



**Cottonwood Extension District
Barton County 4-H Newsletter
March 2026**

Hopefully, we are all on the downhill slide of the plethora of sickness that has been going around, and have warmer Spring days on the horizon. Spring is a time for continued County Fair project planning! Maybe we are getting those livestock projects home to begin the process of getting them ready for the fair. Maybe you are having some animal babies born, having anticipated their arrival for some time. You could be halfway through that scarf or sweater that you've been crocheting all Winter long. Either way, I hope everyone is making great progress on your County Fair goals!

In February, we had County 4-H Club Days. I want to congratulate everyone on their hard work! The judges were very impressed with everyone's performances, and I was impressed with how you all handled yourselves and represented the Barton County 4-H Program. If you qualified for Regional 4-H Club Days, I wish you the best of luck. I have no doubt you all will do great! Just remember to have fun, and take a moment to reflect on and learn from every bit of feedback you receive.

Don't forget that small animal tagging will be done by appointment; please contact Alicia at the office by April 15th to set up a time. Be sure to get those appointments made as soon as possible, and not wait until the last minute. The deadline to have animals tagged is May 1st.

Remember, a big part of your experience in 4-H is what you make it. Don't be afraid to step out of your comfort zone and try something new. You never know when stepping out of that zone will expose you to something new and grand that helps you grow into the top-notch future leader I know you all can be.

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](#)

Website: www.cottonwood.ksu.edu

Office Number: 620-793-1910

K-State Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



Upcoming Events



- March 13 4-H Regional Club Day, Great Bend High School
- March 14 Uncrewed Aircraft System Workshop - K-State Salina Campus - [Registration](#)
- March 14 Meat Goat Clinic - Cheney from 1 - 3 pm (p. 14)
- March 17 Volunteer Meeting - Extension Office - (12:15 -- 12:45)
- March 18 YQCA, 1:00 pm @ Extension office
- March 21 NW Super Saturday Judging Contest, Hays (p. 9-11)
- March 29 Showmanship Clinic - Barton Co. Fairgrounds Expo III (1:30 - 5:00) (p. 5)
- April 4 4-H Ag Tech Day - Moundridge from 10 am - 2 pm (p. 13)
- April 11 Junior Sheep Producer Day - Registration due March 20 (p. 12)
- April 11 Judge's Training - Trego Community HS, Wakeeney (10 am - 1: 30 pm) (p. 5)
- April 14 Homeschool STEM Day (10 am - 3 pm) - Hays - (p. 5)
- April 16 Homeschool STEM Day (10 am - 3 pm) - Colby - (p. 5)
- May 1 Fair T-Shirt Orders due to Extension office (by club)
- May 20 YQCA, 5:30 pm @ Extension office
- June 1 Horse ID papers and Vaccination form due to the Extension office
- June 24-28 Barton County Fair - 2026 Theme: "Our Fair, Our Heritage"

Interested in testing your evaluation skills with a day of fun and learning?

Join 4-H youth on March 21 for Super Saturday at FHSU! This event alternates sites with Colby Community College, and the morning involves multiple judging contests such as Life Skills, Entomology, Crop ID, and Photography. **NEW THIS YEAR**, there will be Wildlife and Geology Skills judging! In the afternoon, you can test your livestock judging skills or participate in one of several project-related activities, such as Engineering & Technology or Visual Arts.

More info can be found starting on page 12 of the newsletter!

Barton County 4-H Shooting Sports

[Air Rifle/Pistol Contest Results](#) - Two of our very own, Madison Gaddis and Kade Fryberger, recently competed at the Gray County 4-H Air Rifle Contest. Madison was the top shot, and they placed as the 3rd placed team!

[Small Bore Rifle/Pistol](#) - THE 1ST SIX WEEKS OF THE AIR RIFLE/AIR PISTOL PROGRAM ARE MANDATORY FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE SMALL BORE PROJECT. Those six weeks start on November 11, 2025.

