



AUG/SEPT/FAIR 2026

4-H Family News

St. Joseph County



**Beyond
Ready**

Dear 4-H Families and Friends,

Summer is quickly coming to a close, which means fair week is right around the corner! Are you ready? Please **carefully read** through this newsletter to ensure you don't miss any important dates or information.

We have an exciting opportunity to share our passions and hard work with our community. The county fair gives us the chance to connect with people outside of 4-H and show them how GREAT this organization is! I look forward to seeing all of you and your projects in September!

I know there's a lot of information, so please contact the MSU Extension Office at (269) 467-5511 with any questions you may have.

Helping to "Make the Best Better",

Program Coordinator
4-H Youth Development

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EXTENDED OFFICE HOURS

The 4-H Fair Office is located between buildings #43 and #44. We will be open during the following hours starting Saturday, September 19, 2026.

- Saturday 9/19: 8:00 am - 7:00 pm
- Sunday 9/20 - Thursday 9/24: 9:00 am - 7:00 pm
- Friday 9/25 & Saturday 9/26: 9:00 am - 9:00 pm

Thursday staffing will be limited. If you need assistance, please go to the show arena.

Weekly MSU Extension Office Hours:

Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri: 8:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

Wed: 8:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.

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COUNTY 4-H NEWS

NEW FOR 2026

Admission Passes

Passes for 4-H exhibitors and leaders will be printed for 2026. Pick-up will be in the "little red barn" #46 on Saturday, September 19, 8:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Any 4-H leader who is also a St. Joseph County Grange Fair Association member will only receive one week-long pass from the association.

Poultry

Each exhibitor will be required to submit a completed Poultry Project Record Sheet at the time of evaluation. Record sheets will be handed out at poultry tagging.

Educational displays will be required for each club. Set-up must be completed by 8:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 20, and taken down at 10:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 26.

Goats

Goat pens must be cleaned a minimum of 2 days during fair week; suggested Tuesday and Thursday.

Evaluations

Members exhibiting both breeding stock and market animals will only be required to do ONE evaluation.

Horse Awards Ceremony

Horse Awards have been moved to Friday, September 25, at 5:00 p.m. in the Henningsen Show Arena.

Youth County Awards

The Youth County Awards Ceremony will once again be moved back to the 4-H Leader/Donor Recognition Banquet in November. County Awards applications are available on the website and are **due October 2**. Fair week is a great opportunity to turn these in! https://www.canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/4-h-youth-council

Loadout

The fair board has removed the requirement that all trailers cease movement by 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, September 27. All breeding stock and market animals designated for take-home will be released between 11:00 p.m. and midnight on Saturday, September 26, and at 5:30 a.m. on Sunday, September 27. ALL ANIMALS must be checked out with the superintendent before leaving the barns.

If all livestock exhibits are removed Saturday night, it is still the responsibility of the EXHIBITOR to help with barn clean-up and tear down of pens/stalls on Sunday.

- **Attention:** All 4-H Livestock members/clubs will be held responsible for cleaning and tearing down their project pen/stall at the end of fair. Individuals or clubs may be assessed a \$50.00 fine for failure to do so. This is not a new rule but will be enforced.



Post-Fair Meetings

The feedback form noted on the reminder page will take the place of post-fair meetings unless a meeting is necessary for a specific species. Your feedback is highly valued!

Volunteer Hours

Every year, the number of volunteer hours that 4-H leaders put in throughout the year is estimated for the fair's 120-day report to the state. If you are a 4-H leader, please email Kayla (mitch704@msu.edu) the total number of volunteer hours you worked in 2026 by October 15.



COUNTY 4-H NEWS

REMINDERS

- Don't forget to **check your fair books** for all project requirements!



- Sign up for fair week alerts from **REMIND** to stay in the loop!
 - There are two codes. Both will have the same reminders. Please only use one code.
 - Joining by Text Message: Text the code @sjc4h26 or @sjc4h2026 to 81010.
 - Joining via the App or Website: Open your Remind account or download the app. Click or tap the **menu** (three lines) in the top-left corner. Select **Add a class**, then choose **Join existing class**. Enter the class code @sjc4h26 or @sjc4h2026.

- Some still projects require **additional forms and leader approval**. Forms can be found at http://canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/4_h_still_projects.
- Notebooks for any project are all required to be in a **three-ring binder**.
- **Still Project Entry Tags**: 4-H members will not be allowed to add classes that they do not have tags for on Saturday, September 19. Please refer to your email for confirmation from FairEntry and contact the MSU Extension office *immediately* if classes need to be added.
- **Teen leadership Leader** evaluations are due to the MSU Extension office by Wednesday, September 9, 2026. Forms can be found at http://canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/4_h_still_projects.
- **Dress appropriately** for your interviews and species show.
- Use **good sportsmanship** before, during, and after each show.
- **Cattle & Swine Exercise Pens** will be available for cattle and swine to be walked during fair week. The cattle exercise round pen will be set up on the south side of the open class beef barn #29. The hog exercise pen will be between swine barn #25 and sheep barn #26.
- There will be a **mandatory meeting for all horse exhibitors** on Saturday, September 19, at 5:00 p.m. in the Margie Tien practice arena.
- Anyone using **equipment** on the fairgrounds, including bobcats for cleaning stalls at the end of fair week, must sign a **waiver** with the fair office annually.
- **Volunteers** are always needed for a variety of fair prep and fair week tasks! See the volunteer page for more details and call the MSU Extension office if you are available to help.
- **The Still Project Auction** will be Saturday, September 26, at 4:00 p.m. in barn #44. ALL still exhibits are eligible to be sold. See "Still Project Auction" page for more details.
- Your feedback is important to us! Please use this link or scan the QR code to provide **4-H feedback**. https://msu.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8kySkMviUPngB8



JIM & THELMA FAIRCHILD VOLUNTEER 4-H LEADER AWARD

Applications are now being accepted for the Jim & Thelma Fairchild Volunteer 4-H Leader Award.

