



4-H Family Guide & Policy

2025-2026

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Welcome to Marais des Cygnes District 4-H!

Whether you are a new member or returning for another year of 4-H, we are excited that you have chosen to be a part of the 4-H Program. This document is provided to assist you and your family as you discover 4-H. It highlights policies and guidelines that the Kansas 4-H Program and our local Marais des Cygnes District 4-H Program follow. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask your club leader or call either Marais des Cygnes District Extension Office.

4-H Membership

Club Members must be age 7-18 before January 1st of the coming year.

Enrollment must be done on 4HOnline at: <https://v2.4honline.com/#/user/sign-in>

New Members must enroll by May 1st to show in the 4-H departments of either county fair.

Returning Members must enroll by January 15th to show in the 4-H departments of either county fair.

Kansas 4-H has a **\$15 membership fee** which is required at enrollment. If you are financially unable to pay the membership fee, you can request a waiver. Waivers are granted based on financial need.

You can choose to enroll in a community club, a project club or independent as your primary club.

If you are enrolled in a community club, you may also enroll in any project club that is offered as well.

Table of Contents

Welcome	1
Membership.....	1
Independent Members.....	2
Adding/Deleting Projects	2
4-H Age	2
Independent Study	2
Livestock Requirements/ Deadlines.....	3
YQCA	3
Family Tagging Policy	3
Animal Project Requirements	4
4-H/FFA Dual Enrollment	4
Shooting Sports Project Requirements	4
Club Fundraising	5
Collecting Donations.....	5
Grievance Policy & Procedures.....	6
Weather Cancellation Policy.....	6
Volunteer Policy.....	6
District 4-H Event Calendar	7

I pledge my **HEAD** to clearer thinking,
my **HEART** to greater loyalty,
my **HANDS** to larger service,
and my **HEALTH** to better living,
for my club, my community,
my country, and my world.



Projects

4-H uses projects as learning opportunities for members. Each member must select at least one project each year and should keep records for that project. Projects help youth explore an area of interest. 4-H members must be enrolled in the appropriate project to exhibit in any division of the county fair.

Marais des Cygnes District 4-H offers over 30 different projects as well as Self-Determined which can be anything that you would like to learn more about. An example of Self-Determined might be Dinosaurs or Bee Keeping.

Adding or Deleting Projects

We have a project deadline of May 1 of the current 4-H year. To add or delete a project, you must go into your 4-H Online account and delete or add the project by May 1 of the current year.

4-H Age

When asked for your 4-H age, that is your age by January 1 of the current 4-H year. Examples: Macy turns 10 on January 1, 2025. Her 4-H age is 9 for the 2025-2026 4-H year. Jared turns 12 on December 31, 2025. His 4-H age is 12 for the 2025-2026 4-H year.

Although 4-H is open to all youth ages 7-18, some events and activities are limited by age. Most will ask for your 4-H age when registering for the event. This is to encourage age appropriate activities and build on experiences and knowledge as youth get older.

Independent Study

If you are not able to be a part of a local 4-H Community Club or Project Club, you can enroll as an Independent 4-H Member. Independent 4-H member must complete the Individual Study 4-H Member plan with their enrollment. The Study Plan is available at: <https://www.maraisdescygnnes.k-state.edu/4-h/joining/index.html> and is due by January 15 for returning members and May 1 for new 4-H members. You must also enroll in our online system.

Independent study members must have a screened adult mentor other than a parent. They are required to help with the 4-H Food Stand at their local fair to help fundraise for their county/district. Independent 4-H members also complete a Year-End Report which is the Kansas 4-H Personal Page and a Permanent Record with at least three pictures of their project work. The Year-End reports are due by October 1 of each year.

Transferring Membership Between Clubs

A 4-H member may transfer clubs during the 4-H year. You must meet the enrollment deadlines for transfer. (This means that if you are a returning member you must switch clubs by January 15 of the current year).



Kansas 4-H focuses on the mastery of five life skills:

- A Positive Self-concept
- An Inquiring Mind
- A Concern for Community
- Healthy Interpersonal Relationships
- Sound Decision-Making

Residence

Kansas youth typically enroll within the Extension Unit (County/District) in which they reside. However due to educational or social reasons, individuals living in one Extension Unit may join 4-H in another. Although a 4-H member may choose to participate in another Extension Unit, they can only enroll and exhibit in one Extension Unit.

Livestock Project Requirements & Deadlines

Each 4-H member shall care for his/her animal for the appropriate time determined by each species.

