

WINTER 2026 4-H FLASHES

PROJECT ENROLLMENT AND DEADLINE

In order to be eligible to exhibit at the 4-H General Project Show and/or the 4-H Fair you must be signed up for projects by April 15. Enrollment fees must also be paid by April 15. The enrollment fee is \$20 for all 4-H & Cloverbud members. The \$20 enrollment fee can be paid online in ZSuite or paid with check/cash to the Extension office. Checks should be written out to DeKalb County 4-H Foundation. If you have any questions do not hesitate to give the Extension office a call (815) 758-8194.



PROJECT BOOKS

Most of the projects have the option to request a project manual/book. If you would like to request the book fill out the form found on our website at: <https://extension.illinois.edu/bdo/4-h-dekalb-county> or in a "share file" on ZSuite and email it to schallg@illinois.edu or drop it off to Sandy at the Extension office.



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ALL THE 4-H CLUB HELP YOU NEED

4-H HELP DOCUMENTS

Welcome to 4-H – new 4-H member guide that helps members learn about diverse project areas, learn about their new club, and involve family and friends in 4-H.

4-H Family Handbook – a resource designed with the family in mind. This resource will introduce family members to a variety of 4-H opportunities and be their go-to guide when supporting the new club member in their family.

4-H Officers Handbook – this resource is the tool you need to put into the hands of ALL of the youth serving in club leadership roles! It will serve as a guide to 4-H club officer's and provide them with the tools to plan and facilitate effective meetings. These meetings should allow for the orderly and efficient completion of club business, but also encourage a healthy dose of fun during each meeting. In addition to the useful information that is provided, the handbook also contains valuable tools including 4-H club meeting planning forms, planning worksheets for committees, and helpful hints using social media to stay connected with club members and families.

The Illinois 4-H Website - all of the resources and forms needed to guide 4-H club officers, committees, and members as they plan for the new 4-H program year. Go to go.illinois.edu/IL4H, scroll to Resource to find lots of helpful documents such as these:

Illinois 4-H New Family Handbook - is a go-to guide for navigating everything your child's journey in Illinois 4-H will look like — from club meetings and project work to volunteering and leadership opportunities. It's packed with easy-to-understand info on membership guidelines, project categories, and how families can get involved to help youth thrive.

Club Meeting Agenda – this fillable form is a useful fill-in-the-blank form your club officers can use as they plan each section of the meeting. This useful form provides them with a meeting structure they can use to identify who from the club should be in charge of each potential item included in a meeting.

Club Committee Planning Worksheet – the Committee Planning Worksheet is an excellent tool to give to committee members as they plan club events and activities.

Club Yearly Program Plan – this helpful tool guides the club officers and club members as they identify club goals to work toward during the year and brainstorm what programs, events and/or activities to plan for the club to engage members in fun, hands-on learning experiences throughout the program year.

More – Don't forget to download your new secretary book, treasurer book, tips for good club meetings, tips for using the 4-H name, and other important resources!

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH LEADERS

Jr. Federation: All 4-H members in 6th & 7th grade are welcome to be a member of Jr. Federation. They meet four times a year to plan two county-wide Cloverbud Fun Days in December & June. Email Nicole: groeizing@illinois.edu for more info.

Federation: All 4-H members in 8th grade or older are welcome to be a member of Federation. Meetings are once a month on the 1st Tuesday of the month at 7 PM in the Farm Bureau building. They plan county events, community service projects, and fun activities. Email Nicole: groeizing@illinois.edu for more info.

SUPER SATURDAY

It's getting to be time to start thinking about Super Saturday! The date for the 2026 4-H Super Saturday is Saturday, **March 7 from 9 AM to 3 PM** in the DeKalb County Farm Bureau building.

We would like to have 4-H members, volunteers and parents start thinking about a variety of different sessions they would like to teach or see offered at this event. In the past there have been a number of wonderful sessions that were taught by 4-H'ers, parents, and community supporters. Once again we are hoping for this same kind of involvement in teaching workshop sessions. The workshops should be hands-on oriented and something both boys and girls would like to do. If you would be willing to teach a session at Super Saturday, please email Nicole at groezing@illinois.edu. Include the name of the class, max number of participants per session, how many sessions you are willing to teach, and the cost. Past involvement indicates that 4-H'ers have enjoyed learning from other 4-H members, leaders and parents on a wide range of topics.

We would like to have all sessions set by January 26.