If you know of someone who you think is deserving of this special award, contact the MSU Extension office at 269-467-5511 for more information and guidelines. Completed forms are due to the MSU Extension office by Friday, October 9, 2026.



COUNTY 4-H NEWS

STILL EXHIBIT TAGS & ADMISSION PASSES

One of the first things 4-H members need to do when they arrive at the fair is pick up an envelope containing their still project exhibit tags and fair admission pass on Saturday, September 19, 2026, from 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. or 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. in the "**Little Red Barn**" #46. No exhibit tags will be distributed after the 4:00 p.m. deadline on Saturday, as judging has ended.

Fair Admission Passes: 4-H members over the age of 10 who exhibit livestock will receive a pass with seven (7) scans for the week; youth 10 and under are free. One pass with seven (7) scans per livestock family will be provided for parents of exhibitors who cannot drive themselves to do chores.

A pass with three (3) scans will be given to all other 4-H members who are not eligible to receive 4-H livestock exhibitor passes.

4-H Leader Passes: Active, registered 4-H leaders will receive a pass with seven (7) scans for the week. Individuals registered to serve as leaders, but who have been identified as inactive by club organizational leaders in terms of fulfilling their responsibilities as leaders, will NOT receive a fair pass. Leaders who are also St. Joseph County Grange Fair Association members will receive their pass from the fair association, but will NOT receive one from 4-H. It is the responsibility of 4-H club organizational leaders to ensure that all project leaders are registered in 4-H Online with St. Joseph County 4-H.



EXPRESS PASS

4-H members who will be exhibiting in the 4-H Dog Show, and/ or Rabbit, Poultry, or Cattle Evaluations on Saturday, September 19 and who also need to have still projects evaluated on that date may, if their situation meets the conditions stated in the next paragraph, pick up a special 4-H wristband in the 4-H Fair office (located between buildings #43 & #44) that will serve as an "express pass" for still project evaluations. The "express pass" will allow members to be moved to the front of the still project evaluation lines.

Express Pass Criteria: Express passes will be distributed only when special access to still project exhibit evaluations is absolutely necessary to ensure that the 4-H member in question can participate in both the 4-H Dog Show and/or Livestock Evaluations and Still Exhibit Project Evaluations during the times allotted for these activities on Saturday.

EVALUATION PROCESS FOR ANIMALS

Saturday, September 19

Dog: Dog Husbandry and Grooming Interview required during the show, starting at 8:30 a.m. in the Henningsen Show Arena

Beef/Dairy Beef/Feeder Steer: Evaluation required, 2:00 - 6:00 p.m. in the Beef Barn (#31). Notebook optional.

Poultry: Evaluation required, 2:00 - 6:00 p.m. in the Poultry/Turkey Barn (#27 & #28). Poultry Record required; notebook optional.

Rabbits: Evaluation required, 2:00 - 6:00 p.m. in the Rabbit Barn (#29). Notebook optional.

Dairy Cattle: Interview required, 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. in the Dairy Cattle Barns (#20 & #21). Notebook required with a 4"x 6" picture on the front.

Sunday, September 20

Sheep: Evaluation required, 8:00 - 11:00 a.m. in Sheep Barn #25. Notebook optional.

Goat: Evaluation required, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon in Goat Barn #22. Notebook optional.

Swine: Evaluation required, 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. between Swine Barns #24 & #25. Notebook optional.



Beyond Ready

because of St. Joseph County 4-H



COUNTY 4-H NEWS

EARLY CHECK-IN FOR CATTLE, HORSES, SHEEP, AND SWINE

Any cattle, horse, sheep, and/or swine member who would like to bring in their animal(s) early may do so on Friday, September 18, 2026, during the following times: sheep & swine 3:30 - 7:30 p.m., beef/dairy beef/feeder steer 5:00 - 7:00 p.m., dairy cattle 5:00 - 8:00 p.m., horses by request. Animals should be clean and tags easy to read. If tags are not clean and easy to read, the member, animal, and vehicle will be moved to the end of the unloading line. All market livestock will be weighed as they are unloaded from the trailer, and there will be no re-weighing.

MARKET LIVESTOCK WEIGH-IN

The official "weight" of a given market livestock project animal (for show and sale purposes) will be determined when the animal is weighed in at the fair. The weight of your animal at this time will determine the specific market "weight class" your animal will be entered in for competition at the fair.

Attention! Market livestock will be weighed ONE TIME ONLY. All market livestock must be weighed before being housed.

- Sheep = Friday, 3:30 - 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
- Swine = Friday, 3:30 - 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, 8:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.
- Rabbits = Friday, 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.
- Poultry = Friday, 4:00 - 7:00 p.m.
- Beef = Friday, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. and Saturday, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
- Goats = Saturday, 8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

2026 HEALTH REQUIREMENTS FOR LIVESTOCK

The following is a summary of important animal health information for animals brought to exhibit at the 2026 St. Joseph County Grange Fair.

All cattle (market & breeding stock) must have an official radio frequency identification device (RFID) ear tag.

All sheep and goats must have official identification (scrapies tag) in the ear or tail of the animal prior to movement off the farm. Contact the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) at (517) 324-5290 for ear tags.

A CL 840 tag is required to be in the ear of all swine prior to movement off the farm.

All equine, except foals under six months and nursing their dam, entered in a fair, exhibition, exposition, or show must test negative to an official Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA) test within the current calendar year (also known as Coggins Test). You must have the original on hand with you, and a copy must be on file with the MSU Extension office.

No paperwork or vaccinations are required at this time for rabbits.

All poultry vaccinations will be given at the time of tagging.

