEWSLETTER

May 2026

Nebraska Extension in Madison County
1305 South 13th Street Norfolk, NE 68701

Phone: 402-370-4040

Website: www.madison.unl.edu

Like Us on Facebook: [www.facebook.com/](http://www.facebook.com/UNLMadisonCounty)

UNLMadisonCounty



65 Days until Fair

Pre-Entry Forms Are Ready! **Digital 4-H Fairbooks Available Online!**

Note: Printed books have been delayed. We will notify you when they are ready.

June 15 County Fair Deadline

Submit all paperwork to the Extension Office by Monday 15. Must be postmarked by Monday, June 15 to exhibit at the Madison County Fair!

Drop off locations will be available on Friday, June 12 in Battle Creek and Newman Grove.

Submit the following paperwork to the Extension Office at 1305 S. 13th St. Norfolk, NE 68701

We will set out our portable mailbox by our front door all weekend from Friday, June 12-15 for drop off purposes.

*Note: Due to the Memorial Day holiday, our office will be closed on Monday, May 25.

4-H Drop Off Friday, June 12

8:30am to 9:30 a.m. at Battle Creek (White Star Gas Station Parking Lot)

10 a.m. to 11 a.m. at Newman Grove (Public Library)

Checklist for Fair Paperwork:

(be sure to check fair book for reminders regarding rules and deadlines)



Pre-entry Forms



Fashion Show Pre-Entry Forms for those modeling for the judge
and/or public fashion show

For Livestock Exhibitors:



Livestock ID Sheets



YQCA: submit certificate of completion if youth completed it online

(see previous newsletters for more information)



Cat and Dog Vaccination Forms (available at madison.unl.edu)



Horse Level Testing for county fair only (schedule your test if you haven't yet)



**All exhibitors will receive a complimentary T-shirt from our sponsors.
Please ensure that you update your T-shirt size on 4-H Online if necessary.**



So, what are Pre-entry forms?

Pre-entry forms are ready and are needed for our data entry system that we use for the county fair. These help us know what projects you are bringing to the county fair. You will use a fair book and complete the form with the projects and classes your 4-H member will be completing for judging. **They were emailed to families from Betty where you may fill out a blank form from April's newsletter OR the Excel version!**

For example, if they are sewing a patchwork pillow for the fair they would enroll in the following:

- Department C, Division 901, Class 904 - Pillow

Then, if your 4-H member decides to model their pillow for our 4-H Fashion Show, you would also need to include that as well on the form.

- Department C, Division 410, Class 901 - Sewing for Fun Modeling

What are the Fashion Show Pre-entry forms?

These forms are included with your pre-entries if you enrolled in a textiles project. These forms are due back to the office so we can prepare the judges books, narrations, and program order for judging day and for the fashion show.

Please feel free to contact, Sarah, Jayd or Betty with any additional questions you have!

2026 4-H Fair Book

The updated fair books are ready to view on the website! Check them out at madison.unl.edu or use the QR Code to get to the 4-H Book!



Attention Madison County 4-H Archery Club Members

The 4-H Archery Fair Shoot 2026 is on **Saturday, June 6** at the outdoor range. Please be sure to follow their Facebook page for updates and information.



Can I still join 4-H?

YES!

Deadline for enrollment and re-enrollment is **JUNE 15!** You haven't missed any deadlines yet! June 15 will be the final day to turn in pre-entry forms, animal ID sheets, nominations for State Fair, YQCA certifications, Horse Advancement Level test for the county fair and even enrollment to participate in the 2026 Madison County Fair!

Be sure to get enrolled today at v2.4honline.com.

(NO ENTRIES or ENROLLMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION AT THE COUNTY OR STATE FAIR WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER JUNE 15. NO EXCEPTIONS!)



4-H Hay Bale Decorating Contest Open to All Madison County 4-H Clubs!

Participate in the 1st ever Round Bale Decorating Contest at the 2026 Madison County Fair! Clubs are invited to develop their own distinctive themes and decorate their bales! Bales will be supplied to each club and assigned on the fairgrounds. Please confirm your participation by May 15 BY EMAILING OR CALLING Sarah at spolacek2@unl.edu or 402-370-4040.



A CASH prize awaits the club with the winning hay bale!

This contest is proudly sponsored by the Madison County 4-H Council!