4-H CAMP

Registration for 4-H Camp 2026 is open! 4-H Camp is set for June 14-18, 2026, at Rock River Christian Camp, Polo, IL.

4-H Camp is a five-day, four-night residential camping experience. During camp week, youth will engage in a variety of activities including hiking, shooting sports, arts and crafts, crate stacking, team-building challenges, zip-lining, swimming, and more.

4-H Camp is open to ALL boys and girls, ages 8-14 by June 14, 2026. The early bird cost is \$325 for 4-H members until March 1, 2026.

Register online at:

<http://go.illinois.edu/4HSummerCamp>.

DEKALB COUNTY 4-H SCHOLARSHIP

The DeKalb County 4-H Foundation has a scholarship fund for DeKalb County 4-H members. High school seniors along with post-high school students enrolled as a full-time student in an educational program are encouraged to apply. Scholarship recipients will be selected on the basis of 4-H involvement, 4-H achievements, community service, school achievements and future plans in 4-H. The scholarship is for \$500. Applications can be picked-up at the Extension office or found online at: <https://extension.illinois.edu/bdo/4h-dekalb-county>. All applications are due to the Extension office by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, April 24.



PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST

The DeKalb County 4-H Public Speaking Contest will be held on Tuesday, March 31 starting at 6:00 PM in the Farm Bureau theatre. The entry form is due by Monday, March 16. The 4-H public speaking contest is a great way to enhance your communication skills! 4-H'ers can choose from formal, illustrated, oral interpretation and original works speeches. Three youth from DeKalb county will advance to the State 4-H Public Presentation Contest, held April 25. All ages are eligible to compete in any of the four divisions. Youth may participate in this contest AND exhibit a project at the Illinois State Fair.



SUMMER FAIRS

- 4-H General Project Show - Thursday, July 9
- 4-H Livestock Fair - July 31 - Aug 2
- 4-H Multi County Dog Show - TBD
- 4-H Multi County Horse Show in Ogle - July 30





LIVESTOCK POSSESSION DEADLINE

The following dates are the 4-H possession deadlines for livestock projects:

January 1

Beef & Dairy Cows, Goats-Milking Does & Meat Does

February 1

Market Beef Steers & Heifers

May 1

Horses and Ponies, Bucket Calves, Market & Breeding Sheep, Beef & Dairy Calves, Dairy Heifers

June 1

Breeding Beef Heifers, Swine - Gilts and Barrows, Poultry, Rabbits

4-H'ers must be enrolled in the appropriate project no later than April 15 and have their animals in their own possession by the deadlines listed above.

YQCA

BEEF EFFICIENCY & BUCKET CALF CLASS

Beef Efficiency - Once again this year, the Cattlemen's Association will allow 4-H members to use their own steers in the Beef Efficiency Contest. By using your own steer you can show it in both the efficiency class and the regular beef class at the 4-H Fair. Steers will be weighed in February with the state fair weigh-in. The contest is based on rate of gain, record book, ultrasound and the live class placings. Premiums are paid in each of these areas, and the overall winner receives a monetary award of \$200. Email Nicole at groezing@illinois.edu if you are interested or if you have any questions.

Bucket Calf Class - The Bucket Calf Class is a great opportunity to raise a small calf. The Bucket Calf Class is open to members ages 8 to 13 and includes raising a small calf, keeping records and showing it at the Fair. Calves need to be born between Feb. 1 and April 1, 2026.

Second Year Bucket Calf Class - Those of you who showed a bucket calf at the 2025 Fair may show that calf in the Second Year Bucket Calf Class in 2026. This will be a show class only, and be based entirely on the animal. Enrollment in this class will be in June as part of the 4-H Fair entries.

For members enrolled in dairy cattle, beef cattle, swine, sheep, and goats:

Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) is a livestock quality assurance program that all 4-H exhibitors of these animals need to complete each year. Attend either a face-to-face class on:

- March 24 from 6-7:30 PM in the DeKalb Farm Bureau building or
- March 25 from 6-7:30 PM in the Boone County Extension Office or
- April 2 from 6-7:30 PM in the Ogle County Extension office or
- Certify online via the website <https://yqcaprogram.org/>

The YQCA program is for youth ages 8-21.

The online version is broken into age divisions as follows: juniors 8-11, intermediate 12-14, senior 15-18, and young adults 19-21. This certification is needed each year with test out options of 1-3 years. The estimated cost for the face-to-face training will be \$3 and \$12 for the online version. Registration is required and more information will be emailed to those enrolled in an animal project.