

Clover Connection

Chisholm Trail District - Dickinson County
4-H Youth Development News & Updates
March, April, May, and June
Spring 2026



Beyond Ready

Lots of Information Here

Please note that this is a multi-month newsletter covering March, April, May, and June. Keep it handy for reference the next several months. It will only be sent via 4HOnline and posted on our website. Please let us know if you would like us to print you a hard copy. The CKFF edition and July/August newsletter will arrive mid-June. As always, contact our office with questions (785-263-2001), watch for emails from 4HOnline, and our social media. We are glad to help!

78th Annual 4-H Basketball Tournament

The 4-H basketball committee of the Dickinson County 4-H Council hopes your clubs are looking forward to the upcoming tournament on **Saturday, March 14th** at the Chapman District Gym, 622 N Marshall, Chapman. Brackets and rules will be posted on the Chisholm Trail District 4-H events page at: https://www.chisholmtrail.k-state.edu/4_h/events/Events.html and sent out to club leaders.

CKFF Clean-up

CKFF Clean-up is scheduled for **Sunday, March 15th starting at 2 PM** at the fairgrounds. We have LOTS of leaves to remove from the fairgrounds, so bring your rakes, shovels, work gloves, and old bed sheets! Special thanks to those providing large equipment like trucks, skid steers, and loaders, it makes the work that much quicker. In order to increase efficiency, club clean-up assignments have been made and are listed below. Every DK 4-H member who plans to participate in the fair is expected to help with clean-up. This is a team effort!

- **Concession Stand Square, Pavillion, and Sterl Hall** – Chapman Shamrocks, Solomon Wranglers, Newbern Wideawakes
- **Large Livestock Arena, Sterner Beef Barn, Barn 9, center walkway** – Jolly Jays, Holland Sunflowers, Mt. Ayr Go-Getters
- **Small Livestock Arena, Barn 2, hog barn, dairy goat barn, west alleyway** – Fragrant Hilltoppers, Sand Springs Rustlers
- **East side of Pine Street including horse barns, arena, rabbit/poultry barn** – Detroit Ramblers, Navarre Boosters, Willowdale

Chisholm Trail District 4-H Day

Great work by all who participated in our annual district-wide 4-H Day. Sixty-nine club members participated with eighty-nine presentations given throughout the day. There were forty participants in life skills judging. Best of luck to those representing us at Regional 4-H Day in Clay Center on March 28th.

May 1 and June 1 Deadlines Fast Approaching

- Nomination deadline for steers and market heifers exhibiting at the Kansas State Fair or the Kansas Junior Livestock Show. **The nomination process is completely online, do your homework now! **
- 4-H Project Drop/Adds - must be done in [4HOnline](#). No project changes may be done after **May 1st**!
- Bucket calf IDs. Form may be found on our [4-H forms page](#).
- Horse ID papers must be in the Extension Office by **June 1st**. This is a state rule and there will be no exceptions! [Form available here](#). **This NEWEST KS 4-H horse ID form MUST be used.** Beat the rush, get them in early!

Drop/Add – May 1

Please login to 4HOnline (<https://v2.4honline.com/>) and make sure your listed projects are correct before **May 1**. Keep in mind that market livestock projects with tagging dates prior to **May 1** (such as market beef and swine) cannot be added after the tagging date because fair rules specifying a minimum number of days of care/feeding required.

Regional Project Award Screening

Great work by all who submitted project records to regional screening. We were well represented by Addison Acheson in Beef, Audrey Dester in Shopping in Style and Rabbit, Josslyn DePew in Leadership and Fiber Arts, Jade Wilson in Foods and Nutrition, Autumn Felbush in Performing Arts and Swine, and Colt Dester in Wildlife. Best of luck to those who were selected as state project semi-finalists: Josslyn Depew in Fiber Arts and Autumn Felbush in Performing Arts.

