

4-H FAMILY

MADISON COUNTY

DECEMBER 2025 AND JANUARY 2026

NEWS



Hello 4-H Families,

It's already December! I'm not sure where November went, but I hope you had the chance to spend time with family and friends. The 4-H staff for Unit 22 is very grateful to have you as part of our Madison County 4-H family. Happy holidays and best wishes as we head into the new year!

A reminder to submit your 4-H enrollment as soon as possible. Please send a thank-you card to our two sponsors: Madison County Farm Bureau - 900 Hillsboro Ave. Edwardsville, IL, and Southwestern Electric Cooperative - 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246 (Attn: Jennifer Gillan, Member Services Manager).

Please don't hesitate to contact me at 618-344-4230 with any questions!

Thank you,

Meghan Cope | 4-H Program Coordinator
Serving Madison and St. Clair Counties |
mawolff@illinois.edu

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Office Hours:

Monday- Friday: 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
Closed Noon to 1:00 p.m. for lunch
618-344-4230

Monroe County Office

901 Illinois Ave., PO Box 117
Waterloo, IL 62298
618-939-3434, 618-939-7708 Fax

Madison-St. Clair County Branch Office

900 Hillsboro Ave
Edwardsville, IL 62025
618-344-4230

University of IL Extension at the JJK

FAN Innovation Center
2051 Lynch Ave
East St. Louis, IL 62204
618-875-8939, 618-875-8786 Fax

Extension County Director

William Catalano

Madison & St. Clair 4-H Coordinator

Meghan Cope

Office Support Specialist

Nicole Hellon

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extension.illinois.edu/mms

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Madison County 4-H

University of Illinois Extension-
Madison, Monroe and St. Clair Unit

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Madison, Monroe, St. Clair- IL

2025-2026 4-H HANDBOOK

Here is this year's 4-H handbook for all 4-H members and families.

<https://go.illinois.edu/MadisonCounty4-HHandbook>.

The handbook goes over what 4-H is, the policies, what clubs do, the event calendar, and so much more. If you have any questions, please contact Meghan Cope via email at mawolff@illinois.edu

2025-2026 4-H MEMBERSHIP POLICIES

Youth **five through seven years of age, on or before September 1** of the current 4-H year, may enroll in 4-H Cloverbud groups.

Youth who are **eight years of age and have not reached their nineteenth birthday on or before September 1** may enroll in 4-H clubs.

A youth who enrolls in a Madison County 4-H club must:

- **Attend at least four meetings** to be called a 4-H member. Youth who do not comply are not eligible to participate in 4-H exhibitions, receive 4-H premiums, or receive other 4-H awards and recognitions available to 4-H members. **(College students can be enrolled when they live away from home and must attend at least one meeting when they are home on breaks or virtually.)**
- **Present a talk or demonstration at a club meeting during the project year.**
- **Youth enrolled in a livestock market class must turn in a livestock record book by September 15. If not completed by September 15, the youth will not be able to participate in a livestock market class the following year.**
- Complete enrollment by **January 15 to exhibit projects at 4-H shows**. Youth may enroll after this date, but are not eligible to exhibit projects at shows. Projects can be added up to this deadline, but the addition of projects is not accepted online after this date (except for SPIN Clubs).



4-H Enrollment Information

As of December 4th, 2025 we have 187 4-H members/cloverbuds in the ZSuites system.

Enrollment for the 2025-2026 4-H year is open!

We will again be using the Z-Suite platform to collect enrollment information. New members, please use the instructions below to create a household account for your family and enroll youth members. Returning members, please use the same login information as last year. Adults who are screened as volunteers must also enroll in Z-Suites. If you have any questions, please email Meghan at mawolff@illinois.edu or call 618-344-4230.

There is a \$20 fee for all youth enrolled in the Illinois 4-H program. Enrollment fees will be sponsored by **Madison County Farm Bureau**, 900 Hillsboro Ave. Edwardsville, IL, and **Southwestern Electric Cooperative**, 525 US Route 40, Greenville, IL 62246 (Attn: Jennifer Gillan, Member Services Manager). 4-H Clubs and Families are encouraged to send a **THANK YOU** note to both sponsors for their generosity.