CARCASS CONTEST INFORMATION

All Species Carcass Contests will be held at:
Bontrager Custom Meat Processing
53541 Correll Rd.
Leonidas, MI 49066
269-496-7587

All carcass contest animals must be delivered to the fairgrounds for weigh-in on Saturday, September 12, 2026, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Hanging Evaluations on Tuesday, September 15, 2026:

- Goats - 5:30 p.m.
- Swine - 6:00 p.m.
- Sheep - 6:30 p.m.
- Beef - 7:00 p.m.





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2026 FEEDER STEER VACCINATION REQUIREMENTS

- Step 1 - First vaccination must be received at the June weigh-in to help protect against infectious diseases.
- Step 2 - "Booster" the calf two to four weeks later (following the Step 1 vaccination) with the same type of modified live vaccine used in Step 1.
- Step 3 - Nasalgen will need to be administered to all steers. 4-H Club leaders will be responsible for administering Nasalgen between August 24 and September 7, 2026.

WATERING LIVESTOCK REMINDER

Due to the potential for transmission of communicable livestock diseases through use of shared drinking water containers, no group watering tanks will be allowed at the fair.

In addition, all animals are to be watered either in their pen/stall or at the appropriate wash rack, and the wash rack cleaned up if necessary (i.e. any manure left behind by your animal properly disposed of). This rule is necessary due to the problems with "water holes" and mud that are created when livestock are watered next to water faucets at the ends of barns.



STILL EXHIBIT JUDGING & CLUB BANNER CHECK-IN

All 4-H still exhibits and club banners **MUST** be checked in and evaluated on Saturday, September 19, 2026, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. or 1:00 - 4:00 p.m.

There will be a 1-hour lunch break for judges and judging clerks from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. Still project exhibit buildings will be closed during the lunch break. Member access to the exhibit building will be limited as necessary starting at 11:30 a.m. to help ensure that judges wrap things up in time for lunch.

The Still Exhibit Evaluation procedure is as follows:

1. Pick up an envelope containing your 4-H still project exhibit tags during the noted times above in barn #46.
2. Report to the EAST end of barn #43 or barn #44. An Evaluation Traffic Controller will assist members with finding the right stations.
3. 4-H members **ONLY** will be admitted into the building during evaluation times. Each member exhibiting "still projects" will complete a one-on-one interview with a judge.
4. All projects that require hanging devices or additional items such as sheets/forms, notebooks, photos, patterns, recipes, etc. **MUST** have those accompanied with the project to receive an "A" rating. **Read through all projects thoroughly for instructions.**

Note: Sewing, Knitting, Crocheting & Wardrobe Personalization members will not be asked to change into their garments for evaluation at fair. Sewing and Wardrobe Personalization project members are reminded to bring garments on a hanger(s) so that they are ready to be "hung" on the exhibit building wall for display purposes.

Exhibits that require hangers must have hangers attached prior to judging:

Candlewicking/Embroidery/Needlepoint/Other Needlecraft, Counted Cross-Stitch, Plastic Canvas, Quilts, Drawings, Paintings, Ink on Glass, Latch Hook, Paint by Number, Other Crafts, Tin Punch, Wood Burning, Puzzles



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STILL EXHIBIT UNLOADING

Unloading of still exhibits may be done next to the barns; however, your vehicle **MUST** be moved immediately after unloading is complete (do not leave your vehicle unattended). If your vehicle is left in the unloading zone, it will be towed to the back of the southeast parking lot. Please make sure you are not in an animal unloading line.

Promotional & Club Displays, Dioramas, Collections, Engines, Tractors, & Other Large Projects can be brought in and set up on Thursday, September 17, or Friday, September 18, 4:00 - 7:00 p.m. to be ready for judging on Saturday.

STYLE REVUE

The 4-H Style Revue will be held on Wednesday, September 23, 2026, at 6:45 p.m., in barn #44. All 4-H members who will be exhibiting a completed Sewing, Knitting, Crocheting, and/or Wardrobe Personalization project at the fair are eligible to participate in the Style Revue.

Members may model a combination of project exhibits if desired. In addition, members may also use purchased accessories to complete or accentuate their outfit and/or a "prop" to help "set off" the particular type of garment(s) being modeled.

4-H Style Revue participants will be divided into three divisions according to age (8-11 years old, 12-14 years old, and 15-19 years old). Members will be judged on their modeling ability and garment fit and will receive an A, B, or C rating and premium accordingly.

DEMONSTRATIONS & PERFORMANCES

All 4-H animal project demonstrations will take place on Wednesday, September 23, 2026, 3:00 - 4:00 p.m. at the 4-H Photo Wall on the north side of the Henningsen Show Arena.

All 4-H still project demonstrations, performances, public speaking presentations, and illustrated talks will be given on Wednesday, September 23, 2026, 4:00 - 7:00 p.m. in barn #44.

Note: One table and one easel will be provided at each of the above-noted locations.

Demonstration/Performance "Times": Sign-up for "times" will be conducted on a first-come, first-served basis in barn #46 on Saturday, September 19, 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. or in the 4-H Office between buildings #43 & #44 on Sunday, September 20, 2026, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Plan to be at your designated "presentation" location at least 15 minutes early. Be sure to bring all the equipment you need.



VIEWING SCHEDULE FOR STILL PROJECT BARNs

The 4-H still exhibit building (#44) and the 4-H trophy building (#43) will be open for public viewing according to the following schedule, starting with the opening on Sunday, September 20, 2026.

- Sunday: 1:00 - 9:00 p.m.
- Monday - Thursday: 10:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m.
- Friday & Saturday: 10:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.

4-H Still Exhibit Building Monitors will be on duty each day during viewing hours as a security measure to help prevent mishandling and theft of exhibits and awards. This viewing schedule will be strictly adhered to out of concern for the security of the exhibits.