4-H Hay Bale Decorating Contest Guidelines

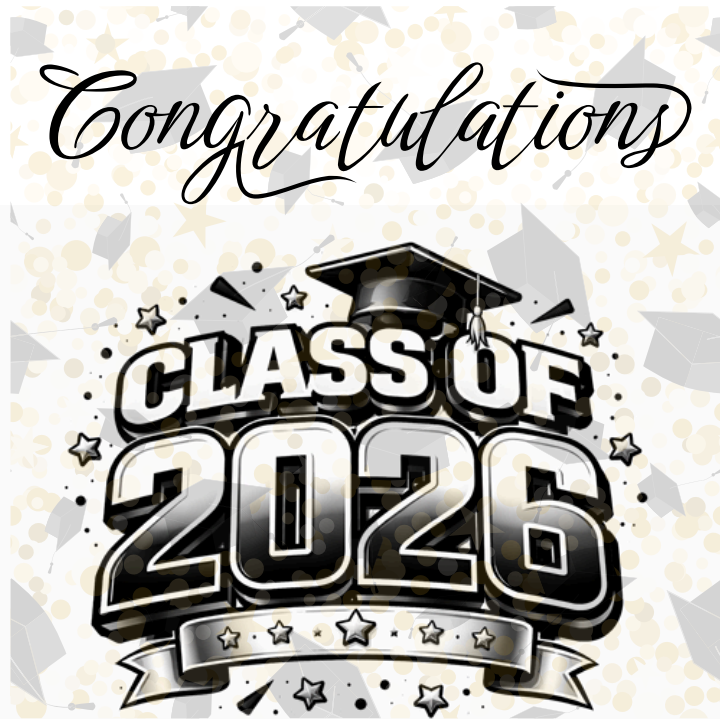
- Hay bale displays must be set up by July 6 at 5:00 PM. They will be available the week prior to the fair to begin decorating.
- Displays must be removed and the area cleaned up by Wednesday, July 15, unless other arrangements have been approved.
- The entire design will be judged, so plan a complete and creative display.
- Do not add extra hay or additional bales (such as square bales) to your design.
- Each display must clearly show the 4-H club name.
- Designs should promote 4-H in a positive and appropriate way.
- Clubs are responsible for keeping their display neat throughout the fair.





4-H Council Seeking Members

Want to get more involved with 4-H? Want to influence the 4-H program in Madison County? Here is your chance: 4-H Council is seeking members for the upcoming year! Members are voted in by 4-H members, families, volunteers, and alumni. Voting will take place during the fair. Five youth positions and three adult positions are open. Youth serve for one year; adults serve a three-year term. Meetings are typically held the fourth Monday of the month with eight meetings held throughout the year. Add your name to the ballot by Friday, June 12! Simply email your name to Betty at bbooks2@unl.edu.



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/1CyoyYJt6_Eyl7BiTc9AqD1AGFIQSjOwfwrm_Hl18ja4/edit?usp=sharing



NEBRASKA STATE 4-H CAMP

Big Gumdrops Outdoors

SUMMER CAMP 2026!

EXPLORING ECOSYSTEMS

DAY CAMPS:
Grand Island, NE
June 30th

Register Here or Apply for a Scholarship Today:

NEBRASKA STATE 4-H CAMP

Big Gumdrops Outdoors

SUMMER CAMP 2026!

EXPLORING ECOSYSTEMS

DAY CAMPS:
Lincoln, NE
July 22nd

Register Here or Apply for a Scholarship Today:

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 Sunday Funday





4-H Livestock News

YQCA / Quality Assurance

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 this training.

For help please see:

https://yqcaprogram.org/local/pdf/YQCA_HelpDoc_GettingLTCertification_2024.pdf

IMPORTANT

Livestock Affidavits/ID Sheet

- required for all livestock and small animals for county fair
- print copies on madison.unl.edu or pick up at Extension Office

***Cloverbuds will need ID Sheets or record books for animals as well**

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

Livestock Achievement Program

-The program recognizes Members of Excellence across all 4-H livestock project areas, including: beef, sheep, meat goat, swine, dairy cattle, dairy goat, rabbit, and poultry.

-For more information, including program instructions and additional resources, or to apply, go to:
<https://4h.unl.edu/livestock-achievement>

Applications Due **JUNE 15!**

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

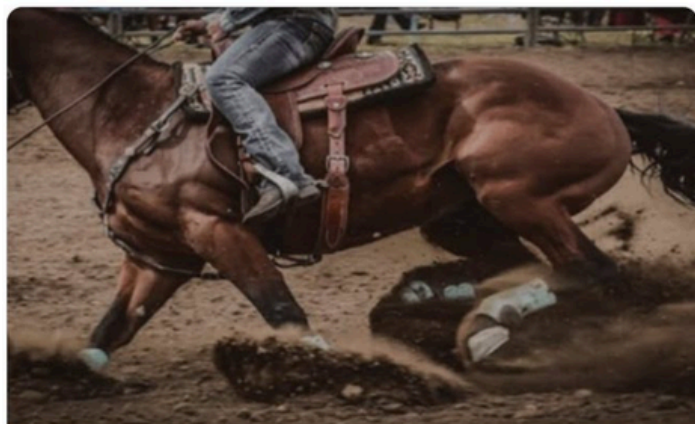
• All sheep and goats require scrapie tags for County and State Fair.

