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February 2026

Ellis County 4-H Happenings

The 4-H Food Challenge and 4-H Day are 2 upcoming events that everyone is welcome to participate in! Good Luck to all the 4-H members who are planning to participate at these great events!!

See more information on the Food Challenge on the following page.

The [4-H Day guidelines and registration packet](#) is posted on our website. You can print off and return a hard copy OR you can go on-line and [register with the link](#). Either way, **entries are due to the Extension Office by Friday, February 20.**

As always, if you have questions, please give us a call!

Join our private Facebook group - **Ellis County Kansas 4-H** for more update information and for deadline reminders!

Yours in 4-H,

Tamara Robertson



Meetings Coming Your Way

4-H Council – Feb 2 at 6 PM, Extension Office back meeting room

4-H Ag Livestock – March 2nd at 6 PM, Back meeting room



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Ways to Contact Us

- You can reach the Office at (785) 628-9430
- Extension Office fax # is (785) 621-2002
- el@listserv.ksu.edu
- www.cottonwood.ksu.edu

IMPORTANT DEADLINES TO NOTE

February 9 – Registration for Food Challenge
February 13 – Sign up for Jr. Beef Producer Day @ KSU
February 20 – Ellis Co. 4-H Day Entries Due
February 27 – Registration for KSU Meat Judging Contest
March 1 – Sponsor a County Fair Award
March 12 – Posters Due for Water Poster Contest
March 20 – Sign up for Jr. Sheep Producer Day @ KSU

WINTER WEATHER & 4-H ACTIVITIES

Our policy is that if school cancels for weather related events, 4-H events are canceled, too. Please check our website or contact the person in charge before traveling in, if you are in doubt about the status of an event.

Remember, **DEADLINES** are **DEADLINES** in **Ellis Co. 4-H**. Please pay attention to and respect those deadlines so that your child doesn't miss out on an opportunity!

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This institution is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all programs, services, and activities. Discrimination based on race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, age, ancestry, disability, genetic information, military status, or veteran status is prohibited. Program participants may request information in languages other than English. Reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities, including alternative means for communication (e.g., Braille, large print, audio tape, and American Sign Language) may also be requested by contacting the Cottonwood District - Ellis County Extension Office at 785-628-9430. Language access services, such as interpretation and translation of vital information will be provided free of charge to limited English proficient individuals upon request.

4-H PROJECT ENROLLMENT

You must be enrolled in 4-H to participate at any 4-H event or activity. You are able to add projects or delete them from your list of enrollments until May 1 for all areas, **except Livestock projects and shooting sports projects. Those need to be enrolled prior to the weigh-in and identification date set for each specie or the start of the shooting sports practice.** I.e. Small Livestock weigh-in & tagging will be April 29th.

Your enrollment is not complete until you have successfully paid the \$15 fee.

4-H BEEF TAG INVOICES

Families are asked to come into the office and **pay for tags during the week of February 2nd-6th.** Any remaining invoices will be mailed out after February 9th. Checks should be made out to **Ellis County 4-H Ag Livestock.**

Livestock ID Procedures

Large and Small animal ID procedures for 2026 have been updated. Please take time to review this!

FOOD CHALLENGE

The 4-H Food Challenge is back and it's time to show off your culinary creativity! Join us on Sunday, February 15 at the Ellis Co Fairgrounds Schenk Building for this exciting competition.

Teams of 3-4 members will work together to create a unique dish using predetermined ingredients in just 40 minutes! Teams are encouraged to invite a non-4-H member as that 4th contestant, so if you have a friend that has expressed interest in 4-H or you want to introduce them to 4-H, this would be a great opportunity! Teams will present their dish to the judges and explain the preparation process, food safety, nutrition, and cost.

Age Groups & Times:

Ages 7-9 (no sharp utensils): 2:00 PM (Check-in at 1:45 PM)

Ages 10-13: 3:00 PM (Check-in at 2:45 PM)

Ages 14-18: 4:45 PM (Check-in at 4:30 PM)

One adult should register teams, registration is due by February 9 at [4-H Food Challenge](#)

EVENT SCHOLARSHIP AVAILABLE

The 4-H Scholarship and Development Committee has funds available for all Ellis County 4-H members. The [Event Scholarship Application](#) can be completed to attend any event that would benefit youth. Events can include 4-H camps, livestock clinics, shooting sports competitions, and more that would help youth build on their skills. Members should complete the application and turn into the office 2 weeks before the event registration is due.

ELLIS COUNTY SCHOLARSHIP

The Ellis Co. 4-H scholarship application is coming soon. Seniors, watch for it to come in an email from Tamara!

4-H DAY—Sunday, March 1 – North Oak Community Church - Hays

4-H Day is a chance for 4-H members to showcase their project learning through public presentations. *If you ask 4-H alumni what one of the most important things they gained through their 4-H experience, they'll most likely tell you it is their public speaking ability.* Consider building that powerful skill in your children through their involvement in 4-H Day activities. Some clubs have already started working on skits, project talks, talent, etc. [Check out the website](#) for the latest information, rules, entry form, etc.