Starting Range Date for Small Bore > The 1st Wednesday in June 2026

The smallbore project is a discipline of the 4-H Shooting Sports Program. It is for 4-H members aged 10 to 18. This project extends the knowledge gained in the air rifle/air pistol project. In this project, the youth learn firearm safety, the parts of and operation of small bore (.22 caliber) rifles and/or pistols, three shooting positions (prone, kneeling, and standing) for rifle, how the environment and weather affect rifle performance, shooting range rules and etiquette, and have the opportunity to shoot in a safe, supervised environment. The weekly meetings are held at a local gun club with an area reserved for use by the 4-H small-bore program. In this project, most rifles are provided by the 4-H members (the program does have 3 rifles that can be used if someone needs one), and all pistols must be provided by 4-H members. Any firearms provided by 4-H members must pass inspection by the shooting instructors. Ammunition is provided by the 4-H member and must meet certain specifications. It can be purchased through the 4-H small-bore program. There is a \$10 charge per member to cover the costs of targets. During late summer, mainly August, there are opportunities to compete in matches with other 4-H members from across the state. A state match takes place in October for those who qualify.

[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.**





2026 Horse Panorama Results



On February 21 and 22, Cottonwood Extension District 4-Hers from Barton County travelled to Rock Springs 4-H Ranch to compete in the 2026 Horse Panorama. Contests include: quiz bowl, hippology, public speaking presentations, photography, and educational posters. Topics include breeds, horse coat colors and markings, health and nutrition, anatomy, reproduction, tack and equipment, horse safety, and the different uses and disciplines, to name a few.

The 4-H members who participated from the Cottonwood Extension District were Emaline Debes, Kylee Miessler, Adessa Prosser, and Austyn Prosser. These youth represented the Cottonwood Extension District very well! Emaline Debes received a purple and two blue ribbons for her photography entries, a purple with her PowerPoint, and 1st place and a purple ribbon for her Intermediate Demonstration. She was also the 1st place Intermediate Hippology Individual and 2nd place in the Open Horse Bowl. Austyn Prosser was 4th place with a blue ribbon for her Intermediate Demonstration and placed as the 4th place Intermediate Hippology Individual.

In the Seniors, Kylee Miessler was the 2nd place Hippology Individual and placed 7th in the Senior Horse Bowl. Adessa Prosser was the 7th-place Senior Hippology Individual. We are so proud of all the work these 4-Hers put in to get to this point, and can't thank their coaches, Wendy Prosser and Heather Miessler, enough, for helping to guide and support them along the way!



Pen Pal Program



State's 4-H International Exchange Program has announced that their Pen Pal Program will be back April 1 - June 1. 4-H'ers and others aged 9-18 as of April 1 are eligible to participate. Youth who participate will commit to writing a weekly message by email or letter. There will be a \$10 registration fee to participate. Registration is set to open on March 1 and close on March 20. However, spots fill fast. When available, more information can be found [HERE](#) for those who are interested.



Livestock Showmanship Clinic



March 29th from 1:30 - 5:00 pm at Expo III

The 4-H Livestock Committee will be hosting a Livestock Showmanship Clinic for all youth enrolled or interested in the Horse, Beef, Swine, Sheep, and Meat Goat projects. We will have animals there for the youth to work with, while an instructor shares helpful showmanship techniques. Species sessions will last 30 minutes, as youth rotate from species to species. We will also have a session going over the Round Robin contest for those who are interested. More information will be coming out soon.



Homeschool STEM Day



The Northwest Region 4-H Agents will be hosting a Homeschool STEM Day on two separate days. April 14th at the Hay Research & Extension Conference Center, and April 16th at the Thomas County Fairgrounds 4-H Building in Colby. There will be 5-6 stations that are 20-25 minutes for the youth to rotate through. The day will run from approximately 10 am - 3 pm. Please watch for registration information that will come out soon, and feel free to share with your networks and anyone you think might be interested in attending.



4-H Judge's Training



There will be a Judge's Training held on April 11th at the Trego Community High School in Wakeeny. The day will begin at 10 am and wrap up around 1:30 pm. We are looking to have training for these projects (final list TBD): Sewing & Textile Design, Shopping in Style, Fashion Revue, Foods, Crops/Horticulture, Building Block Engineering, Robotics, Aerospace/Rocketry, Interior Design & Architecture, Visual Arts, Posters/Display/Notebooks, Photography, Wildlife, and Shooting Sports. More information on registration will come out soon.



Youth Leadership Corner



Junior Leaders	April 20 th	6 pm
4-H Council	April 20 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 February meeting, the Council voted on county fair t-shirt designs, presented ideas for Expo II awards, and voted to make a financial contribution to the 4-H Holding Board for needed repairs at the 4-H Educational Buildings. They also heard from delegates who attended Citizenship in Action and those who competed at the National Western Roundup in Denver.

Jr. Leaders will host a day camp in August, and they tabled discussion on what the theme will be.