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

ID sheets for County Fair livestock entries can be found at <https://extension.unl.edu/statewide/jmndson/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.		County Fair Due Date	State Fair Nomination Due Date *Show Stock Manager Site	State Fair Show Entry Deadline 8 PM
	County Fair <i>ONLY</i> ALL ANIMALS NEED VISABLE EAR TAG, EID Tag or Scrapies Tag	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 https://showstockmgr.com/			
BEEF					
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	-----	-----
DAIRY					
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	-----	---
GOAT					
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
HORSE	ID Sheet Drawing	ID Sheet Drawing	June 15	June 1	June 1
SWINE					
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
SHEEP					
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
RABBITS					
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

Additional Animal Opportunities



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

Open to all area 4-H'ers!

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

4-H State Horse Show Entry Deadline is June 1st at 5pm NO LATE ENTRIES ARE ACCEPTED!

ALL HORSE ADVANCEMENT LEVEL
REQUIREMENTS, IDENTIFICATION
PROCESS AND ENTRY PROCESS ARE
DUE BY 5:00 P.M. ON JUNE 1.

Please review the online entries, fees and
requirements here: [https://4h.unl.edu/
horse-expo-show-entry](https://4h.unl.edu/horse-expo-show-entry)



Showing animals at the Nebraska State Fair?



Nomination Requirements for **STATE FAIR**

The animal identification deadline for 2026 is
JUNE 15th. Link: www.showstockmgr.com

- All market & breeding sheep and goats must have a scrapie tag. All market hogs and market beef must have an 840 EID tag and breeding heifers must have a tattoo and DNA sample.

DNA Envelopes for NE State Fair

- DNA envelopes will be \$7.00 per envelope. All breeding nominations will be \$2.00 per online entry. Exhibitors will be able to dual nominate an animal as breeding and market if selected and paid for in Show Stock Manager. Families will now receive a receipt that they have entered in a breeding nomination.

Submitting Animal Information into Show Stock Manager Livestock Database

- Exhibitors will be responsible for submitting their animal information into the www.showstockmgr.com website prior to the nomination deadlines. Completed DNA forms are due to our office by June 15th. (we will validate and submit these for you) Once the information is in the database and has been validated by the Extension Educator, it will then be available for exhibitors to make State Fair entries. Any animal entry not in the database or have DNA submitted will not be considered nominated and eligible for State Fair.

Please visit: [https://4h.unl.edu/state-fair/live-
animal-exhibitor](https://4h.unl.edu/state-fair/live-animal-exhibitor) for more information regarding the
Nebraska State Fair and livestock entries.



MADISON COUNTY 4-H SUMMER WORKSHOPS

Nebraska Extension in
Madison County
1305 S. 13th Street, Norfolk,
NE 68701
402-370-4040

READY TODAY LEADING TOMORROW



Register for workshops online following the links provided or call 402-370-4040.
Registration is complete when payment is received. All fees are non-refundable.

Make checks payable to "University of Nebraska-Lincoln".

All workshops are open to 4-H and non-4-H members.
Space is limited.



May 26: Cake Decorating, Getting Started

9 a.m. to Noon. - Nebraska Extension in Madison County

Cost: \$25.00

Age: 8-10

Limited to 10 participants

Get started and learn the basics of making frosting and cake decorating!

Registration by: May 20



May 26: Cake Decorating, Moving Forward

1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - Nebraska Extension in Madison County

Cost: \$25.00

Age: 10+

Limited to 10 participants

participants

Expand your cake decorating skills as you move forward and try more techniques. Previous experience required, encouraged to take the Cake Decorating for beginners prior to this workshop. If you attended the beginning cake decorating class, please bring your kit.

Register by May 20



May 27 - Friday, May 29: Engineering Explorers

11 a.m. to 2 p.m. - Nebraska Extension in Madison County

Cost: \$15.00

Age: 8-12

Limited to 12 participants

Do you like inventing? Do you want to challenge yourself to solve problems using everyday materials? Join us to invent, design, and create in this exploration of engineering. During this 3-day workshop, you will use everyday materials and your ingenuity to create a contraption that hovers in a wind tube, wire a circuit, design helpful tools for a dog and more! Please bring a sack lunch each day. Snack will be provided.

*This program is part of a University of Nebraska-Lincoln research study exploring how 4-H Educators and youth talk about engineering during 4-H activities. A researcher will be video recording parts of the program. If you and your child would like to help UNL and 4-H learn about and improve engineering education, please go here to learn more: go.unl.edu/facetparentconsent

Register by: May 20



June 2– Insect Collection: Entomology

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. - Nebraska Extension in Madison County

Cost: \$25.00

Age: 8+

Limited to 10 participants

Start your entomology collection or just learn about these tiny creatures that are all around us! Identify, collect, and preserve the basic kinds of insects, as well as learn about insect lifecycles. As part of the workshop, participants will receive insect pins, a display box, labeling materials, and a basic identification guide. Bring a sack lunch and dress appropriately for spending the day outside in the sun. Each participant will need to bring their own strait-sided jar. Pickle jars work well. No canning jars.

