



# Dawes County 4-H Newsletter

January 2024 Edition



## 4-H Calendar



**January 2:** Office Open

**January 3:** Melissa in the office

**January 8:** 4-H Council Mtg. @ Extension Conference Room, 6 PM

**January 10:** 8th Grade Careers Exploration w/ Melissa @ Chadron Middle School

**January 14:** Highland Huddlers 4-H Club Meeting, 2 PM @ the Dawes Co. Fairgrounds

**January 15:** Office Closed- Martin Luther King Jr. Day

**January 17:** 7th Grade Leadership Skills w/ Melissa @ Chadron Middle School

-STEM Reading w/Melissa @ Chadron Primary Just For Kids Afterschool Program

**January 19:** For the Birds, Birdhouse Workshop 2-4pm

**January 30:** Extension Board Mtg. @ Extension Conference Room, 6 PM

**January 31:** Melissa in the office

**February 17:** Beef Weigh-Ins @ Crawford Livestock Market, 9 AM-12 PM

**Deadlines:**

**January 5:** Special Edition Stories & Jr. Leader Ad Sales

**January 12:** "For the Birds" Birdhouse Workshop Registration

**January 26:** First Baby of February donations due to the office

**February 5:** Special Garden Seed Deadline



## 2024 DEADLINES

### JUNE 15TH

- 4-H ONLINE ENROLLMENT & \$3 FEE
- ANIMAL AFFIDAVITS
- YQCA CERTIFICATION

### JULY 1ST

- STATIC ENTRY FORM
- LIVESTOCK ENTRY FORM
- CLOVER KID ENTRY FORM
- DOG VACCINATION FORM
- CAT VACCINATION FORM
- PEN/TIE/TACK FORM
- CARCASS CONTEST FORM

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## Dawes County Extension Office Updates:

We are currently in the process of interviewing candidates for our new 4-H assistant. Ashley Ahrens is currently out on maternity leave. Melissa Mracek works in Dawes, Sioux, Sheridan & Box Butte counties and will be in our office most Wednesdays. If there are any days we will be unexpectedly closed, we will try to send out a Remind text but please feel free to give us a call before you come in, to make sure someone is available in our office.

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# Happy New Year



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## Welcome, Baby Reed ♥

The Northern Panhandle would like to introduce our newest member, Reed Smith Ahrens! Reed was born on December 9th. He was 5 lbs. 9 oz. and 17 1/2 in. long. Congratulations to our Food, Nutrition, & Health Educator, Ashley Ahrens and her husband Ian. Reed was welcomed home by big brother Westin and his fur brother Edwin!



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## January Workshop

For the Birds- 1/19

Dreaming of warmer weather? Join Delanie Bruce from the Bird Conservancy and build your own birdhouse to be ready for bird watching this spring! Learn about the different bird species we have in our area and what type of housing suits them the best. This workshop is for ages 8-18 and costs \$12. It will be held on January 19th from 2-4pm at the Dawes County Fairgrounds. Register by 1/12 by calling (308)432-3373. Youth will need to bring a hammer if they have one. This project is eligible to be entered at fair!

**For the Birds**  
Birdhouse Workshop



January 19th, 2-4 pm @ Dawes County Fairgrounds  
Ages 8-18  
\$12 Fee  
Register by: Jan. 12th  
Call (308)432-3373  
Please bring a hammer if you have one

Dreaming of warmer weather? Join Delanie Bruce from the Bird Conservancy and build your own birdhouse to be ready for bird watching this spring! Learn about the different bird species we have in our area and what type of housing suits them the best.



The University of Nebraska does not discriminate based upon any protected status. Please see [www.unl.edu/extension/discrimination](http://www.unl.edu/extension/discrimination). © 2023

## First Baby of February 2024

Help 4-H Welcome the *First Baby of* **FEBRUARY 2024**

Dawes County 4-H Jr. Leaders & Chadron Community Hospital are sponsoring the First Baby of February Contest in honor of Nebraska 4-H Month. We need your help to fill the basket for this special bundle of joy!