DK 4-H Foundation Phone-a-thon and Donate Day

A huge thank you to those who helped with the Dickinson County 4-H Foundation's Phone-a-thon on **Tuesday, March 3 and Wednesday, March 4!** The funds raised will help with camp and other event scholarships for the entire year. **If you missed getting a call and your family would like to donate, please contact our office.**

Donate Dickinson County Day is being hosted by the Community Foundation on **Friday, March 20.** Donations made online or at the Community Foundation that day will be doubled for the DK 4-H Foundation up to \$5,000! [Donate here!](#)

Dickinson County 4-H Foundation Event Scholarships

Due to the generosity of supporters during events like the Phone-a-thon and Donate Day, the Dickinson County 4-H Foundation can provide scholarships to help all of our members attend not just 4-H camp, but other area, regional, state, and national 4-H events that interest them. The Foundation will cover up to 50% of the cost of 4-H events for enrolled youth members and adult volunteers that have completed the screening process. If the event cost is less than \$100, the event scholarship will cover up to \$50 of the cost. Event scholarships must be repaid entirely if unable to attend or if behavior warrants removal. Take advantage of this opportunity and be sure to return detail-packed thank you cards we can share!

Quickly Upcoming Events

- **Uncrewed Aerial Systems Workshop**, March 14, 9:30 AM – 6 PM at K-State Salina. Registration due March 9 at: https://kstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3I37gpLIFA7kJ3o
- **4-H Ag Tech Day** – Saturday, April 4, 10 AM – 2 PM at Flickner Innovation Farm in Moundridge, KS. Explore the farm and learn about both new and established technologies that are helping make farm management easier and more efficient for producers. Registration required by April 1: <https://bit.ly/AgTechDay>
- **K-State Junior Sheep Producer Day** – Saturday, April 11 at the Bilbrey Family Event Center. All attendees, youth and adults, must register. \$20 per person if submitted by March 20: <https://bit.ly/SheepJrProducer>
- **Insect Art Contest** – Create artwork that fits the theme, "Metamorphosis Magic." May include drawings or paintings, digital art, or a 3-D piece such as sculpture, stained glass, or other creative media. 1st – 3rd place in lots of age divisions from kindergarten to adult! Details at <https://bit.ly/3NHuIEU>
- **4-H International Pen Pal Program** – Be paired with a 4-H pen pal from Costa Rica, South Korea, or Taiwan. This program fills up fast so act now if you're interested! <https://states4h.org/pen-pal-program/>

4-H Camp at Rock Springs

Registration is open for all sessions of 4-H camp at Rock Springs Ranch! The Dickinson County 4-H Foundation is committed to making camp financially accessible for all of our 4-Hers. Thanks to financial gifts to the Dickinson County 4-H Foundation, the first 45 4-Hers attending overnight, specialty, or mini-camp at Rock Springs Ranch the summer of 2026 will receive \$300 toward their camp registration fee! Apply now at <https://bit.ly/4-hcamp scholarshipapp>.

The Dickinson County 4-H Foundation believes in the Rock Springs Ranch camp experience so much that they are also providing a \$200 scholarship for a limited number of non-4Hers to attend camp. If you have non-4-H friends who live in Dickinson County that would enjoy camp as much as you do, they can apply for a scholarship at: <https://bit.ly/non4-hercamp scholarshipapp>.

Learn more about camp at Rock Springs Ranch at <https://www.rockspringsranch4hcamp.org/>.

Fully paid scholarships to attend Leaders in Training (LIT) sessions are available for those going into 10th or 11th grade and Counselor in Training (CIT) sessions for will-be high school seniors. Check out more information today at <https://www.rockspringsranch4hcamp.org/sessions-rates/>. More information is also available on our [district 4-H events page](#).

**Thank You Amy, Barbie, Cheryl, and Dorothy!**

Wednesday, April 22 (office professional's day) is the date designated this year to let Amy, Barbie, Cheryl, and Dorothy know how much we appreciate the work they do for the Chisholm Trail District. Amy and Barbie work hard to assist in every way they can with our 4-H program, Cheryl handles financials from the Marion County office, and Dorothy is learning more about Chisholm Trail District 4-H every day. They are always looking out for you, let them know you notice!

National Volunteer Week - April 19-25

National Volunteer Week is almost here. This special week offers opportunities to thank some of America's most valuable assets — our volunteers — and to recognize the myriad of ways they improve our communities. National Volunteer Week reflects the power that volunteers have to "inspire by example" — volunteers both encourage those they help and motivate others to serve! Ways to celebrate may be found at: <https://www.pointsoflight.org/nvw/>. Thank you to our Dickinson County 4-H volunteers!

