

Cottonwood Extension District: Barton County 4-H Newsletter **June 2026**

It's County Fair month! You all are putting the final touches on your exhibits, as well as finalizing your entries! Don't forget that those are due on June 8th by 5 pm!

There shouldn't be any major changes from last year's fair that you aren't used to. Be sure to look through all the rules and guidelines, though. I know it seems like there may be too many rules to follow. However, life is about rules, and following a particular set of guidelines to succeed at whatever you are working on. Some of those exhibit rules are there for your own safety, and some are there to teach you a lesson as you work through developing your exhibits.

Don't forget that the 4-H Free Stage will be set up in Expo II again this year for anyone who would like to present a demonstration, project talk, music performance, skit, or reading for the public from 6:30 - 8:00 pm, directly following the 4-H Public Fashion Revue.

How you act at the fair is being watched by not only other 4-H families, but also the community members who visit the fair to support you all. Countless hours and no small amount of resources have been committed to making this a great experience for everyone. That experience would not be possible without the work of the Barton County Fair Association. Please find the time to thank them building up to, during, and after the fair.

The most important thing is to have fun and remember this whole experience is about making special memories with family, friends, and our great community!

I can't wait to see everyone at the fair and get a good look at all of your exhibits!

If you ever need anything. That's what I'm here for.

Every day is an opportunity for a new adventure!

Benjamin T. Sims

Follow us on Facebook: [Cottonwood Extension District](#) and [Barton County 4-H Members](#)

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Upcoming Events



- June 8 COUNTY FAIR ENTRIES DUE TO EXTENSION OFFICE by 5:00 pm
- June 8 YQCA completion by midnight to participate in the premium auction
- June 9 Sign Up Genius links released **via email** for consultation judging at **7 am**.
- June 14 Sign Up Genius links will close at 11:59 pm for consultation judging
- June 22 Set up of Expo Grounds and Buildings from 10 am - 7 pm
- June 24-28 Barton County Fair - 2026 Theme: "Our Fair, Our Heritage"
- July 28 Youth Livestock Skills Meeting - 5:30 pm @ Extension Office - *tentative*
- August 1 4-H Holding Board Fundraising Event - 4-H Education Buildings
- August 7 KSF entries due to the Extension Office by 5 pm

Itemized Fair Schedule:

- June 19 4-H Dog Show @ 9 am - Expo III
- June 20 4-H Fashion Revue, Fiber Arts, Sewing & Textile, Shopping in Style, Banners @ 8:30 am - Expo I
- June 22 Set Up Expo Grounds and Buildings
- June 24 8-12 Check in all exhibits, judging begins for Foods, Arts/Crafts, Cloverbuds, Rabbits/Poultry
American Ag Credit BBQ for 4-H followed by Livestock Mtg. & Youth Rally
- June 25 Business Appreciation Brkfst. - Modeled like a Chamber Coffee
Swine, Horse Halter Classes, Bucket Calves, Judging of Hort., Crops, Photography, Engineering/Tech and much more
- June 26 Dairy Goats, Meat Goats, Sheep, Beef
- June 27 Horse Riding Classes, Hand Pets, Public Fashion Revue, 4-H Free Stage for demonstrations
- June 28 Sunrise Service, 4-H Holding Board Breakfast, Small Animal Round Robin, Large Animal Round Robin, 4-H Awards, Sale of Champions

SignUpGenius links will come out after entries are complete for judging time slots, as well as to sign up for **Concession Stand times.**

There have been a couple of updates made to the 2026 Barton County Fair book. All updates are red edits that can be found on our district [website](#) under their respective project area.

Barton County 4-H Shooting Sports

[Air Rifle/Pistol Contest Results](#) -

Congratulations to Madison on being the 12th-place individual at the State 4-H Air Rifle Match on April 18th, here in Great Bend!!

[Archery](#) - Practices started in early February at the 4-H Educational Buildings on Hwy 281. Watch for more information. **4-H Shooting Sports is a great tool for teaching discipline, firearm safety, and accountability. For more information, reach out to John Reh at 620-786-0052 for rifle questions and Dustin Wyant at 620-617-6212 for Archery questions.**



Fair Thank You Station



We will have a Thank You Station in Expo III to pick up awards again this year.

Hours will be: Wednesday from 1 pm - 4 pm

Thursday from 9 am - 12 pm

Friday from 9 am - 12 pm

Outside of those hours, please contact Ben, and we'll make arrangements during the fair or back at the office.



Invite, Everyone!



The County Fair serves as a great time for community members and potential future sponsors to visit the fair and see all the hard work that is going into both exhibiting at the fair and putting it on!

We invite you to visit with family, friends not in 4-H, and local businesses that you work with to share the calendar of events and invite them to come out and see what the fair is all about. They can come watch a livestock show, attend a concert, walk through the commercial vendors in Expo I, ride some rides at the carnival, or simply peruse the exhibits in Expo II.



Turf at the County Fair



We are pleased to announce that turf has been donated to the Barton County Fair Association, which will be utilized at this year's county fair! The entire show arena will be turf, like that of a soccer or football field. The cattle stalls will be lined with this turf, as well. Eliminating the need for bedding there. However, swine, sheep, and goat pens will still need bedding. Please feel free to reach out with questions.