Some Ideas to Donate Are:

- Purchased items (diapers, bottles, wipes, toys etc.)
- Sew a blanket or quilt
- Crochet booties or a hat
- Make a card or frame a photograph

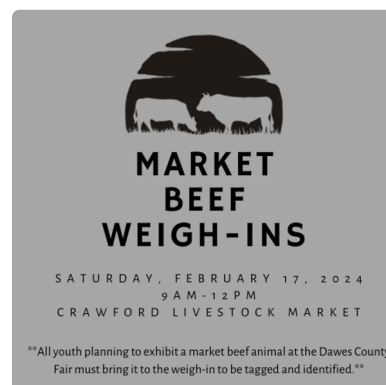
PLEASE BRING YOUR ITEM(S) TO THE DAWES COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE (250 MAIN ST. SUITE 8) BY FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2024

As a special way to celebrate National 4-H Month, Dawes County Jr. Leaders & the Chadron Community Hospital sponsor the First Baby born in February. The precious newborn receives generous gifts from local 4-H families and businesses. Please drop off donations to the Extension Office by January 26th.

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## Beef Weigh-Ins

Dawes County 4-H will hold their Market Beef Weigh-In on **Saturday, February 17th, from 9 am to noon, Crawford Livestock Market**. All youth planning to exhibit a market beef animal at the Dawes County Fair must bring it to the weigh in to be tagged and identified. Youth planning to show at the Nebraska State Fair and Aksarben should let the office know as there are other requirements for showing (EID tag and DNA).



Members who cannot make the weigh-in date may attend the Box Butte or Sheridan County Market Beef weigh ins if necessary. If attending the alternative weigh-in, members must notify the beef superintendents and the office. Members will be not be eligible to compete in the Rate of Gain contest if weighing in at an different location.

### Alternative Beef Weigh- Ins

#### Box Butte

Sunday, January 14th from 11am-1pm

Box Butte County Fairgrounds, Hemingford

#### Sheridan

Sunday, February 4th from 1 pm to 3 pm

Sheridan Livestock, Rushville

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## 4-H Special Edition Needs Your Stories & Photos

Each year the Dawes County 4-H Jr. Leaders, with the help of the Crawford Clipper, put together the 4-H Special Edition. It is a newspaper insert FULL of wonderful stories and photos submitted by YOU- Dawes County 4-H Members! It is an outstanding promotional tool and also a fundraiser for the Jr. Leaders. Each member is asked to submit via email, a typed, short article of 200-400 words, along with a digital photo, telling what you like about 4-H. It might be a special project you completed, something that happened during the year, or a person who helped you.



**Seniors-** We will use the biography and photo you provided for the Achievement Banquet unless you send something else.

**Please submit your stories & photos by Friday, January 5th.** It is published the first week in February in honor of Nebraska 4-H Month. This is circulated over multiple households & businesses! Email your story & photo to Chelsey at [chelsey.scherbarth@unl.edu](mailto:chelsey.scherbarth@unl.edu)

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## New State Fair Age Limit

*As you know, in 2023, Nebraska 4-H lowered the age limit for participation in the Nebraska State Fair for all in-person events to nine years of age. That change increased our participation and provided more youth the opportunity to have an engaging learning experience. We had many positive comments from legacy families as well as new.*

*This fall, we have had follow-up conversations with the show superintendents and various teams that run these events during State Fair and throughout the year. Based on that feedback and our goal of increasing access, the decision has been made to change **the age of eligibility in 2024 to be 8 years of age before January 1 (of the current year) for all in-person State Fair events (livestock, contests, fashion shows, contests) and other state competitions (Fonner Park State 4-H Horse Expo, PASE, communications contest).** Note: there will be some events that will maintain their ages due to specific program rules (shooting sports, FIRST LEGO League Challenge robotics). Please check information on each specific event as it becomes available.*

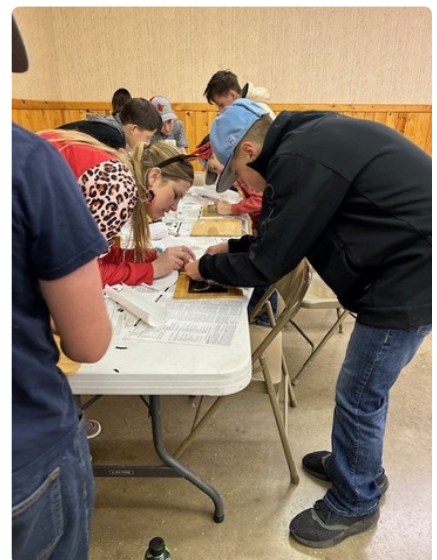
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## 4-H Happenings

### 2nd Annual 4-H Maker Day

Our 2nd annual 4-H Maker Day was a blast! The weather was perfect with no snow in sight! We had 51 youth sign up. Each youth was able to pick 4 projects to make with their choices being fabric wreaths, snow dough, painted tea towels, cutting boards, hot cocoa kit, sugar scrub, and macramé ornaments.