Through Livestock 4-H Projects, 4-H'ers gain the following:

- Learn basic principles of animal science by owning, caring for, and keeping records on one or more animals.
- Demonstrate knowledge of sound breeding, feeding, and management practices.
- Learn meat industry standards and practice those standards to produce a safe meat product for consumers.
- Develop integrity, sportsmanship, and decision-making skills.

Family Tagging Policy

Since we do family nominations in Kansas, all eligible 4-H youth (siblings, step-siblings, and/or foster siblings) who legally reside in the same household, share the same legal address, and materially participate in the care of the project the majority of the time can be listed under the family/household name when tagging or declaring ownership of the animals. This means immediate family can tag their animals under the family name and then identify each 4-H members animal at fair pre-entry. However no one other than immediate family members are allowed to show the animals at another show between tagging deadlines & the fair. If you have questions about this policy, please contact your local agent (Karla, Katelyn or Abbie).

Animal/Project	Miami County Fair Deadlines/Rules	Linn County Fair Deadlines/Rules
Bucket Calf	June 1 Ownership Deadline Member must be 12 and under Cannot show market beef Calves must be born between Jan 1-Jun 1	June 1 Ownership Deadline Member must be 10 and under Cannot show market or breeding beef Calves must be born between Jan 1-Jun 1
Market Steers & Market Heifers	Must have 4-H tag by Sunday, March 22, 2026 Weigh-in/Tagging: March 22 5:30pm-7:00pm YQCA Training Required	Must have 4-H tag by Friday, March 6, 2026 Weigh-in: March 6 6:00pm-7:00pm YQCA Training Required
Commercial Heifers	Must have 4-H Tag by April 26, 2026 Tag Dates: March 22, 5:30pm-7:00pm (preferred) April 26, 4:00pm-8:00pm YQCA Training Required	YQCA Training Required
Registered Heifers, Registered Does, Registered Ewes, & Registered Gilts	Registration papers must be in the exhibitor's name by June 15 A copy of the registration papers are due with fair pre-entries. YQCA Training Required	Registration paper must be in the exhibitor's or immediate family member name by June 15 YQCA Training Required
Market Goat, Market Sheep, & Market Swine	Must have 4-H Tag by Sunday, April 26, 2026 Must have Scrapie Ear Tag by Sun., April 26, 2026 Weigh-in: April 26 - 4:00pm-8:00pm YQCA Training Required	Must be tagged by Friday, May 22, 2026 Must have Scrapie Ear Tag by Fair Weigh-in: May 22 - 6:00pm-7:00pm YQCA Training Required
Commercial Does, Commercial Ewes, & Commercial Gilts	Must be 4-H Tag by Sunday, April 26, 2026 Must have Scrapie Ear Tag by Sun., April 26, 2026 Tagging: April 26 - 4:00pm-8:00pm YQCA Training Required	Must be Tagged by Friday, May 22, 2026 Must have Scrapie Ear Tag by Fair Tagging: May 22 - 6:00pm- 7:00pm YQCA Training Required
Dairy Goats, Dairy Cattle	May 1: 4-H members must have ownership & animals must be in the 4-Her's name. Lease of Dairy Cattle	
Lost Ear Tag Policy	If your livestock loses a tag after the official tag deadline for your county, please contact the extension office in the county where you participate in 4-H. You will need to provide the agent with the following items: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tag number that was lost • Provide an additional ear tag number, scrapie tag number, tattoo or ear notch, • Send a photo of the animal that lost the tag. 	
Youth Quality Care of Animals Training (YQCA) **If you do the YQCA on-line you must provide proof (certificate) to the extension office.	Both the Linn County Fair and Miami County Fair require that all exhibitors in market and breeding livestock (Beef, Sheep, Meat Goats, and Swine) complete their YQCA Training each year. You can do it online or attend one of the following in-person trainings: Paola Trainings: March 17 at 10:00am; March 17 at 2:00pm; April 15 at 6:30pm or May 27 at 6:30 pm. All at the Paola Office. Mound City Trainings: March 25 at 6:00pm & May 27 at 6:00pm at the Linn County 4-H Building. June 10 at 2pm at the Mound City Office All YQCA trainings must be completed by June 15 to show at your county fair. To receive your certificate for KJLS or KSF, you must complete the pre- and post- test.	