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. April’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

This month, we are going to highlight a message from Ambassador Russell Kern.

"Hi! This is my 9th year in 4-H. I like 4-H because it is a way to try new things. It's a way to figure out what things you like doing and gives you ideas for future careers. My life has been positively impacted by my being in 4-H. I have learned lots of leadership skills, and had many chances to help in the community. I have got to go to state and national events, and learned a lot from 4-H in general. For example, I get to serve on the Kansas 4-H Health and Wellness team, sharing about the importance of making nutritious food choices. I am also a Cottonwood District 4-H Water Ambassador. I lead workshops on the importance of water quality and conservation. I recommend 4-H to anyone, because it’s a great way to grow and learn." ~Russell Kern





Leader's Corner



Spring into Volunteering- The Association of Kansas 4-H Volunteers hosts this event and will be at the K-State Salina Campus on Saturday, April 25. Registration will begin at 9 am, and the day will conclude at 3 pm. This is for anyone serving as a 4-H Volunteer or considering it. The goal is for volunteers to go home recharged, excited, and ready to try new things in their volunteer roles. Once registration opens, it will be due April 15.

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 - Starting on March 17th (12:15-12:45), I will begin holding 4-H Volunteer Meetings every other month here at the Extension Office. This will serve as time to check in with you all, connect better, and hear from you about what you need to be successful. I encourage you to reach out at any time, but hope these scheduled times can serve us both well in the task of strengthening our 4-H Program. If attending over Zoom would serve you better, please let me know, and I can get that set up.

Livestock Judging & Skill-A-Thon - I am exploring the possibility of scheduling regular times for 4-H Youth to gather and practice livestock judging and Skill-A-Thon skills. I would hope to have a team of 4-Hers to send to the State 4-H Livestock Sweepstakes contest in August. Please chat with your 4-H Club members to see if there are any who would be interested.

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.



K-State Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



NW 4-H

Judging Event

Super Saturday

Saturday, March 21, 2026, 9:00am - Finish

Host Site: Fort Hays State University

Judging Contests include: 9:00am to 12:30pm -- \$7.00

Crops, Entomology, Horticulture, Life Skills, Photography, Livestock Skill-a-thon
NEW this year Wildlife Skills Judging and Geology

Volunteer Sessions for Parents and Volunteers - Free, 10:30am

Livestock Judging : 12:30pm FHSU enclosed Rodeo Areana, North of I-70

Project Opportunities: (NON-LIVESTOCK Judging youth): 1:00 -3:00pm \$5.00

The afternoon will be filled with STEM and Visual Art Rotation stations, including, robots, circuits, Building Block Engineering, painting and paper crafts.

Sack Lunches provided with mandatory RSVP - \$8.00

Registration Link:

https://kstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_78Jwy8nnfMNIBW6

If you have any questions concerning this event, you may contact Robyn Trussel at 785-798-5020 or rdeines@ksu.edu or Chandra Plate at 620-388-7157 or cplate@ksu.edu



K-State, County Extension Districts and U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperating,
K-State Research & Extension is an equal opportunity provider and employer

Register [HERE](#)

Time Line:

March 16th- Registrations for lunch and STEM Rotations due

March 21st:

- 9:00am to 12:30pm - Indoor Judging (Crops, Entomology, Horticulture, Photography, Life Skills, and Livestock Skill-a-thon, NEW this year Wildlife Skills and Geology Judging)
- 10:30am to 11:30 - Volunteer/ Parent Session
- 11:30am to 12:30pm Pick up Sack Lunch
- 12:30pm Check in for Livestock Judging at FHSU Rodeo Arena North of I-70
- 1:00pm Livestock Judging Orientation
- 1:00pm to 3:00pm Project Opportunities
- 1:30pm Livestock Judging Contest Begins

Results:

Livestock Judging Classes will be talked at the conclusion of reasons being given, all other contest results will be sent out 5-7 business days after the event.

Who: Any 4-H or FFA Youth 7-18 years of age, plus volunteers and parents

Where: 2nd Floor Albertson Hall, FHSU Campus for Indoor and
FHSU Enclosed Areana North of I-70 for Livestock Judging

Cost: \$7 per individual (1 contest or multiple)

\$8 Sack Lunch- Sandwich, chips, fruit, cookie and drink

STEM/Visual Arts Rotations : **\$5.00**

Registration will be paid at the Event with Cash or Check made
payable to Ness County 4-H Council



Contest Divisions:

Juniors - age 7-8 participation prizes only

Intermediates - age 9-13

Seniors - age 14 and over



Team Notice -- A younger member may move up an age group to complete a team but will be required to complete the requirements of the age division through the entire contest.