COUNTY 4-H NEWS

STILL PROJECT AUCTION

The purpose of the still project auction:

- To entice more interest in 4-H youth participation in still project areas because of the opportunity of financial gain.
- To give the 4-H still project exhibitors the “marketing” experience like the livestock exhibitors have, such as face-to-face experience with potential buyers, writing skills in the form of buyer letters and thank-you notes, and the character-building skills of presentation in the sale ring.
- To have the means for funds specifically earmarked for Still Project area development and exhibit improvements by assessing a small commission.

Criteria for Still Project Auction Entry:

1. Entry is completely voluntary.
2. Exhibitor must have shown in that project area at least once before.
3. Project must be entered in the current year fair and receive an “A” rating.
4. 4-H member **MUST** be present and take the project through the auction.
5. Auction entry forms must be completed and turned in to the 4-H office by Friday, September 25 at noon to allow the committee enough time to verify placings and completeness of application.
6. If the project was awarded a trophy/award, the appropriate thank-you note must be submitted with the Auction Entry form. The committee will record this on 4-H office records.
7. Project may be pulled from the auction with a written request by the exhibitor and parent/guardian no later than Friday, September 25 at 5:00 p.m.
8. Items entered in the auction will be moved to a designated area in barn #44 throughout the week.
9. Exhibitors are strongly encouraged to contact at least three potential buyers in writing and/or in person to invite them to attend the auction.
10. Auction will be held in **Still Exhibit Barn #44 at 4:00 p.m. on Saturday, September 26, 2026**. Thank-you cards for auction items must be turned in to the 4-H office by Friday, October 2, 2026. No money will be released to the exhibitor until a thank-you note is turned in.
11. Items that are auctioned become the property of the buyer upon completion of the sale. Project items must remain on display until the designated pick-up time. **Exception:** A fresh batch of food product or living plants must be made to give to buyer(s) after the auction.
12. Items purchased may be picked up on Saturday, September 26 after 10:00 p.m. or on Sunday, September 27 between 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. (same as other still projects) with Bill of Sale ONLY.
13. There will be a Sales Commission of 2% deducted from the sale check. These monies will remain with the SJC 4-H Youth Council and be used for Still Project Development programs/workshops and Still Project Exhibit/Display improvements only.





COUNTY 4-H NEWS

PHOTO COVERAGE

4-H members receiving trophies or special awards in livestock and/or still projects may report to the 4-H Fair Photo Wall located on the **NORTH SIDE** of the show arena from 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday for "photo opportunities" with reporters from area newspapers.



4-H Photo Information Sheets are available on the MSU Extension website. They will be also available during fair week at the 4-H Fair office and at the Photo Wall during photo times. 4-H members seeking a "photo opportunity" must complete a 4-H Photo Information Sheet prior to getting their photo taken.

"Photo trophies" have been set aside for use in photo sessions with local media. These trophies have blank engraving plates and "generic" figures on top. A volunteer "photo session coordinator" will be on hand each day

that photo sessions are scheduled to assist the reporters/photographers. The photo session coordinator will be responsible for transporting the "photo trophies" to the photo session location at the 4-H Fair Photo Wall by 4:45 p.m. and returning the trophies to the 4-H Fair office at the end of the photo session. They will also assist photographers in coordinating an orderly flow of interested members through the photo process. Your cooperation with this system of handling photo opportunities with our local newspapers and fair photographers will be greatly appreciated.

END OF FAIR FUN EVENTS

The 4-H Youth Council is hosting a Scavenger Hunt on Wednesday, September 23, at 7:00 p.m. Meet in the Henningsen Show Arena

The 4-H Dance is back! 4-H Fun Night will be held Friday night right AFTER Sweepstakes on the East end of the Henningsen Show Arena. This will be a fun night for 4-H members and Cloverbuds to celebrate a week of fun and all of their accomplishments. Come celebrate with us! *This is only open to St. Joseph County 4-H members.



The Open Adult and Youth Livestock Judging Contest will take place on Saturday, September 26, at 10:00 a.m. in the Henningsen Show Arena. Participants will judge all large animal species. It is a FREE event with quality prizes being given to those who "know their stuff". Come and test your knowledge!

TSC PAPER CLOVER FALL CAMPAIGN

The fall 2026 4-H Paper Clover Campaign will take place Friday, November 27, through Sunday, December 13. Shoppers at the Sturgis and Three Rivers TSC stores will have the opportunity to support 4-H in St. Joseph County by purchasing paper clovers for just \$1 at checkout. All funds raised will be donated to 4-H and will support 4-H youth development program activities in St. Joseph County.





COUNTY 4-H NEWS

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES STILL AVAILABLE



Volunteers are needed to serve as still exhibit judging clerks, on Saturday, September 19 from 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and/or 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. Judging clerks assist the judge in organizing/moving the projects, attach ribbons after evaluation and record all placings, including best of shows/trophies. We also need help with exhibit set-up on Saturday after the evaluations, Sunday helpers, and in a variety of other capacities throughout the week. Please call the St. Joseph County MSU Extension Office at 269-467-5511 to volunteer your services. You can also stop by the still exhibit barns any time after evaluations to see where help is needed.

STILL PROJECT AUCTION

The 4-H Youth Council Still Project Auction Committee is asking for additional help! On Friday, September 25, they will need help to move/rearrange projects for the auction. Any muscle is appreciated! If you are around, swing by barn #44. The auction will be on Saturday, September 26 at 4:00 p.m. The committee will need help with preparing projects, buyer check-in, and more! If you are available to help with the auction, please call the St. Joseph County MSU Extension office at 269-467-5511 to volunteer your services.

4-H MILK BARN

The 4-H Youth Council is looking for volunteers to help sell milk at the 4-H Milk Barn during fair week. There are several shifts available if you are interested. There should be a maximum of one adult and two 4-H members at a time. Please call Craig Ulsh, Youth Council President, at 269-506-0199 to schedule your time.