Kansas State Fair



State Fair information can be found in the [KSF 4-H Handbook](#).

State Fair Deadlines:

Grand Drive Entries Due (beef, sheep, swine, meat goat) - July 15

Horse Show - August 1 (be sure to read through all requirements in KSF 4-H Handbook)

Dairy Goats - entered via Open Class System

Static Entries - (everything else), Poultry, Rabbits, Dog, Communications - August 7 by 5 pm

Please feel free to reach out to the Extension office with questions. **There will be an entry book at the fair located in the Expo I fair office for you to fill in your Kansas State Fair entries. Questions can be directed to Ben.**

Reminder - If you received a purple in the following categories at 4-H Club Day, you are eligible to present at the Kansas State Fair. We'll include more information closer to the State fair entry time. Division and class information can be found in the KSF 4-H Handbook.

Project Talks, Junior and Senior Demo/Illustrated Talks, Readings, Public Speaking



2026 Japanese Exchange Host Opportunities



Kansas 4-H has been participating in the Japanese Exchange since 1977, in collaboration with S4-H Programs. Since then, over 3,500 Japanese youth have traveled to Kansas. Kansas families host Japanese youth and adult chaperones from mid-July to mid-August. In 2026, Kansas 4-H will be hosting about 30 youth and 3 adult chaperones from July 21 - August 16. Host family recruitment is open. The goal is to have all host families found by June 1, 2026.

This is a great opportunity that I strongly encourage our 4-H families to consider. Here is a [video](#) that was created to provide some context and inspiration to consider opening your home to a Japanese Exchange youth in 2026. If you have questions, Donna Maskus, a Cottonwood Extension District Board member who has experience with the exchange program, would be happy to chat with you.

You may think your schedule is too busy to support an endeavor like this, but think of all that the Japanese Exchange youth would get to experience while here! **They are still in need of host families to ensure we have spots for all Exchange Students! Please consider this opportunity!**

More information can also be found on the [Kansas 4-H website](#).



Youth Leadership Corner



Junior Leaders	August 17 th	6 pm
4-H Council	August 17 th	7:30 pm

Council committees meet before the meeting at 7 pm on meeting nights, or may schedule meetings at other times. At the April meeting, the Council voted to run the County Fair concession stand and hire a person to manage it, help the Dog project purchase agility equipment, and for each club to make two baskets for the Business Breakfast on Thursday morning.

Jr. Leaders will host a day camp on August 7th (tentative), and voted to do their peach fundraiser again. They have also released their scholarship application, which is due June 1st to the Extension office. Jr. Leaders will reimburse any Jr. Leader member who participates in Discovery Days their registration fee.

Please feel free to reach out to your club's representatives or Council officers with questions.

President: *Kassie Linsner* Vice President: *Samantha Negaard*
Secretary: *Callie Loesch* Treasurer: *Kaisha Woydziak*
Reporters: *Kiera Wyant & Jillian Axman* Parliamentarian: *Adessa Prosser*

Meetings are held in person at the 4-H Educational Building (Hwy 281) or via Zoom Conference Call. August's meeting will be held in person.



4-H Ambassadors



Your 4-H Program 2025-2026 Ambassadors are:

Russell Kern, Samantha Negaard, Melody Braddy, Jonas Kern, DJ Wyant, Callie Loesch, and Kiera Wyant

These 4-H'ers are here to offer any support they can to help you succeed in 4-H. They would be happy to answer any questions you have and help out!



Leader's Corner



Volunteer hour tracking - I ask that our registered volunteers begin sending me how many youth are at your meetings (project meetings included), and how long you meet for. I'm just looking for "where we met, had 5 kids there, and met for 2 hours". This helps with reporting, and I would also like to start getting a feel for the hours our volunteers are putting in. I don't expect you to report every single hour spent toward 4-H, because I know that number is high, and I don't want to add a ton extra to your already full plates. I have created a form for you to use that can be found on the next page.

Volunteer Meeting - There likely will not be a meeting in July, I will discuss the meetings with our new agent and see what September looks like.

Livestock Judging & Skill-A-Thon - We have started to have meetings for youth interested in learning more about Livestock Judging, Livestock Skill-A-Thon, and Meats. The next meeting will be on July 28th, starting at 5:30 pm here at the Extension office.

Kansas State Fair - Please encourage any youth that you know received a purple ribbon at our local Club Days in either Project Talk, Demo/Illustrated Talk, Reading, or Public Speaking that they can compete at the Kansas State Fair if over the 4-H Age of 9.

Also, we will have a book at the county fair for families to complete their State Fair entries. They must be over the 4-H Age of 9. That book will be in the Expo I fair office. Questions can be directed to Ben at the fair.

Project Records - This is a great time for families to be working on Project Records. Please encourage them to do so. Families with questions can be directed to Ben.



4-H Volunteer: Hour and Direct Contact Tracking Form

Name of Volunteer(s): _____

Event (please circle one and state what project):

Community Club Meeting *Project Meeting:* _____

Project Fair *Officer Training*

Other: _____

Number of contacts made: _____

Number of hours: _____

Date: _____ Meeting Location: _____

Thank you for submitting! Tracking the hours of our 4-H Volunteers is helpful to K-State Extension Professionals with their reporting expectations, and in tracking the impact you make in the lives of 4-H Youth.



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