Club skits will go first at 2:00 p.m. Schedules will then be posted outside of each room and it will be FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED. **It will be your responsibility to sign up for a judging time.**

A Life Skills Judging Contest and a Crops ID Contest will be held in the Lobby of the church.

Regional competition will be held in Trego County on March 27th, 2026. Time and location is TBA.

4-H Day 101

New to 4-H Day?? We've posted a series of informational handouts and videos on the website to help you get started planning talks. [Check out the website to see](#) the series of "how to" video presentations by our Ellis Co. 4-H'ers.

Model Meetings

Model Meetings are a great way to test your club's parliamentary procedure skills. Contact Tamara to record or clubs can record their own meetings and submit to the Extension Office. This year all clubs will include the motion "to amend a motion" into your clubs meeting. The club receiving the top ribbon placing will represent Ellis Co. at Regional 4-H Day.

4-H Day Room Monitors

Each club has a dedicated room during 4-H Day on March 1st. Visit with your club leader or stop by the Ellis Co. website to learn more about your room monitor duties.

Jr./Int. Demonstrations & Illustrated Talks – **BCA**

Readings – **GJ**

Talent (Skits, Dance & Other Talent) – **Sanctuary – VV**

Project Talks, Show & Tell – **GH**

Public Speaking, Extemp. Speaking, Sr. Demo – **ES**

Warm Up Room & ARI – **BJF**

Restrooms & Lobby – Everyone's responsible to make sure these are kept in good order during the event.

Thanks for doing your share to keep the facility clean!

K-STATE INVITATIONAL MEAT JUDGING CONTEST

Kansas State University is hosting an invitational meat judging contest at the Weber Hall Meat Lab on March 1st. The contest will include 6 classes, 40 retail identification and questions. After the contest there will be an educational walk through. Registration starts at 7 am with the contest beginning at 8 am. Prizes will be awarded to the top 10 individuals and highest placing team. Cost is \$15 before February 20th and \$25 after that until February 27th.

Register at [Event Information](#). For questions, contact Erin Beyer at erbeyer@ksu.edu

K- STATE JUNIOR PRODUCER DAYS 2026 DATES

We are excited to announce the dates for the 2026 K-State Junior Producer Days and new location! The 2026 K-State Junior Producer Days will be hosted at the new Bilbrey Family Events Center, which is in Manhattan, north of campus, near the livestock units.

The junior producer day programs are one-day educational programs through which families can attend to learn about the selection and management of a specific specie. These events are open to all ages and skill levels including youth, parents, extension agents, ag teachers, project leaders, and other volunteers. A variety of topics are provided by K-State faculty, staff, graduate students, former exhibitors, and guest speakers. The tentative program and topics for each day are included on the flyer. This is a family event! Parents and youth are invited to come learn together!

The Junior Beef Producer Day will be Saturday, March 7. The deadline to register is February 13.

The Junior Sheep Producer Day will be hosted Saturday, April 11. Registration is due March 20.

The junior day registration fee is \$20/person for those who register before the deadline and \$30/person for those who sign up late. T-shirts are only guaranteed for those who register by the specified deadline. Lunch will be provided for participants. There will also be an optional instructor-led YQCA training at the conclusion of the program for both events, with a different registration for an additional \$3.

More information and online registration available here: [Kansas Junior Producer Days](#)

SUPER SATURDAY 2025 – Fort Hays State University

This year's Super Saturday judging event will take place on March 21st at Fort Hays State University. There will be 8 judging contests—Crops, Entomology, Horticulture, Life Skills, Livestock, Livestock Skill-A-Thon, Photography and Wildlife Skills for 4-H & FFA youth 7 - 18. You can judge at 1 or all of these great contests. There will also be several workshops in the afternoon to help 4-H'ers explore project learning. Watch for more info as these activities are finalized!

WATER POSTER CONTEST

"Water...It's Important!" is the theme of this year's contest. This contest is open to all ages Pre-K – Adult. There are some great prizes. Water conservation, Stormwater, Water Quality are the key concepts to share in the poster. For rules, visit the [City of Hays website](#). **Posters are due to school offices, City Hall or Hays Public Works by NOON on Thursday, March 12th.** Prize winners will be announced by March 27th with an awards ceremony on March 31st.

ELLIS COUNTY FAIR 2026 will be July 12 - 17, 2026
The Theme is "Let the Good Times Roll"



ELLIS COUNTY FAIR VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Older 4-H'ers and interested adults are encouraged to join our "team" in getting things ready for this year's Fair. Once again, all clubs will be asked to recruit volunteers to help with a variety of jobs at the Fair, as well. Watch for that listing coming your way soon.

FAIR AWARD SPONSORS

The Ellis Co. Fair board is seeking award sponsors. In order for a special award to be awarded in any given area, there must be a sponsor. **Contact Norleen Knoll by March 1** if you'd like to sponsor a special award. Sponsorships will be listed in the Ellis Co. Fair book and in several news releases/ads. The [sponsorship form](#) is posted on our website.