TINY TAILS BIRTHING BARN

The Tiny Tails Birthing Barn coordinator is looking for volunteers to help staff the barn during the fair. Your responsibilities would include but are not limited to:

- Encourage and show visitors where to wash their hands after petting animals.
- Keep area clean of all feces.
- Do not let anyone pet animals that appear ill.

It is requested that you volunteer for a 3-hour shift any time between 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. during the week of the fair (Sunday, September 20 - Saturday, September 26). For more information and/or to sign up for a volunteer time, call Jenny Nofziger at 269-625-7140.

AG-CITING EXPERIENCE

We are still in need of volunteers for the 36th annual Ag-Citing Experience. The dates for the program are Tuesday, September 22, Wednesday, September 23, and Friday, September 25.

"Ag-Citing Experience" is an educational program that gives 3rd grade students in St. Joseph County the opportunity to learn about farm animals and agriculture while on a field trip with their school. The classes are bused to the fairgrounds, where they will be led on a tour to designated animal stops and field/vegetable crop stations. The animals they will be learning about this year are cattle, goats/sheep, swine, poultry, and rabbits. **Note:** scripts are provided, and knowledge is not necessary in these areas to volunteer.

Please call Sandy Summey at 269-718-7521 or email her at bgnursesandy@gmail.com to volunteer.



COUNTY 4-H NEWS

THANK YOU NOTE CARDS FOR SALE



The 4-H Youth Council will be offering "sets" of 4-H "thank you" note cards, for sale at fair, with each "set" including a 4-H "note card" plus a stamped envelope. "Thank you" note sets may be purchased at the 4-H Fair office starting on Sunday, September 20, and running through Saturday, September 26, during regularly scheduled office hours for as long as supplies last.

At \$2.00 each, these attractive "thank you" note sets are a great buy for use in writing "thank you" notes to trophy, plaque and special award donors and market livestock buyers! (However, the use of "4-H" thank you note stationary is not required.)

Trophy and special award recipients are **required** to write and submit a "thank you" note for the donor(s) of each trophy/special award received. The "thank you" note is then exchanged by the member for his/her trophy/special award. "Thank you" notes must be submitted in a stamped envelope (which has both the donor's address and the award recipient's return address neatly written on the envelope). Note: If the "thank you" note is for a buyer, write on the back of the envelope what species of yours they purchased.

Attention: Thank you notes (including envelopes) should be written using an ink pen to end up with the most professional and neat-looking results! In addition, the 4-H Youth Program Coordinator reserves the right to refuse "thank you" notes submitted with sloppily and/or incompletely addressed envelopes and/or dirt-smudged envelopes.

Donor Name/Address Information: The trophy/special award donor's name will be printed on a "donor identification card" that will be attached to each trophy/special award. A list of all trophies/plaques/special awards and the corresponding donors (including the donor's complete address and the name of the "contact person" for business donors) will be posted on the A-frame in the middle of barn #44.

Buyer Name/Address Information: The buyer's name and number will be written on a sheet of paper that is filled out immediately following the sale of your animal. A list of all buyers (including complete address and "contact person" for businesses) will be posted on the A-frame in the Henningsen Show Arena.

Be sure to put some real time and thought into composing your note. Hastily written notes are not well received by donors and buyers. It is up to you as an award winner to express your appreciation in such a way that donors are encouraged to continue donating trophies and special awards in the future. Without the support of our donors, the awarding of fair trophies and awards would not be possible.

TROPHIES & SPEICAL AWARDS PICK-UP

Trophies and special awards may be picked up on Saturday, September 26, 10:00 - 11:00 p.m. and Sunday, September 27, 8:00 - 10:00 a.m. in barn #44.

To pick up your trophy, you must submit a stamped and sealed thank-you note written to the donor with the correct address and your return address. Thank-you notes with pre-stamped envelopes will be for sale in the 4-H office for \$2.00 each during regularly scheduled hours. A listing of all the donors, with correct spelling and addresses, will be posted in barn #44 and all livestock buyers' information will be in the Henningsen Show Arena.





COUNTY 4-H NEWS

SHOOTING SPORTS

St. Joseph County 4-H members who are interested in archery, BB gun, shotgun, and rifle will be able to compete in the 21st annual county “shoot”. This is possible because of the many hours the shooting sports volunteers put in to organize and work with the kids throughout the year. All “shoots” will take place at the St. Joseph County Conservation Club: trap on Tuesday, September 8, archery on Wednesday, September 9, and rifle/BB gun on Thursday, September 10, 2026, all starting at 6:00 p.m. The Conservation Club and 4-H leaders have been very influential in helping get support from other organizations for supplies and have offered hunter safety classes that are necessary to participate in any shoot. For more information, contact your shooting sports leader. Each shooting sports participant must also do an educational still project to be judged on Saturday, September 19.

RELEASE OF EXHIBITS AT THE END OF THE WEEK

- **Saturday, September 26** - All 4-H still project exhibits released from 10:00 - 11:00 p.m.
- **Saturday, September 26** - Optional release for breeding stock and market animals designated for take-home 11:00 p.m. to midnight
 - We encourage all poultry & rabbits to be taken home during this time to get the barns cleaned. If necessary, they may also be loaded out on Sunday, September 27, but must be gone by 6:00 a.m.
- **Sunday, September 27** - All livestock will be released and all-species barn clean-up at 5:30 a.m.
- **Sunday, September 27** - Pick up any remaining still project exhibits and awards from 8:00 - 10:00 a.m. in building #44.

All livestock exhibits must be **checked out by the specie Superintendent before leaving the barns.**

It is highly recommended that still exhibits be picked up during the above-noted times as there is no guarantee of exhibit security. Any exhibits not picked up two weeks following the fair will either be disposed of or given to a charitable organization as deemed appropriate.