Thank you to our amazing volunteers who helped make this a successful event: Julie, Morgan and Roudy Schommer, Mandy Morava, Bailey Lesmeister, Miranda Betson, Kadence Fisher, Julia Nicholson, Oakley Terrell, Jady Tidyman, Alexa Tollman, Ava Pyle and Kendall Sellman





## Month of Caring & Sharing for Happy Hustlers

The club made three meals for families in town. Then they stood in the cold for 2 hours to ring bells for the Salvation Army.



## Highland Huddlers Race Airplanes

The Highland Huddlers 4-H Club had airplane races after an origami airplane demonstration by Guin.



## National 4-H Congress

Thirteen Nebraska 4-H members traveled to the 102nd National 4-H Congress in Atlanta, GA, held November 24-28, 2023. Dawes County's Morgan Schommer and Alexa Tollman were two of those 13 members! National 4-H Congress is the premier leadership event for 4-H members between the ages of 15 and 19 years of age. Nebraska delegates are selected for the trip to National 4-H Congress by submitting an Achievement Application for state competition. Learn more about this year's adventure to 4-H Congress at

<https://4h.unl.edu/.../nebraska-4-hers-participated-102nd...!>





UNFORGETTABLE  
PAST **INNOVATIVE  
FUTURE**

**NEBRASKA**  
November 24<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup> Atlanta, GA

2023 National 4-H Congress



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## 2024 Summer Camp





# Summer 2024 CAMP

The power of  
being  green



REGISTER TODAY  
[4H.UNL.EDU/CAMPS-REGISTER](https://4h.unl.edu/camps-register)

<b>CHADRON</b> JUNE 1-5 JUNE 6-8	10-14 YEARS 8-10 YEARS
<b>COZAD</b> JUNE 16-20 JULY 1-3	10-14 YEARS 8-10 YEARS
<b>BURWELL</b> JULY 17-19 JULY 20-24	8-10 YEARS 10-14 YEARS



Get ready to experience

❖ THE POWER OF BEING GREEN ❖

We are excited to have youth join us across the state again, with opportunities to experience camp with a more tailored age cohort.

Have a first time or younger camper? This year we are introducing a new camp session for our youngest camper. They'll get a taste of camp with 3 days jam packed full of learning and fun at 4-H camp!

Our older campers will have our traditional 5 day camp with more time to explore what it means to be clover green! We'll focus on how we can use our head, heart, hands, and health to make the world we live in a better place.

Families can find dates, session summaries, and registration information by visiting

<https://4h.unl.edu/camps-register>.

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## Nebraska 4-H Youth Leadership Experience Ambassador Team

We are so excited that you are interested in becoming a part of the Nebraska 4-H Youth Leadership Experience Ambassador Team.

As a part of this group, we hope you can be a voice on the youth perspective, develop & practice leadership skills that you can take back to your communities, and collaborate with Extension Staff and 4-Hers across the state to plan & implement a 4-H Youth Leadership Experiences!

***The deadline for applications for the Ambassador team is Friday, January 5, 2024!***

If selected our first meeting will be Sunday, February 4, 2024 at 4-6pm CT (via Zoom). From there we'll meet monthly to create an amazing experience for you and other high schoolers across the state!

The 4-H Youth Leadership Experiences will be a combination of working with state level 4-H events and contributing with your own leadership ideas across the state.

If you have questions or would like to know more please contact Julie Schultz ([jschultz28@unl.edu](mailto:jschultz28@unl.edu)) or Stacey Keys ([stacey.keys@unl.edu](mailto:stacey.keys@unl.edu))!

## Youth Ambassador Application

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### 4-H Volunteer Impact Study- You may be contacted

What you do makes a difference! We are excited to share that our state will be participating in the 4-H Volunteer Impact Study of volunteers in the North Central Region.

This survey is being conducted as a part of 12 state effort to document the impact of volunteering.

It will focus on three areas:

- the personal benefits of your volunteer experience;
- the impact you have on the organization by volunteering; and
- how your volunteer efforts contribute to your community in which you live and work.

A random sample of volunteers of 1000 volunteers from each state will be surveyed. This study will be conducted through an electronic survey. If you are selected you will receive an email to let you know you have been selected to participate.