Z-Suites

<https://4h.zsuite.org/>

Instructions to enroll:

New Members: <https://go.illinois.edu/MadisonCountyZSuiteQuickStartGuide>

Returning Members: <https://go.illinois.edu/MadisonCountyZSuiteReenrollmentInstructions>

Leaders: <https://go.illinois.edu/MadisonCountyZSuiteClubLeaderManagementGuide>

Please mark all the projects they are interested in on the youth's account. When Fair Entry is released in April/May, that is when they will commit to which project from Z-Suites they plan to show at the 2026 fair.

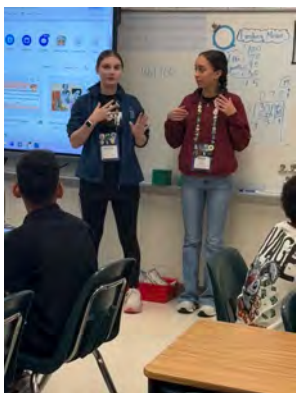
The deadline to enroll to be able to show during the 2026 fair season is **January 15, 2026. If they are not enrolled by January 15, youth will not be able to show any projects for the 2026 fair season. 4-H members can still sign up to participate in 4-H after the deadline, but are not allowed to attend the 2026 fair season.**



National 4-H Congress 2025

Hi everyone! My name is Alyssa Elliott, and I have just been given the opportunity of a lifetime: serving as an Illinois State Delegate for the 2025 National 4-H Congress. I was one out of ten youth picked from the state of Illinois to attend 4-H Congress in Atlanta, Georgia, for five days. At this event, 42 of the 50 states were represented, and over 700 youth attendees attended. This year's theme was 'Courage to grow, Heart to serve'. During my time there, I had the opportunity to talk to youth from all over, learn about how 4-H impacts them, and even trade really cool state pins with each other. Each day, they offered us different workshops to attend, which ranged from discussions about Artificial Intelligence to a Dancing with the Stars-themed workshop.

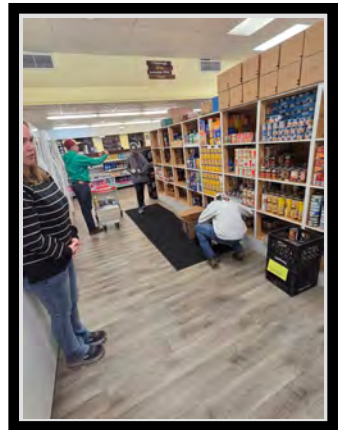
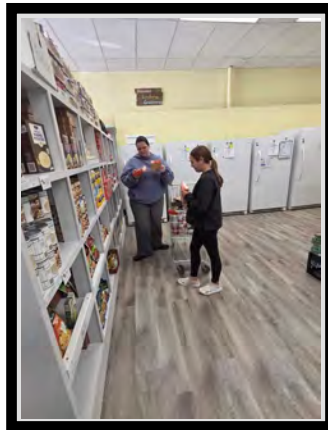
Along with the workshops, one day was dedicated to community service in Atlanta. This is our way of giving back to Atlanta and thanking them for hosting us. To start each day, they had an opening ceremony with guest speakers ranging from Dr. Laymon Hicks to the President and CEO of the National 4-H Council, Jill Bramble. These speakers motivated us to get up, get out, and serve our communities, and also talked about how we were the future of the world. My favorite part of the whole event was getting to know the other youth and learning about their 4-H experiences. It really opened my eyes to how big 4-H really is around the United States. I encourage everyone to try their hardest for this opportunity because it truly is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that has brought me and so many others friendships and memories that will last us a lifetime.



Club Spotlight

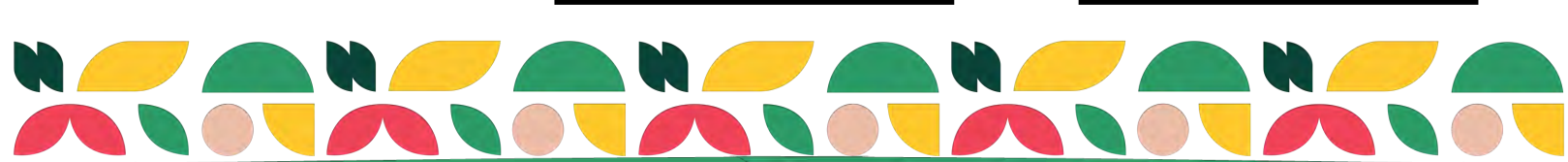
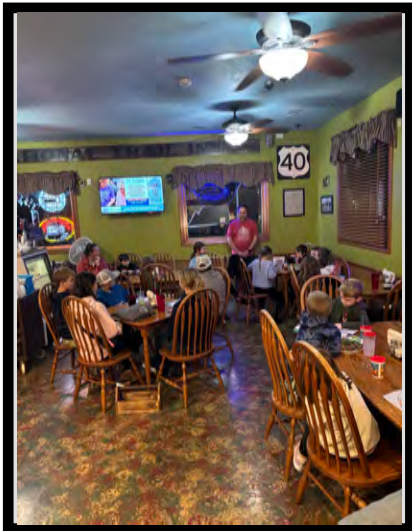
Prairie Youth 4-H Club volunteered at Helping Hands Food Pantry in mid-November. They worked hard to organize food items in preparation for the holidays.