Awards:

Certificates and medals will be awarded in the intermediate and senior divisions. The top three individual and the top team will receive medals. The top 10 individuals will receive certificates. Medals and Certificates will be delivered to the home county at the earliest time possible. Junior division will participate as a "learning experience" and receive a 4-H incentive at each judging area. Results will be posted to <https://www.walnutcreek.k-state.edu/>

Register [HERE](#)

NW 4-H Super Saturday Judging Event Eligibility Requirements: Any current member of a 4-H Club and/or FFA chapter is eligible to participate.

Judging Teams: a county, district or chapter may enter one or more three/four member teams in all judging contest areas. Present team member names at registration. If teams are not identified at registration they will not be scored as a team. Top 3 scores will be used to determine team score. Team members must be from the same local unit.

Livestock Judging:

This judging contest is designed to teach youth how to analyze market and breeding beef, goats, sheep and swine, measuring them against a standard that is commonly accepted as ideal. There will be six classes. Juniors and intermediates will have 2 classes of questions, with no reasons. Seniors will give two sets of reasons. Officials will give placings and talk the classes at the end of the contest and awards will be announced.

Crops: Stacy Campbell (Cottonwood District)

The contest will consist of identification of plants and samples, classification of samples (crop, noxious weed or common weed). All youth will identify 100 samples (50 seeds and 50 plants) and a tie breaker of 6 samples will be used.

Entomology: Kim Naber (Post Rock District)

The contest is designed to help youth learn how to properly identify Kansas insects. Each division will identify insect specimens: Juniors will identify 15, Intermediates 20 and Seniors 25.

NEW – Geology: Chandra Plate (NW Regional 4-H Specialist)

The contest is designed to help youth identify geology specimens. Each age group will have a set number of specimens to identify.

Horticulture: Ryan Engel, Jay Harris and Master Gardener Volunteers (Golden Plains & Cottonwood Districts)

The contest will consist of 3 or 4 judging classes of any horticulture section (vegetables, flowers, nuts, etc.)

The identification contest will include 15 samples for juniors, 50 samples for intermediates and seniors.

<https://www.k-state.edu/hort-judging/> for identification resources.

Life Skills: Cindy Walker (Phillips Rooks District)

Judging topics will be chosen from any 4-H project life skill. These could include family consumer science, foods & nutrition, health & safety, human development, housing, interior design and environmental issues. Junior division will judge 3 classes, intermediates 4 classes and seniors 6 classes.

Photography: Photo Action Team Volunteers

The contest will consist of six classes of photos, a written test, and a problem class. Juniors will only judge the photos. Test questions will come from the 4-H CCS curriculum, the 4-H Guide to digital photography, the National Geographic Ultimate Field Guide to Photography (2009) and other photography reference material.

Livestock Skill-a-thon: Tamara Robertson, Jenilee Godsey (Cottonwood & Twin Creeks Districts)

The contest is designed to provide a framework for youth to learn a variety of topics related to the production and management of beef cattle, meat goats, sheep, and swine. The contest will consist of 6 areas, including: livestock breed identification, equipment identification, wholesale and/or retail meat cut identification, anatomical identification, livestock feedstuff identification, and a written test. Juniors, Intermediates, and Seniors will complete all 6 areas with increasing difficulty for each age division.

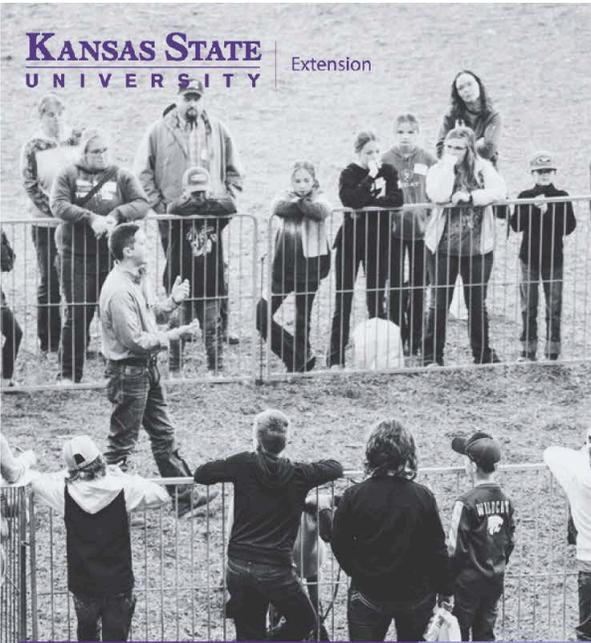
NEW – Wildlife Skills: Aaron Hyland (Rawlins County)

Contestants will use their knowledge to identify wildlife species from their skulls, hides, feathers and/or tracks. Contestants might also identify wildlife management related items and habitat components as part of this contest.