PEN/STALL CLEAN OUT POST-FAIR



This clean-out effort on your part really helps the fair maintenance staff get the fairgrounds back in order quickly and efficiently following the fair. 4-H project leaders will be responsible for organizing their members to get the clean-up accomplished. Be sure to visit with the appropriate 4-H animal superintendent/assistant superintendent during fair week to get details on how the clean-out will be handled.

Attention: All 4-H Livestock members/clubs will be held responsible for cleaning and tearing down their project pen/stall at the end of fair. Individuals or clubs may be assessed a \$50.00 fine for failure to do so.

If all livestock exhibits are removed Saturday night, it is still the responsibility of the exhibitor to help with barn clean-up and tear down of pens/stalls on Sunday.

4-H MEMORIAL PARK

Access to the 4-H office during the fair is by way of the beautiful brick-paved pathway. There have been several bricks added to the walkway this year. To put your mark on the fairgrounds, pick up a 4-H Donate-A-Brick Program form. Fill it out and return it to the MSU Extension office. **Note:** The Donate-A-Brick Program is a fund-raiser for the 4-H Youth Council that started with the 2001 fair season.



COUNTY 4-H NEWS

GOING HOME: BIOSECURITY TIPS FOR ANIMALS THAT WENT TO THE COUNTY FAIR

Author: Katie Ockert, Michigan State University Extension



Animals exhibited at the county fair that will return to their home herds pose a significant biosecurity risk to the animals left at home. Follow these steps after the fair has ended to protect everyone.

Animals that have been exhibited during the county fair are likely near and dear to their exhibitors' hearts. After all, they spent countless hours training and preparing their animal for the show at the fair. We protect them from everything before the show season, but do we give enough thought about what happens when they go home? Each time an animal is taken out of its home environment and exhibited, there is a certain amount of risk for exposure to illness.

Michigan State University Extension offers these biosecurity steps exhibitors can take to protect their show animals and those that were left at home after the fair has ended.

- Keep animals that were at the fair separate from animals that were not for 28 – 30 days. If at all possible, do not allow nose-to-nose contact and provide as much distance between animals.
- Disinfect all buckets, feeders, tools and footwear that was at the fair.
- Throw away any feed or hay that was at the fair.
- Always wear clean clothes and footwear. Boot coverings may be helpful when caring for animals.
- Take care of animals that stayed home from the show first, and animals that were at the show second. Do not go back and forth between animals as this increases the risk of cross-contamination.
- Do not eat or drink in the barn.
- Observe animals daily for signs and symptoms of illness, such as:
 - Obvious pain or discomfort.
 - Decrease in appetite and water intake.
 - Fever.
 - Lethargy.
 - Diarrhea or changes in consistency in manure.
 - Discharge from nasal cavity or eyes.
 - Overall weakness.

If you notice any of the above symptoms, please call your veterinarian immediately.

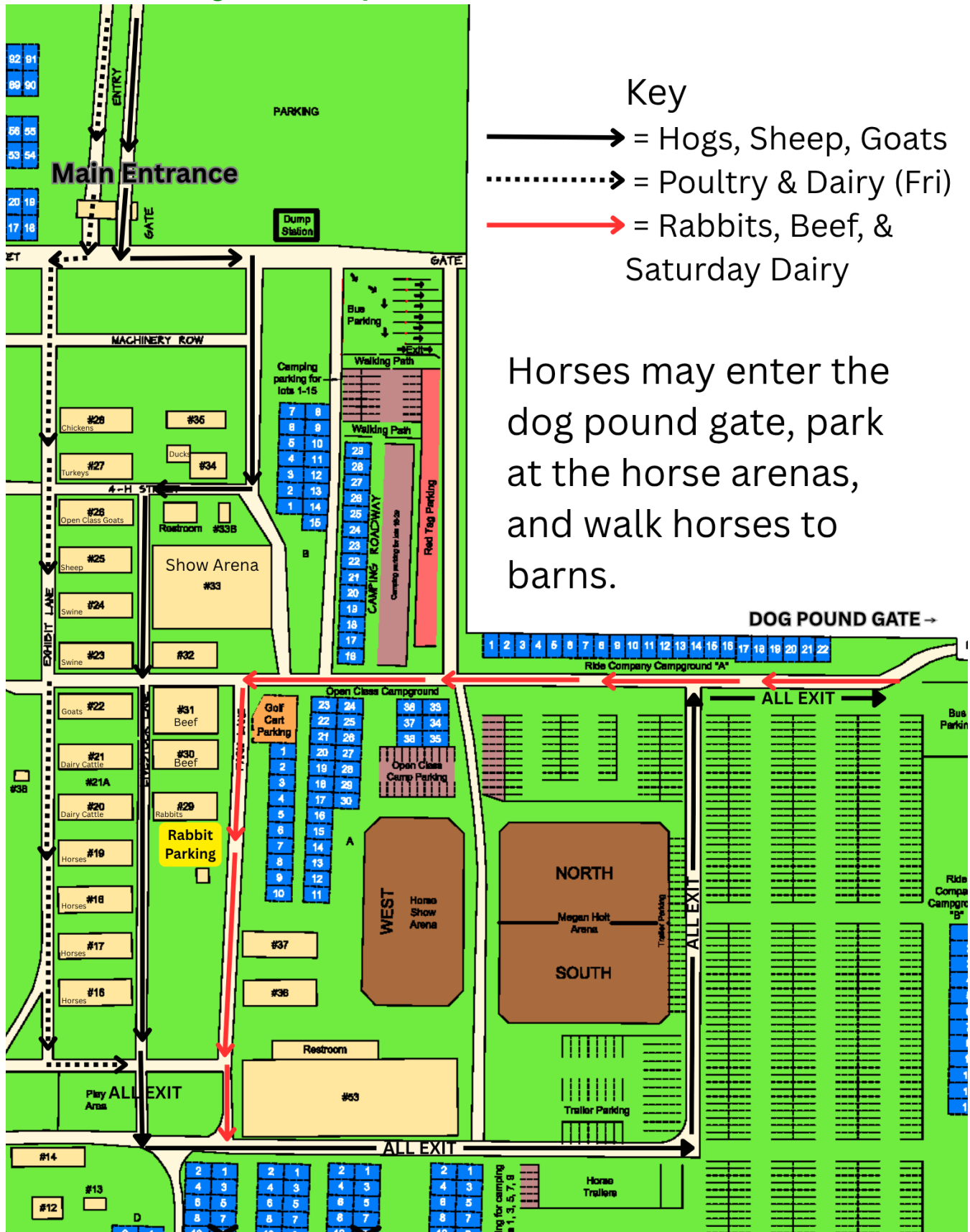
Care of animals after the fair is critical. Exhibited animals were exposed to animals from other farms, fair goers who may not have washed their hands in between various species of animals, and potentially a lot of stress. By following these steps, you can help keep all of your animals safe and healthy.