Great job!



Club Spotlightb

The St. Jacob 4-H Club visited Lucky Rooster in St. Jacob. Lucky Rooster employees discussed the pros and cons of owning a business and turning a passion into a profitable venture. They also talked about food waste and sanitation. Then they had their award recognition. Keep up the great work!



Club Spotlight

Good Producers 4-H Club held its 94th Annual Achievement Night on November 16. Special guest speakers from the Highland Police Department and the K-9 unit. They demonstrated how quickly Rocco can detect drugs and discussed how they train him regularly so that he is not distracted by other smells, even those like fried chicken, which was still sitting on the table from dinner.



Club Spotlight

Alhambra Morning Glories 4-H Club was spreading holiday cheer at the Hitz Nursing Home by caroling on December 3rd, 2025!





4-H & FFA GRANTS

Sponsored by
Madison County Farm Bureau Young Leaders

APPLICATION DUE DECEMBER 10TH

Thanks to community support of the Young Leaders annual golf scramble, \$5,000 will support local youth in agriculture programs! Madison County 4-H & FFA members are eligible for this project grant. Applications are due December 10th. All grant interviews will take place in person at the Farm Bureau office in Edwardsville on December 17th. Those interviews should be scheduled through the application process. Club leaders or advisors should complete a member review for their applicants. Please direct any questions to Paige Durham at manager@madcofb.org or 618-656-5191.

4-H and FFA
members apply
here!



4-H leaders and
FFA Advisors
apply here!



Madison County
Farm Bureau
YOUNG LEADERS




Some applicants may not receive award.






Career Day at Hawthorne Animal Hospital

January 5th at 10 am

 For 4-H members ages 12 -18 years old

 Limited spots available



Sign up on ZSuites under events or scan
the QR Code



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Open to Madison and St. Clair 4-H members

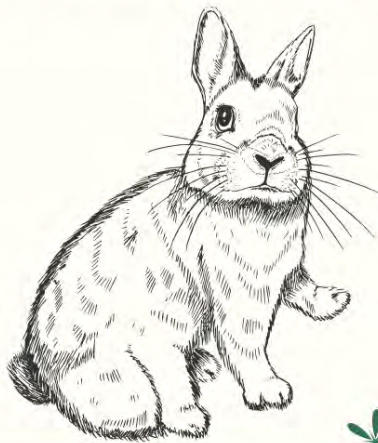


RABBIT ENTHUSIASTS 4-H SPIN CLUB

Do you love animals, science, or learning by doing? Join the Edwardsville Rabbit Enthusiasts and discover what it takes to raise healthy, happy, and high-quality rabbits! Whether you're brand new or already have a herd, you'll gain skills that last a lifetime.

In the Rabbit 4-H Club, you'll learn all about:

- ✓ Rabbit Selection – how to choose the right breed and show-quality rabbits
- ✓ Care & Housing – daily routines, safe housing setups, and health management
- ✓ Feeding & Nutrition – what rabbits need at every stage of growth
- ✓ Breeding & Kindling – responsible breeding, nest box prep, and kit care
- ✓ Market Fryer Grow-Outs – raising market-ready fryers for show and sale
- ✓ Tattoos & Weight Checks – preparing for fair competition and record keeping



Club Information:

- 🌿 Location: Madison County Farm Bureau
- 🌿 Date: 2nd Sunday of the Month starting in Jan.
- 🌿 Time: 5 pm - 6 pm

JOIN NOW ON ZSUITES!



Club Leader: Becky Merkel

bmerkel962@gmail.com



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Front

\$10 per Shirt

There is a limited
amount of youth and
adult sizes.