You may be picked!!! If you are, please respond. We want to hear from you and learn from your volunteer experiences.

Your comments will be used to quantify the personal, organizational and public impacts of volunteers involved with 4-H Youth Development Programs in our twelve-state region.

Your impact is great and we want to hear from you!!!

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## 2024 Special Garden Project

The Special Garden Project is a way to offer Nebraska youth the chance to grow unusual and fun projects in their gardens.

The time has come to unveil the 2024 Special Garden Project plant! The 2024 Special Garden Project will focus on Princess of India Nasturtium. This Victorian-era heirloom flower can be grown in a variety of ways including containers. It provides a splash of color from its scarlet flowers and much of the plant can be eaten



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

- Receive a 'packet' of Princess of India Nasturtium (one packet per youth) in March/April
- Receive a newsletter about planting & growing nasturtium
- Be able to exhibit this unique herb at County and State Fair

If interested, please let Melissa [mmracek2@unl.edu](mailto:mmracek2@unl.edu) or Chelsey [chelsey.scherbarth@unl.edu](mailto:chelsey.scherbarth@unl.edu) know by February 5th.

For more information: <https://4h.unl.edu/special-garden-project>

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## Omaha Fashion Week

Application is now open for youth to model their 2023 design on the Omaha Fashion Week runway happening February 21, 2024! Youth will experience the backstage prep by having hair and makeup done, then walking the runway in front of the fashion community! Deadline to apply is January 5, 2024. Please complete the application at <https://go.unl.edu/4hofw2024>.





APPLICATIONS  
DUE  
JANUARY  
**5**  
2024

You are invited to apply for the OFW 4-H  
Collection shown during Student Night on

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 21, 2024**

at the Omaha Design Center.

**APPLICATION MATERIALS**

<https://go.unl.edu/4hofw2024>

**CONTACT:**  
MNELSON82@UNL.EDU

## Data Driven Field Day

Data Driven is a full-day, dynamic event that will engage youth in a world of endless possibilities in data science and literacy. This competition-based event will be focused on high-school-aged youth, with opportunities for both team and individual prizes and recognitions.

Whether youth are seasoned data experts or just dipping their toes into the data world, this unique opportunity will ignite their passion for data and empower them to create a brighter future through the power of numbers.

**Date:** March 16, 2024

**Location:** [Dinsdale Family Learning Commons](#) on UNL East Campus

**Who:** Teams of four 10th-12th graders!

**Why:** Win Scholarships! Make Connections! Meet Industry Leaders!!



Get ready to embark on an exciting journey into the world of data science and statistics! We're thrilled to invite you to "Data Driven," a unique and engaging competition that will challenge your data skills and spark your passion for numbers.

Additional Information:

- Teams will compete in 5 unique games with a focus on probability, data science, and a little bit of luck.
- Additional rewards include Nebraska swag, time with industry professionals, and more!
- Team Members should be in 10th – 12th grades, with occasional exceptions allowed for exceptional 9th graders; and all members on a team should be from the same or neighboring counties.

BONUS: Registration costs for the first 20 teams is sponsored by the College of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources (CASNR) at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Use code CASNR at checkout! **USE CODE CASNR AT CHECKOUT.**

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## Farrowed and Owned Swine Cohort

Registration for the 2024 Nebraska 4-H Farrowed and Owned Swine Cohort is now open until February 1st, 2024. Please see the attached flyer for more program and registration details.

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 the 2024 Nebraska State Fair with the opportunity for special recognition as a result of participating in the cohort.

Register [here](#) by February 1, 2024!

### 2024 Farrowed and Owned Registration Flyer.pdf

Download

624.9 KB

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## 4-H Livestock Achievement Program

We are excited to announce the fourth year of the Nebraska 4-H Livestock Achievement Program. This additional opportunity for enrolled livestock project youth, is designed to promote all educational aspects of 4-H livestock projects including selection, production, leadership, and exhibition by recognizing youth striving to improve in their livestock project knowledge and leadership.



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.

The program consists of three levels that require 4-H members to plan and report a broad range of age-appropriate and project-related accomplishments. For each level, the Livestock Achievement Program provides a list of accomplishments from which 4-H members choose their goals. Each accomplishment is worth a specific number of points. Junior 8-9 submits pictures, poster, presentation, and other learning activities to receive the distinction of Junior Member of Excellence, no point value, Intermediates, ages 10-13, must complete 100 points worth of activities to receive the distinction of Intermediate Member of Excellence. Seniors, ages 14-18, must complete 150 points worth of activities to receive the distinction of Senior Member of Excellence. The Plan and Reports, linked on the webpage, show examples of the project related accomplishments they can choose, or they can identify their own with approval of their local educator.