For more information about fair biosecurity, visit <https://www.canr.msu.edu/fair-and-exhibition-animal-health/biosecurity>.



COUNTY 4-H NEWS

Livestock Unloading Route Map





COUNTY CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
13 Saturday, 8/29 8:30am Competitive Trail Ride at Russ Forrest 10am Honor Court Interviews Saturday, 9/12 9am Driven and Ridden Dressage Show 10-11am Live Carcass Weigh-In	14	15 Carcass Evaluation @ Bontrager Custom Meat Processing in Leonidas • 5:30pm Goat • 6:00pm Hog • 6:30pm Lamb • 7:00pm Beef	16	17 6:00pm Cat Show @ Henningsen Show Arena Make sure all tags and animals checking in on Friday are CLEAN!	18 3:30-7:30pm Sheep & Swine Check-In (Optional) 4-7pm Rabbit & Poultry Check-In 5-7pm Beef/Dairy Beef/Feeder Steer Check-In (Optional) 5-8pm Dairy Cattle Check-In (Optional) Horse Check-In by request Make sure all tags and animals checking in on Saturday are CLEAN!	19 8-11am Beef, Sheep, Swine Check-In 8-12pm Goat Check-In 8-1pm Dairy Cattle Check-In 8:30am Dog Show 9-12pm & 1-4pm Still Project Check-In/ Judging 2-6pm Evaluations for all beef, poultry, rabbits 3-5pm Dairy Cattle Evaluations 5pm Horse Exhibitor Meeting @ Margie Tien Arena - Horses must be checked-in & stalled 8pm Honor Court Ceremony
20 8-11am Sheep Evaluations 8:30am Horse Show: Showmanship/ Western/Reining/ Trail 9am Rabbit Show 9-12pm Goat Evaluations 9-1pm Swine Evaluations 10am Poultry Show	21 8:30am Horse Show: English/Jumping 9:30am Swine Show 10am Goat Show 4pm Horse Show: In-Hand	22 8:30am Horse Show: Driving 9am Beef Show 9am Feeder Show 4pm Sheep Show 6:30pm Horse Show: Costume	23 10am Horse Show: Gymkhana 10am Dairy Cattle Show 3pm Animal Project Demonstrations 4-7pm Still Project Demonstrations & Performances 5pm Auction Setup 6:45pm Style Revue 7pm Scavenger Hunt	24 10am Small Animal Sale (rabbits, goats, turkeys, chickens) 10:30am Large Animal Sale (lambs, market beef, dairy market steers, gallon of milk, feeder steers, hogs)	25 5pm Horse Project Awards @ Henningsen Show Arena 7pm Sweepstakes Showmanship 9pm 4-H Dance & Fun Night!	26 10am Livestock Judging Contest 11am Parade lineup south side of race track (parade at noon) 4pm Still Exhibit Auction, Barn 44 10pm Poultry & Rabbit Loadout & Barn Clean-up 10-11pm Still Exhibit & Trophy Check-Out 11pm-12am Livestock Loadout for breeding stock and market animals designated for take-home



STATEWIDE 4-H NEWS

Michigan 4-H alumni & supporters invited to get connected by the clover!

As a valuable member of the Michigan 4-H community, you already know the importance of the 4-H connection. We invite those age 18 and older to take that 4-H connection one step further by joining a new statewide community of 4-H supporters: Michigan 4-H Alumni & Friends.

The Michigan 4-H Alumni & Friends database will connect 4-H families, alumni, volunteers, supporters and others across Michigan with one another – connecting them by the clover! We hope you will take a few moments to sign-up for this free community and grow your connection.

As a member of Michigan 4-H Alumni & Friends, you will receive information about opportunities to support 4-H youth and programs; 4-H programming and participants; upcoming events for the Michigan 4-H Alumni & Friends community and more!

Join Michigan 4-H Alumni & Friends

Stay informed. Support youth.
Strengthen communities.
Get connected by the clover today!

Join for free at:
extension.msu.edu/Michigan4HA&F

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension

National 4-H Week: October 4-10

For more than 115 years, 4-H has inspired families, shaped careers, and impacted communities. From October 4-10, we will celebrate the impact of 4-H during National 4-H Week. The theme of this year's National 4-H Week is "Beyond Ready." This theme celebrates how 4-H is building a ready generation in a world of change, equipping youth with skills for the future while meeting them where they are today.

Join with 4-H'ers around the country in activating on two important initiatives:

Monday, October 5: Go Green!