Back

Cash or Check ONLY

4-H Shirts

FLASH SALE

Shirts are now \$10 until
December 18th





Madison County 4-H Teens as Teachers Information Meeting

Tuesday, January 20 at 6:00 p.m. - 8 p.m.
in the Madison County CAREE Building
Pizza and drink will be provided!

What is Teens as Teachers?

- University of Illinois Extension 4-H Program and Madison County CAREE are partnering to teach youth about agriculture.
- This program is open to teens 14-18 years old.
- Teen Teachers will be required to complete 8 hours of training and 8 hours of volunteer teaching in order to complete the program

As a member of the Teens as Teachers team...

- You will be a role model for young kids who share your passion!
- You will expand your own knowledge by preparing lessons and teaching the material to youth.
- You will get practical training that you can use in college, in your career, and throughout life.



Scan the QR code to register for the meeting

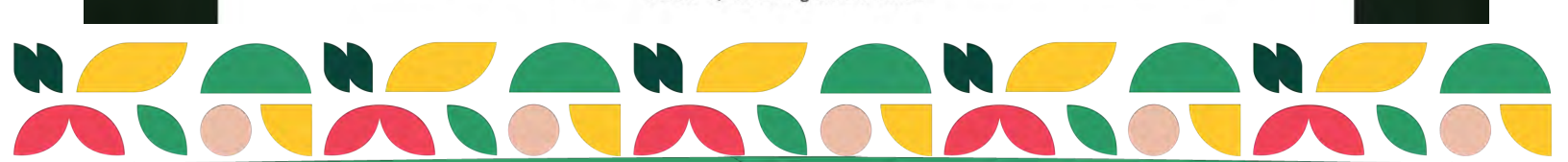


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Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment. If you need a reasonable accommodation to attend, call the registration office.



Madison County 4-H

Steer Weigh-In

Saturday, February 7, 2026 | 9 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

**Kusterman Farm
3637 Hill Rd, Highland, IL 62249**



Questions: Call 217-244-4385
or email mawolff@illinois.edu

RSVP to Meghan by
January 29 by email
mawolff@illinois.edu



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University of Illinois • U.S. Department of Agriculture • Local Extension Councils Cooperating
University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment. If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate, please contact 217. 762. 2191. Early requests are strongly encouraged to allow sufficient time for meeting your access needs.

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I

March 23, 2026 at 6 pm at the Madison County
Farm Bureau Auditorium

Madison & St. Clair 4-H Public Speaking Show

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Fall 4-H Photo Contest



Cloverbud Division Ages 5-7

WINNER ANNOUNCEMENT



1st Place

Natalie S.

Atkins Acres Cloverbuds
St. Clair County



2nd Place

Benji P.

Pin Oak Progressors
Cloverbuds
Madison County



3rd Place

Maeve D.

Creative Critters
Cloverbuds
St. Clair County



Honorable Mention

Gideon R.

Emerald Cloverbuds
St. Clair County

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Thank you for participating in the 4-H Fall Photo Contest for Madison and St. Clair Counties





Fall 4-H Photo Contest

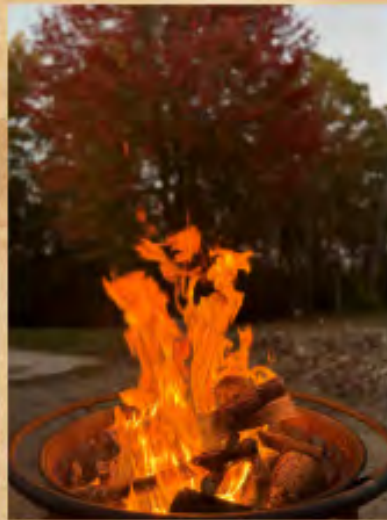


4-H Member Division Ages 8-18

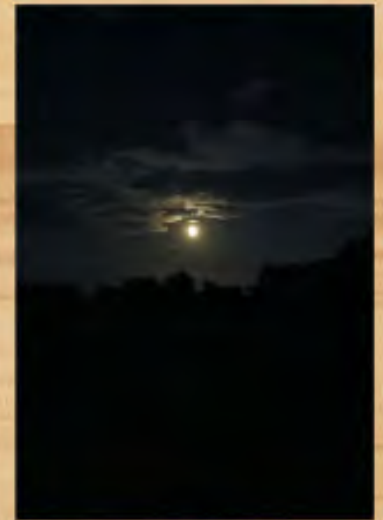
WINNER ANNOUNCEMENT



1st Place
Grace M.
Grant Prairie
Madison County



2nd Place
Levi M.
Prairie Youth
Madison County



3rd Place
Emma M.
Grant Prairie
Madison County

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Thank you for participating in the 4-H Fall Photo Contest for Madison and
St. Clair Counties