**Applications/Sign** up are due June 15th through the application form link on the website. Plan and Reports, as well as Project Records will be due August 1 via the completion form on the website.

**Youth** completing the achievement program and receiving member of excellence recognition in the various species will be recognized during the Parade of Champions, 4-H weekend at the Nebraska State Fair.

For more information or to apply, go to: [Livestock Achievement Program | Nebraska 4-H \(unl.edu\)](#)

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## Youth Advisory Council for Agriculture and Food Systems

The Regional Youth Advisory Council on Food Systems is a project aimed at bringing together a selection of two youth leaders per state to represent 12 North-Central midwestern states (IL, IN, IA, KS, MI, MN, MO, NE, ND, OH, SD, & WI). These leaders will serve on a team focused on providing consultation, vision, and youth perspective to a grant program with the goal of expanding career development opportunities in their state and region, for underrepresented populations in agriculture and food systems careers. All leaders as part of their participation with this Advisory Council will have their travel costs covered for all required travel obligations. Youth council members will be required to participate in monthly Zoom meetings as well as travel to biannual meetings hosted in the Spring and Fall. Youth will serve for no less than one year in their role with potential to serve multiple years. Responsibilities will begin January 2024.

### **Time Commitment:**

Youth Council members will be required to participate in monthly hour-long Zoom meetings as well as travel to bi-annual face-to-face meetings hosted in the Spring and Fall taking place over multiple days. Youth Council members will serve for no less than one year in their role with the potential to serve for multiple years. Youth Council responsibilities will begin in January 2024. Meeting schedules/times are to be determined but will be designed to fit into an afterschool or weekend timeframe.

### **Application Process:**



For full consideration, **applications must be submitted** by Friday, December 29th by 11:59 pm CST at the link below. **Decisions will be communicated** to all applicants by Monday, January 8th. We ask that you confirm your participation by Wednesday, January 10th at 5:00 pm CST.

Requirements: Please note that membership in the 4-H program is not required at the time of your application. All Youth Council applicants must satisfy the following:

- **Fall within 14-18 years of age**
- **Provide evidence of previous leadership or volunteer experience**
- **Be a highly motivated individual with a willingness to develop leadership and communication skills.**
- **Youth will be enrolled in the 4-H program as part of your service on the Youth Council. Not required at the time of application.**
- **Application is open to all youth; BIPOC Youth and/or youth belonging to other underrepresented groups are strongly encouraged to apply.**

## Youth Advisory Council Application

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### Champion Prizes Need to be Picked up!

*The following individuals need to pick up their Champion Prizes at the Extension Office. Please do this as soon as possible.*

- *Allred, Mahayla*
  - *Phillips, Kaylie*
  - *Rasmussen, Lauren*
  - *Werner, Josephine*
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**Join our Remind- Code: 4hDawes**

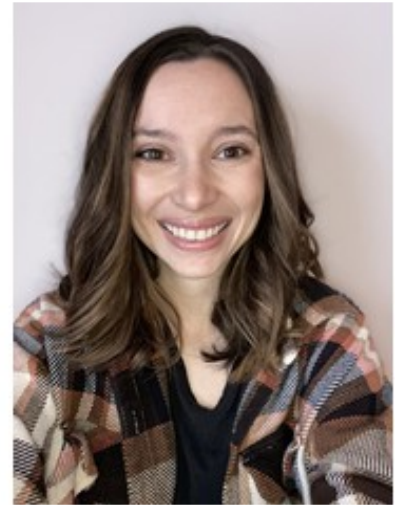
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**Melissa Mracek- North  
Panhandle 4-H Educator**  
[mmracek2@unl.edu](mailto:mmracek2@unl.edu)



**Chelsey Scherbarth-  
Dawes County Ext. Office  
Manager**  
[chelsey.scherbarth@unl.edu](mailto:chelsey.scherbarth@unl.edu)



**Ashley Ahrens- Food,  
Nutrition & Health  
Educator; Dawes County  
Lead Educator**  
[agoad2@unl.edu](mailto:agoad2@unl.edu)



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