On Monday of National 4-H Week, Go GREEN and show your 4-H spirit! Wear a green hat, clothing, face paint— anything green goes. Let's paint the nation GREEN in support of 4-H! Share your 'Go Green' moment on social and tag National 4-H, Michigan 4-H program, and use: #4HBeyondReady #National4HWeek.

Thursday, October 8: Thankful Thursday

On Thursday of National 4-H Week, help us shine a light on all the mentors, educators and volunteers who are making positive impact on you people's lives in 4-H. Share who you're thankful for and celebrate how they are making a difference on Thursday, October 8! Share your 'Thankful' story on social, tag others in your 4-H community, tag National 4-H and use: #4HBeyondReady #National4HWeek.

Learn more about more ways you can celebrate during National 4-H Week at www.canr.msu.edu/events/national-4-h-week.

Wild Spartans returns!

Starting in October, the Wild Spartans Series is back! Join 4-H staff as they take a look into life working with fisheries and wildlife! Follow along to climb through bogs, peer into bear dens, mist net songbirds, snorkel for fish, or perhaps even tag deer. Meet natural resources professionals, learn about their field work, and the education and career path they've followed to get there.

Monthly sessions will be held on the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. EST. Each 30-minute session will feature 1-2 guest speakers. Youth will be encouraged to ask questions to learn more through a live Q&A with scientists. This free virtual series is open to 4-H and non-4-H youth ages 12-19 years. Pre-registration required:

www.canr.msu.edu/environmental_outdoor_education/wild-spartans-series.

Join Us Online
WILD SPARTANS
MONTHLY WILDLIFE & FISHERIES WEBINAR SERIES
FOR FAMILIES INTERESTED IN EXPLORING
SCIENCE • RESEARCH • CAREERS • CONSERVATION
October-March, 2nd Tuesday of each month | 6:30 PM EST
Registration required:
www.canr.msu.edu/environmental_outdoor_education/wild-spartans-series

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STATEWIDE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Starting the new 4-H year with a focus on being Beyond Ready



Beyond Ready

A new 4-H year is the perfect time for volunteers and youth to set the tone for growth, learning and readiness. Beginning the year with intentional activities helps young people build confidence, explore their interests, and understand how their 4-H experiences prepare them for life beyond the club.

Early goal setting, reflection and hands-on project work encourage youth to practice important skills such as communication, decision making and responsibility. Volunteers play a key role by helping youth make connections between what they do in 4-H and the skills they will need in future school, work and community settings.

By starting strong and reinforcing these ideas all year long, clubs can help ensure youth are truly Beyond Ready for whatever comes next.

#BeyondReady

September 9: Welcome Back MSU 4-H Alumni Reception

Michigan 4-H Children's Gardens, East Lansing

If you are a current or former 4-H'er attending MSU this fall, stop by the Michigan 4-H Children's Gardens from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. for networking and free dinner! Plan to stay after for the first meeting of the fall semester for MSU Collegiate 4-H!

www.canr.msu.edu/events/msu-welcome-week-4-h-alumni-reception

September 20: Saginaw 4-H Fall Festival

Schomaker Farms, Saginaw

Join the Saginaw 4-H Fall Festival for a fun-filled afternoon at Schomaker Farms! Bring your family and friends for an afternoon of fun, learning, and community. The public is welcome!

www.canr.msu.edu/events/saginaw-4-h-fall-festival

September 23: Adulting 101 – Are You Ready?

Online

Get ready for anything! This workshop will teach youth how to stay calm, make a plan and handle emergencies with confidence and safety.

www.canr.msu.edu/events/adulting-101-2026

October 2: Michigan 4-H Foundation Annual Membership Meeting

University Club of MSU, Lansing

4-H donors and staff with 4-H responsibilities are encouraged to attend and vote on all items at the meeting. Register by September 18.

www.canr.msu.edu/events/michigan-4-h-foundation-annual-membership-meeting

October 3: Michigan 4-H Legacy Awards Celebration

University Club of MSU, Lansing

Join us to celebrate and recognize Michigan's outstanding 4-H youth, alumni, volunteers, partners and staff. Register by September 18.

www.canr.msu.edu/events/michigan-4-h-legacy-celebration

October 4-10: National 4-H Week

For more than 100 years, 4-H has inspired families, shaped careers, and impacted communities.

Celebrate the impact of 4-H during National 4-H Week! Learn more and find ideas of how to celebrate in your community online.

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/events/national-4-h-week>

October 5: Go Green for 4-H!

On Monday of National 4-H Week, Go GREEN and show your 4-H spirit! Wear a green hat, clothing, face paint— anything green goes. Let's paint the nation GREEN in support of 4-H!

www.canr.msu.edu/events/national-4-h-week





COUNTY 4-H NEWS

HELPFUL LINKS

Be sure to check the fair book and the website for information, updates and new requirements.

- Fair Information - https://www.canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/4_h_fair
- Companion Animals - https://www.canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/4_h_dog_project
- Horse & Pony - https://www.canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/4_h_horse_and_pony
- Livestock - https://www.canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/4_h_livestock
- Still Project - https://www.canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/4_h_still_projects

ANNUAL RECOGNITION & COUNTY AWARDS BANQUET

The annual recognition banquet is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, November 12, 2026, at the Centreville Jr/Sr High School at 6:00 p.m.

County Awards applications are available on the website and are due October 2.

https://www.canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/4-h-youth-council

EXPLORATION DAYS

Are you ready for Exploration Days 2027? We had a GREAT trip this year. Don't miss out! Let's see if we can charter a bus next year! Dates for 2027 Exploration Days are June 23-25. For more information, visit

https://www.canr.msu.edu/4_h_exploration_days

Have a Great Fair!

Remember to be kind and courteous to judges, clerks, leaders, fellow 4-H members, MSU Extension staff and all other fair goers.

Reminder: Enrollment for next year begins in mid-October.

Sign up online at: www.v2.4honline.com.