**Club Community Service Grants**

Congratulations to those clubs receiving club community service grants this year from the Dickinson County 4-H Foundation! Community Service Grants of \$3,091.00 were awarded to seven clubs supporting special projects including Chapman Shamrocks – meal kits for local food pantry, Fragrant Hilltoppers - maintaining bird feeders at a nursing home, Holland Sunflowers – adding mulch to a local park, Navarre Boosters – updating AED and training at community center, Newbern Wideawakes – restocking and upkeep of Giving Box and pet supplies for local vet clinic, Solomon Wranglers – hams for local families , Willowdale – birthday kits for area food pantries. Thank you for making a difference in your community!

Food Safety of Frostings and Fillings - REMINDER

Research has been done and resources are available as you make decisions about frostings and fillings to use with fair exhibits. Food safety is essential and not all frostings and fillings are safe to store at room temperature. Resources on this topic may be found at: <https://www.rrc.k-state.edu/judging/index.html>. Please note that safety calculations must be done by the exhibitor prior to judging. Our 4-H foods judges will not have time to make recipe calculations.

County Committees

The list of county committees was included in the December/January/February Clover Connection. Hopefully you've noted the committee you are on and are committed to being an active member of that committee! Please contact Jill for details. The committee list document may also be accessed at: <https://bit.ly/ctycommittee2526>

Dickinson County 4-H Council

Date: Monday, March 23

Time: 6:45 pm – officers, 7:30 pm – full council

Where: Abilene Extension Office Meeting Room

Online ZBooks Available for 4-H Record Keeping

Record keeping and Project Reporting are valuable skills taught to members of the Kansas 4-H program. Members are encouraged to keep a permanent record of all 4-H and non-4-H experience and are encouraged to summarize their project experiences on the Kansas 4-H Project Report Form for project recognition. To help you through this process, please refer to the Guide to Kansas 4-H Project Recognition. Couple of items to make note of:

- Youth may choose to use either record keeping option: a.) the fillable PDF Project report forms or b.) the online ZBooks software (MOST HIGHLY RECOMMENDED)
- The Permanent Record is included in ZBooks. If you choose to keep records with ZBooks, do not feel like you must transfer over all of your previous years' activities into the online Permanent Record. Start with this year and attach it to your previous document.
- Click [here](#) for instructions and video tutorials for using ZBooks

CKFF Livestock Tag Sponsorship

Casey and DaLean Barten have volunteered to again sponsor tags for all livestock species. Please let them know how much we appreciate their generosity by sending a letter of thanks to them at: Bluestem Embryo Transfer Center, 735 900 Ave, Carlton, KS 67448.

Wild Bill Buckle Bonanza (Beef!)

Will be held **April 4th**. This show will be open statewide and will have county classes. See the [flyer](#) for more information.



Youth for the Quality Care of Animals *REQUIRED for ALL market livestock exhibitors*****

Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) training is required for all 4-H/FFA members exhibiting market livestock - beef, sheep, swine, and meat goats - at the Central Kansas Free Fair and all youth exhibiting livestock at the Kansas State Fair and Kansas Junior Livestock Show. This training may be done in person or online.

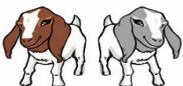
In-person training will be scheduled soon. **Watch for an email with that date.** Online training may be done at any time, but should be completed prior to July 10, the pre-entry deadline for CKFF, or prior to nominating livestock for state shows (May 1 - cattle, June 15 - swine, meat goat, sheep). To register for YQCA please fill out the form at <https://bit.ly/YQCAREGISTRATION> to receive instructions on how to register online (required for both in-person and online training).

This training is sponsored for DK 4-H members by the Dickinson County 4-H Foundation. Thank you notes may be sent to the Foundation in care of our office.

Advanced Livestock Reproduction Workshop

- When: Saturday, March 28, 2026
- Tentative schedule is starting at 10 AM with lunch and snacks provided, ending around 5 PM
- Where: Bluestem Embryo Transfer Center, 735 900 Ave, Carlton KS 67448
- Who: High school, College and Veterinary students interested in learning more about Ruminant Reproduction
- Content: (Subject to change) There will be a full group presentation and then break out sessions following.
 - 3-4 sessions learning about AI, Embryo Transfer, ultrasound for reproduction, semen and embryo handling and thawing, a wet lab to search and handle embryos as well semen evaluation and a presentation on all things small ruminant laparoscopic AI!
 - There will also be industry leaders from many fields, ranging from nutrition, pharmaceuticals, to college professors present to help guide the students through the sessions and offer their expertise in each of their fields.
- How: We will have an RSPV link on our website, bluestemembryo.com
- Cost? FREE!