Animal Project Requirements

Animal/Project	Miami County Fair Deadlines/Rules	Linn County Fair Deadlines/Rules
Horse	Horse Identification Certificates due June 1. USE THE NEW UPDATE FORM! Require "4-H Equine Webinar: Horse Safety" webinar & quiz to show at the Miami County Fair. Must be completed by July 1st.	Horse Identification Certificates due June 1. USE THE NEW UPDATE FORM! Require "4-H Equine Webinar: Horse Safety" webinar & quiz to show at the Miami County Fair. Must be completed by July 1st.
Dog Care & Training	Check out the New Kansas 4-H Dog Show Rules updated January 2023 at https://www.kansas4-h.org/projects/animal-science/dog/index.html Dog Practices are available. Check website for dates & times: https://www.maraisdescygnnes.k-state.edu/program-areas/4h-youth-development/projects/ The Dog Immunization Record (Publication MG34) is also required before trainings & shows.	Dog Practices are available. Check website for dates & times: https://www.maraisdescygnnes.k-state.edu/program-areas/4h-youth-development/projects/ To participate in the Linn County Fair Dog Show and the Linn County Dog Club Spring Show, the 4-H member and their dog must complete 75% of the meetings/trainings for each division. The Dog Immunization Record (Publication MG34) is also required before trainings & shows. Questions regarding immunization please discuss with leader.
Rabbits	Rabbits must be owned by July 1st and pre-entered to show at the Miami County Fair.	Rabbits must be owned by July 1st and pre-entered by July 15 to show at the Linn County Fair.
Poultry, Pigeons, & Doves	No Pullorum-Typhoid testing required until July 2026. Must pre-enter by July 1st.	No Pullorum-Typhoid testing required until July 2026. Pre-entry required by July 15th.

Kansas 4-H/FFA Dual Enrollment

4-H Youth Development and Agriculture Education/FFA promote teaching youth life skills. Both programs exist to maximize the participants' knowledge of agriculture and its value to our communities while educating the young people to become productive citizens. Eligible youth may participate in both 4-H and FFA but shall avoid duplication. Therefore, the following principles are required to be used in delivering the 4-H and FFA programs in Kansas as we strive to educate youth.

- When young people are members of both 4-H and FFA, they shall plan and manage separate projects, and/or supervised agriculture experiences (SAE) programs.
- FFA and 4-H members may enroll in the same area of experience in 4-H and FFA, however; participants cannot identify, nominate, manage, keep records on, or exhibit the same plants, animals, etc. in both organizations. Members must designate exhibits as either FFA or 4-H at weigh-in, registration or similar deadline.
- Members may participate in judging contests and related events in FFA and 4-H but cannot represent both organizations at a contest, show or event at the same time.

Shooting Sports Project Requirements

You must attend safety training to participate.

Minimum age for 4-H Shooting Sports is 8 (BB and archery). 8 Classes minimum required to participate in fair shoot.

Minimum age for air rifle (pellet), smallbore, and shotgun is 12. You must take air rifle/BB prior to be eligible for smallbore or shotgun. 8 Classes minimum required to participate in fair shoot.

Compound archery participants are required to shoot their own equipment (bow and 6 arrows). A release is also required. 5 Classes minimum required to participate in fair shoot. Recurve bow participants will have everything provided. 5 Classes minimum required to participate in fair shoot.

Shotgun participants are required to provide their own shotgun, shells and partial range fees. Only 12-gauge and 20-gauge shotguns are allowed.

Age Requirements (4-H Age as of January 1)

BB Project - 8-15; Archery Projects - 8-18; Air Rifle Project - 12-18; Shotgun Project - 12-18; Small Bore Project - 12-18 (If offered, depending on instructor availability)

You can join the Shooting Sports Project Club when enrolling in 4HOnline. It can be an additional club to your primary (Community) Club or as your main club.

Practices will be scheduled throughout the year. Check out our website for more information in the Project tab. <https://www.maraisdescygnnes.k-state.edu/4-h/project-information/index.html>

Participation

Attendance and participation at 4-H meetings is highly encouraged as part of the overall educational experience. However, club meeting attendance cannot be required as criteria for project completion or fair participation. 4-H meetings should be the quality that 4-H members want to attend, participate and learn something beneficial.

Fundraising

4-H members may not solicit funds to help support their individual 4-H projects. 4-H members may fundraise for a specific 4-H educational trip. Donation given directly to a 4-H'er are not tax deductible because they do not go to a 4-H club or group.

4-H Fundraising must be approved by the 4-H Youth Development Agent. The funds raised must be used to further the 4-H mission and account procedures must be appropriate and in accordance with the policy. **Fundraising events should be emailed to Karla at khightow@ksu.edu for approval at least 30 days before the fundraising begins.** This is to keep other organizations from using the 4-H name, to track on going fundraisers, and to make sure all fundraisers are appropriate for 4-H.

Collecting Donations

All donations should be youth appropriate and useful in the implementation of the 4-H educational program. You should not collect donations made out to you directly. All donations should be made to a 4-H club or entity. This includes donations to shows and events. You will also need to track any money which you receive in the name of 4-H. Example: If you are collecting donations for the Spring Goat Show, all checks should be made out to the 4-H Council. If you have a silent auction, all items donated must be youth appropriate, i.e. no items from liquor, tattoo or vape shops.