Volunteer and Parent Session will share the updated Project Leader Ideas, Clover Classroom, Club Corner information and a Q& A time for Parents and Volunteers to walk away with resources to Make the Best Better.

.

Register [HERE](#)



2026 K-State Junior Sheep Producer Day



Date

4.11.2026

Manhattan, KS



Scan Me!



Registration

Due: 3.20.2026

Cost: \$20/person

<https://bit.ly/SheepJrProducer>

*All adults & youth must register to attend.

**Only those registered by 3/20/26 will receive a t-shirt.

***Late registration is \$30/person.



Questions

Lexie Hayes



785.532.1264



adhayes@ksu.edu

Program

Join us for the biennial K-State Junior Sheep Producer Day on Saturday, April 11, 2026. Presentations will be provided by featured guests, as well as K-State faculty, staff, and students. This event will be an educational day of activities in which youth, parents, extension agents, ag teachers, and sheep project leaders can increase their knowledge of youth sheep project selection and management. A variety of topics will be shared, including an optional YQCA certification at the end of the day. All ages and skill levels are invited! Lunch and a t-shirt are included. The registration fee is \$20/person for those who sign up by March 20 or \$30/person for those who register after that date. Only those who register by the deadline will receive a t-shirt. This is a family event! Anyone attending, including both youth and adults, must register. There will be an optional tour of the sheep and meat goat center offered on Friday evening and Saturday after jr. day.

Tentative Schedule

Friday, April 10

5:00-7:00PM Optional Tour of Sheep & Goat Center

Saturday, April 11

8:00AM Check-in

9:00AM Welcome

9:15AM Selection

10:00AM Nutrition

10:45AM Morning Breakout Sessions

-facilities & equipment, reproduction, project management purchase to show

NOON Lunch

1:00PM Health

1:45PM Afternoon Breakout Sessions

-wool, showmanship, clipping & grooming

3:45PM Dismissal

4:00PM Optional YQCA Class

4:00-6:00PM Optional Sheep & Goat Center Tour



K-State, County Extension Councils, Extension Districts, and U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperating. All educational programs and materials available without discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, or disability.



Register at <https://bit.ly/SheepJrProducer>

Ag Tech Day

April 4, 2026

10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Flickner Innovation Farm

Moundridge, Kansas



Visit stations around the farm and learn about technologies to make a farm management plan.



Free and open to the public; activities are tailored for middle and high school students.



Come and go as you please; snacks provided!

Register by April 1 at <https://bit.ly/AgTechDay>

K-STATE
Research and Extension



KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY | Institute for Digital Agriculture
and Advanced Analytics



Register at <https://bit.ly/AgTechDay> by April 1st

Sedwick County Meat Goat Clinic

March 14, 2026

1:00-3:00 PM

Sedgwick County Farm Bureau Building
308 S Main Street Cheney, KS

Clinic Highlights:

- ✓ Daily Care
- ✓ Equipment
- ✓ Clipping
- ✓ Showmanship

Clinic Guest Speakers

- ✓ Logan Ohlde
K-State Animal Science Graduate
- ✓ Jesse Birney DVM

**All Kansas 4-H youth are invited to attend
Please text Dave Ohlde to register or with
questions.**

785-562-7992



KANSAS STATE | Extension
UNIVERSITY | Sedgwick County

This institution is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services, and activities. Program information may be available in languages other than English. Language access requests and reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, including alternative means of communication (e.g., Braille, large print, and American Sign Language), may be requested by contacting the event contact Stephanie Hays four weeks prior to the start of the event at 316-660-0112 or sahays@ksu.edu. Requests received after this date will be honored when it is feasible to do so. Language access services, such as interpretation or translation of vital information, will be provided free of charge to limited English proficient individuals upon request.

Kansas State University is an equal opportunity provider and employer.