Any questions, please call the BETC office: (785) 949-2007

**Market Lamb and Market Goat Weigh-in**

When: **Tuesday, May 5th, 5:00 -7:00 p.m.**

Where: **Central Kansas Free Fairgrounds**

**Wild Bill (Sheep, Swine, and Meat Goat) Showdown**

When: **Saturday, May 9th**

Where: **Central Kansas Free Fairgrounds**

**State Livestock Nominations**

Updated information on nominating livestock for the Kansas State Fair and Kansas Junior Livestock Show is available at: <https://www.asi.k-state.edu/research-and-extension/youth-programs/nominated-livestock/>. The process is **completely online**, so please check out the required steps now so you don't miss anything.

Swine Tagging

All market barrows must be at the fairgrounds for the **ONLY** tagging date – **Tuesday, April 28th, 6-8 p.m.** Swine will be tagged on the trailer with ear notches recorded. To address disease concerns, families will be encouraged to tag their own animals, plastic boot covers will be worn, and taggers will be disinfected and dried between trailers to prevent cross-contamination. Those with farrowing operations will receive more information in the mailed/emailed tagging letter. Contact our office with questions.

Discovery Days This popular event will be held **June 3-5** on the K-State Manhattan campus for youth ages 13-18 before January 1. The Dickinson County 4-H Foundation will provide 50% scholarships for attendees. Registration and more information will be available at: <https://www.kansas4-h.org/events-activities/conferences-events/discovery-days/index.html>. This is Jill's favorite non-project specific state 4-H event – HIGHLY RECOMMENDED!

Tri-County Fair Information

The Tri-County Fair is scheduled in Herington **July 9th thru 11th**. Be on the lookout for more information on the TCFF royalty contest and entry information.

Decorated Cookie Jar Auction

The following clubs will be making cookies and decorating a cookie jar to be auctioned at the CKFF livestock sale this year **Chapman Shamrocks, Detroit Ramblers, Fragrant Hilltoppers, and Holland Sunflowers**. Proceeds go to the Dickinson County 4-H Council to fund the county-wide program. Keep in mind that cookies sell best when lots of club members are there to display their jar!

**CKFF Queen and King Reminder**

Don't forget to turn in your club's names for the CKFF King and Queen contest! Nominations are due by **June 15th** at <https://bit.ly/CKFFROYALTY>. Talk to your organizational leaders for more information. Nominees will receive application materials and instructions after June 15.

Reminder: Electrical Code for CKFF

You may not use box fans with the 2-prong cord attached to a 3-prong adapter. You **must** use a commercial grade 3-prong electrical cord.

Reminders on Club Banners from Joetta Nagely, CKFF Banner Superintendent

- Colors: light on dark or dark on light.....when standing at a distance, letters or whole words can be lost if there is not a contrast in color.
- Cover several areas of 4-H don't duplicate by saying the same thing twice.
- Balance for the male and female audience make it appealing for both.
- No 3-D..... please check the rules in the fair paper.
- Lettering.....not too small. Must be able to read from a distance.
- Background when using felt, be careful because it stretches. Smooth edges look nicer.
- Enter your banner at the Tri-County Fair. Making a banner costs money and one more premium check will help pay for the supplies.
- Club name may not be on the front of the banner as part of the design.

Foods, Fiber Arts, and Clothing Labels

Members in clothing, fiber arts, or other exhibits needing a label, can make their own label on a piece of cloth with a permanent or laundry type marker. Labels should be about 3" x 2½" in size and include exhibitor name, class number and county. For Foods items, there is a label template available for download at: <http://www.kansas4-h.org/events-activities/fairs/kansas-state-fair/index.html> under "Foods and Nutrition". We have foods and food preservation labels available at the office.