Expectations of

Parents & Members

All 4-H participants—**youth, families, volunteers and staff**—who participate in or attend any activity or event sponsored by K-State Extension 4-H Youth Development Program are expected to uphold the values of the Kansas 4-H Program and conduct themselves according to the following standards:

1. Be present, attentive and engaged in the 4-H activities. Practice good sportsmanship, be helpful to others, uphold ethical practices in 4-H projects and event, and never cheat or falsely represent efforts related to 4-H Project activities.
2. Know and follow federal, state, and local laws that apply to minors (e.g. no use of alcohol, illicit drugs, and tobacco in any form).
3. Use language and actions that do not interfere with others' participation in the program. **(Swearing, harassment, and bullying are not allowed).**
4. Know and follow safety policies and procedures.
5. Obey all rules and directives that apply to the 4-H activity.
6. Use mobile electronic devices during scheduled 4-H activity only in an approved manner.
7. Apply the conduct standard to online 4-H activities such as social media and internet presence.

A complete Kansas 4-H Participant , Parent, and Volunteer Code of Conduct can be found on the website at:

<https://www.kansas4-h.org/resources/policy-guide/index.html>

4-H Presentations

Presentations by the 4-H member are encouraged. Here are the different types of presentations that are used at most club meeting and some county and state events.

Project Talk

The member tells what he/she is doing in the project, where he/she went, what was seen, what activities were conducted, etc.

Demonstration

The member shows and tells how to do something and there is a finished product.

Public Speaking

For older 4-H members, the 4-H member gives a presentation about a topic of their choice.

Illustrated Talk

The member tells how to do something but does not have a finished product.

Grievance Policy & Procedures

The Marais des Cygnes District has a 4-H Grievance Policy. Any grievance concerning the 4-H Program (breach of code of conduct, club day rule, inappropriate behavior from an adult in charge, rules violation, etc)... must be brought to the attention of one of the Grievance Committee members in writing within 48 hours of the said violation. The Grievance Committee consist of the District 4-H Agent, Program Development Committee Members, and the District Board Chair.

The extension agent, together with the local extension board or governing district body, has the authority to make appropriate decisions on local 4-H disputes. These decisions will be formulated using state policy and national directives as formulated by this policy or as dictated by law.

District and state 4-H staff may provide resources to the situation when asked by the extension agent.

All protests must be submitted in writing AND signed by the protester (electronic signatures will be accepted)

The written Grievance statement must include:

- Names of Persons involved and cause of complaint or appeal.
- Situation, documentation, and recommendations for corrections.
- Specific action, rule, etc., in question.
- Additional persons the committee may contact for further clarification.
- Procedures and/or steps carried out by the person involved prior to submission of the protest to the Protest Committee
- Signature of the protesters.

The Grievance Committee will then call a meeting to discuss the matter. If necessary, all parties will be called in. A resolution for the grievance will be decided and given to the parties involved.

The Grievance Committee's decision is final.

Cancellation Policy Due to Weather

Kansas weather can cause many problems including meeting cancellations. If schools are closed due to the weather, we will cancel county-wide/district-wide 4-H meetings and events.

Sometimes bad weather can happen after school. If they are calling for snow or ice that evening, we are probably going to cancel any meeting that night. Be sure to check your email and Facebook for updates when winter weather is in the forecast. We try to cancel meetings by noon if not sooner.

Please check with your Club Leader to see what your club policy states.

Volunteer Policy

Volunteers are fundamental to the 4-H Program. They provide assistance needed to enable youth to become healthy, self-directing, and contributing members of society. It is important that we provide a safe educational experience for all 4-H members and volunteers.

To ensure that 4-H provides a safe education experience, all adults wanting to contribute to the 4-H Program as a club leader, project leader, or chaperone/chauffeur must complete the Volunteer Screening Process.

To maintain volunteer status, all screened volunteers must enroll each year in 4-H Online by going to <https://v2.4honline.com/>

New volunteers who would need to be screened, should contact Karla or Tracy (tracy01@ksu.edu) to start the screening process.

Volunteers in any of the following roles must be screened:

- Organizational (Project) Club Leaders
- Chaperones
- Camp Volunteers
- Volunteers who will have access to funds raised on behalf of 4-H
- Volunteers who will have access to confidential records or information

Process steps include: 4-H Online profile, Orientation online, Background Check, Interview and, approval.

Publications from Marais des Cygnes District are available at www.maraisdescyignes.ksu.edu.
Publications may be available in languages other than English.

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