Register by: May 20



June 4 – AG 360: Exploring Hawaii, Alaska, and Nebraska in VR, Registration submitted and payment required by May 26

9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Haskell Ag Lab (Concord)

Cost: \$25.00 (includes lunch, snacks, and supplies for all activities)

Age: Youth going into grades 7th grade and up

Join this FUN one-day camp to explore agriculture and technology through the creation of virtual reality (VR) tours. Participants will learn about local agriculture as well as Hawaii and Alaska, create tours, and publish their work for public viewing. You will also have the chance to immerse yourself in local agriculture and ask questions of ag professionals while learning about both VR Tour creation and innovative agricultural and research practices.

This workshop is NOT out the Madison County office but offered through another University of Nebraska Extension office. We are excited to share with you all!!!

You Must register here: <https://go.unl.edu/ag360>



June 9 – Acrylic Painting Workshop

9 a.m. to Noon - Madison County Extension Office

Cost: \$32.00 (JUST painting) | \$46 finished painting ALSO with frame Age: 8+ welcome Limited to 15 participants

We have partnered with Connie Buskohl with “Let’s Paint Runaway” to provide a 2 hour step-by step acrylic painting. You will chose your painting during the workshop.

Register by June 5



June 20 – Barn Quilt Painting Workshop

1 p.m. to 4 p.m. - 4-H Building-Madison County Fairgrounds

Cost: \$80.00

Age: 8+ Open to EVERYONE adults welcome

Another great partnership to offer this great opportunity! Learn tips and tricks for less touch up. Paint a barn quilt that lasts outdoors that is 2x2'. ACM is used. 48 designs and colors to choose from the day of class. **Please bring a hairdryer, extension cord, and yellow Delicate Frogtape (1.41 width is most versatile, you can get it at most hardware stores)**

MUST register and pay here: <https://www.artisticinnovationsne.com/event-details/norfolk-madison-2ft-x-2ft-outdoor-barn-quilt-workshop>

If you have any questions text or call 308-529-8992.



June 23 – 4-H Cloverbud Workshop

10 a.m. to Noon - Nebraska Extension in Madison County

Cost: \$6.00

Age: 5-7

Limited to 12 participants

Join us for a fun 4-H workshop designed for youth ages 5–7! Participants will enjoy hands-on activities like rock painting, outdoor art, and more. Perfect for young creators who love to explore and make!

Register by June 5



June 30 – Live Floreal Arrangement Workshop with Hometown Floral

10:00 a.m. to Noon - Nebraska Extension in Madison County

Cost: \$30.00

Age: 8+

Limited to 20 participants

Create your own small live floral arrangement in this hands-on workshop led by hometown Floral and 4-H alum Katie Hammond! Youth will learn basic design tips, how to care for fresh flowers, and take home a beautiful arrangement they made themselves, Perfect for beginners who want to get creative and have with flowers!

Register by June 5

*Register
Now*

<https://golunl.edu/d7f0>





2026 Summer Workshop Fair Classes

Cake Decorating Classes:

- Dept. E, Div. 910 – many options!

Engineering Explorers:

- Dept. M, Div. 988, Class 902 4-H Project Day Item
- Dept. M, Div. 994, Class 947 Miscellaneous Exhibit

Insect Collection:

- Dept. H, Div. 800, Classes 1-3 *choose what best fits youth

Acrylic Paint Workshop:

- Dept. C, Div. 260, Class 1

Barn Quilt:

- Dept. C, Div. 229, Class 21

Cloverbud:

- Dept. M, Div. 999 Class 977 for each project completed at workshop

Live Floral Arrangement:

- Dept. G, Div. 999 Class 972

2026 Madison County Fair Pre-entry Form

Due to the Extension Office: JUNE 15, **2026** (NO LATE ENTRIES WILL BE ACCEPTED)

Mail to: Nebraska Extension in Madison County, 1305 South 13 Street, Norfolk, NE 68701

Email to : bbooks2@unl.edu

Name: _____ 4-H Age (as of January 1): _____

Address: _____ Club: _____

Phone: _____ Email Address: _____

Projects:

Important: Please refer to the 4-H Fair Book to obtain the correct codes for exhibits you wish to enter:

Department, Division, Class, and Description. Livestock & Small Animal Exhibitors: Enter the number of animals you will bring for stall assignments. Horse Exhibitors: Please list the name of the horses you will bring.

[illegible]

2026 CALENDAR

Subject to change

More activities could be added in the future!

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