Livestock Educational Materials

Lots of great livestock materials are available on the Kansas Youth Livestock page at: <https://www.asi.k-state.edu/research-and-extension/youth-programs/educational-materials.html>. This includes guides and videos from junior livestock producer days hosted virtually and at Kansas State University.

FSA Youth Loan Program

The FSA youth loan program is designed to help rural youth establish and operate an income-producing project of modest size relating to their participation in 4-H or FFA. The goal of the youth loan is to help youth develop an income-producing project that expands their knowledge of their projects and provides them with practical business knowledge. For more information see the FSA Rural Youth Loan Fact Sheet: <https://www.fsa.usda.gov/resources/farm-loan-programs/youth-loans>

Northwest 4-H Judging Event and Super Saturday

The 2026 NW 4-H Super Saturday Judging Contest and Project Opportunities will be held on **Saturday, March 21, 2026**, in Hays, Kansas at Fort Hays State University.

- Morning Judging Contest: Crops, Horticulture, Photography, Life Skills, Livestock Skill-a-thon, Wildlife Skills, and Geology - \$7.00 (one or all contests)
- Afternoon Judging Contest: Livestock Judging
- Afternoon Project Opportunities: STEM and Visual Arts - \$5.00
- Also a Parents/Volunteer Session will be held - FREE, Sack Lunch Provided for \$8.00

Registration Link - Due **March 17th** https://kstate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_78Jwy8nnfMNIBW6

2026 Central Kansas Free Fair Theme – Let Freedom Ring!

Remember the fair theme will also be used for the Dickinson County 4-H Achievement Celebration in November.

Central Kansas Free Fair Helpers

4-Hers age 10 and up are needed to assist division superintendents at the Central Kansas Free Fair. Responsibilities consist of helping on entry & judging day, watching exhibits at assigned times during the week, and any other tasks needed or requested by superintendents. A minimum of FOUR hours of work are required to earn a fair pass good for one night at the grandstand. Passes will be distributed by superintendents after work assignments are completed. Complete the Google form at the following link to sign-up for your preferred department by **JUNE 5, 2026**.

<https://bit.ly/CKFFYOUTHHELPER>

Club Trash Barrel Challenge

The Dickinson County 4-H Foundation is again sponsoring the Club Trash Barrel Challenge. Contact our office if your club would like to participate in the trash barrel challenge to choose your trash barrel from the CKFF collection. Trash barrels may be picked up from the fairgrounds during CKFF office hours, **Monday thru Friday, 9 AM – 2 PM**. It would be wise to call ahead at 785-263-4570. *Note: metal trash barrels and those plastic barrels designated as water barrels will not be available for decoration.* Photos of your decorated barrel must be emailed to chisholmtrail@listserv.ksu.edu by **July 10, 2026**. The winning barrel will be determined based on social media response. Top barrel is rewarded with a gift certificate for a club pizza party at Tossed N Sauced in Abilene. Sno-cone vouchers will be provided to members of all participating clubs.

District Fairs

Information and links for the Central Kansas Free Fair and the Tri-County Fair will be posted on our CTD District Fairs page (link follows). Please bookmark it and refer to it for links to the FairEntry pre-entry system, fair book, judging schedules, etc. Both fairs will be using FairEntry this year. Pre-entries for CKFF will be due **JULY 10**. We will share CKFF & TCFE entry information as soon as it's available.

<https://www.chisholmtrail.k-state.edu/fairs/untitled.html>

Responsibilities of Parents in the 4-H Program:

- Show interest in what your children are doing and give them encouragement.
- Provide materials and equipment your child may need, as able.
- Help the club and leader when asked. Don't wait to be asked, VOLUNTEER!
- See that your child finishes as well as starts their project(s). Be a "shadow helper" - guide, advise, help - but let the child do his or her own work.
- Encourage your child when they succeed and even more when they fail. Encourage and reward effort and progress, as well as the end results. Help your 4-Her be a good sport and appreciate the success of others. Support the 4-H leaders. Let the leaders know you appreciate them. Make 4-H a family affair, get the whole family involved in 4-H activities.
- Learn and support the goals and objectives of 4-H. Remember, the development of youth is the mission.
- Know that you are building for the future.
- Know that today's 4-H activities build the citizens and leaders of tomorrow.





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 Jill Martinson four weeks prior to the start of the event at 785-263-2001, martinso@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.

Jill D. Martinson

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