4-H FOOD CHALLENGE

The 4-H Food Challenge is a fun and engaging contest where 4-H members showcase their culinary knowledge and skills.



Sunday
FEBRUARY 15

Ellis Co Fairgrounds Schenk Building



Ages 7-9 **Ages 10-13** **Ages 14-18**
2:00PM **3:00PM** **4:45PM**

Check-In 1:45 PM **Check-In 2:45 PM** **Check-In 4:30 PM**

Every team is invited to observe the entire program.

The Challenge:

- Teams of 3 to 4 members work together.
- Use predetermined ingredients to create a unique recipe.
- 40 minutes to develop the recipe and prepare the dish.

Teams will present their dish to a panel of judges and explain:

- Preparation steps.
- Serving size.
- Food safety concerns.
- Nutritional value.
- Cost of the dish.

Are You Ready to Take the Challenge?
Get your team together and join today!

<https://tinyurl.com/2026FoodChallenge>

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REGISTRATION DEADLINE:
MONDAY
FEBRUARY 9TH



ELLIS CO. 2026 4-H DAY

SUNDAY, MARCH 1, 2026, 2PM
NORTH OAK COMMUNITY CHURCH

EVENTS INCLUDED:

- SHOW-N-TELL
- Project Talks
- Demo/III Talks
- Public Speaking
- Talent (Dance & Music)
- Model Meetings
- AND MORE!!

Entry Link



Registration Due February 20

Life Skills Judging & Crops ID Contests will also be held at this event.

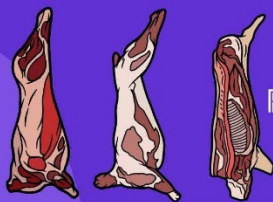
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REGISTER
NOW!!



REGISTRATION
LINK BELOW!!

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

YOUTH MEAT JUDGING CONTEST

MARCH 1, 2026

REGISTRATION ON
JUDGINGCARD.COM- CLICK
SYMBOL OR LINK BELOW!

QUESTIONS TO ERIN BEYER
ERBEYER@KSU.EDU

<https://www.judgingcard.com/Registration/Info.aspx?ID=24341>

- AT LEAST 6 CLASSES, 40 RETAIL ID, AND QUESTIONS
- MEAT LAB AT WEBER HALL
- REGISTRATION OPENS AT 7:00AM
- CONTEST BEGINS AT 8:00AM
- AWARDS FOR TOP 10 AND HIGH TEAM
- YOUTH OF ALL AGES ARE WELCOME



2026 K-STATE JUNIOR BEEF PRODUCER DAY

Program

Join us on March 7, 2026, for the biennial K-State Junior Beef Producer Day! This event is a fun-filled educational day for youth, parents, beef project leaders, ag teachers, and extension agents to expand their knowledge of youth beef projects. Presentations by K-State faculty, staff, K-State livestock judging team members, students, and guest speakers will cover topics that may include selection, nutrition, daily care, meat science, reproduction, health, grooming, and showmanship. An optional YQCA certification class will be offered at the end of the day. A complimentary lunch and t-shirt will also be provided for those who register by the deadline. The registration fee is \$20 per person for those who sign up by February 13. The fee will increase to \$30 per person for those who register after the deadline. Only those who register by February 13 will receive a t-shirt. This is a family event! Anyone attending the event must register, including youth and adults.



Tentative Schedule

8:00AM	Check-in
9:00AM	Welcome
9:15AM	Project Selection
10:00AM	Morning Breakout Sessions -Nutrition, Meat Science, Daily Care, Grooming & Fitting
Noon	Lunch
1:00PM	Afternoon Breakout Sessions -Health, Reproduction, Showmanship
3:15PM	Dismissal
3:30PM	Optional YQCA Class

Registration

Deadline: February 13

Fee: \$20/person

Registration Link: <https://bit.ly/BeefJrProducer>

Late Registration: \$30/person (after February 13)

*All attendees must register, including youth & adults.

**Late registrants will not receive a t-shirt.



Scan Me!

Questions?

Lexie Hayes

785.532.1264 | adhayes@ksu.edu

Registration Due
February 13



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.

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Kansas State SHEEP PRODUCER DAY 2026

Join us on March 28th for the K-State Sheep Producer Day. This event offers sheep producers the opportunity to learn about current research at K-State, gain practical insights, and connect with fellow producers.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

8:00 AM	Check-in with coffee & donuts
9:00 AM	Welcome
9:15 AM	Undergraduate Research Update
10:15 AM	Immune Response to Parasitism
11:15 AM	CIDR Study
12:30 PM	Lunch - Sponsored by Superior Farms
1:30 PM	NDSU Research Update
3:00 PM	Dismiss

REGISTRATION

Deadline: March 13th

Cost: \$15.00 per person

Late Fee: \$30.00 per person

Registration Link: <https://bit.ly/SheepDay2026>



EVENT SPONSORS