Fall 4-H Photo Contest



4-H Member Division Ages 8-18

Honorable Mention



Bethany N.
Prairie Youth
Madison County



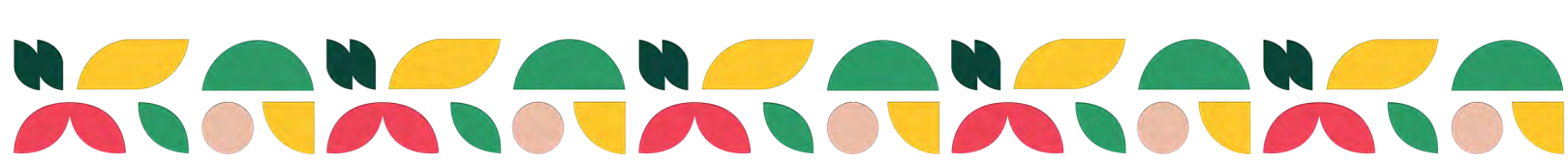
David R.
Emerald Clovers
St. Clair County

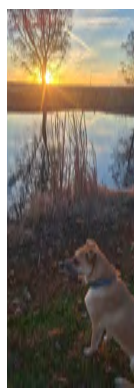
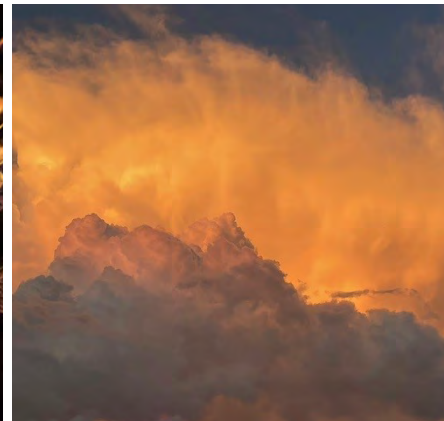
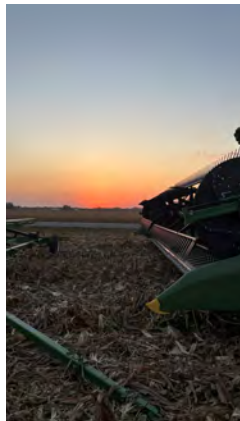
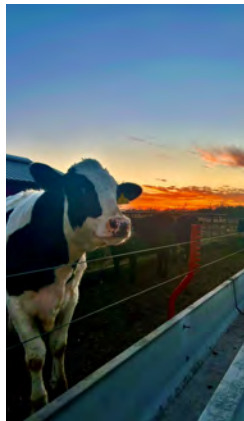
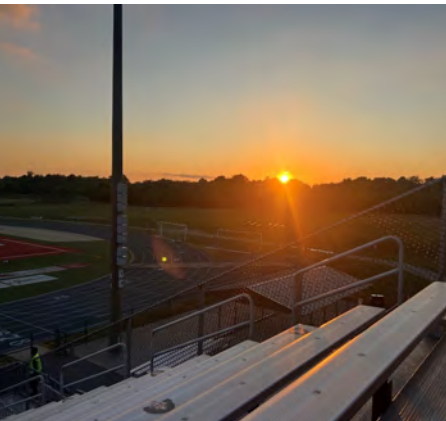
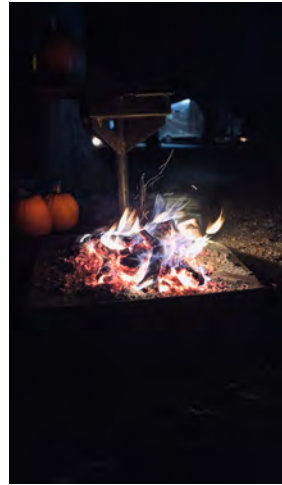


Eli A.
Atkins' Acres
St. Clair County



Emma M.
Grant Prairie
Madison County





Madison County Shooting Sports 4-H Clubs



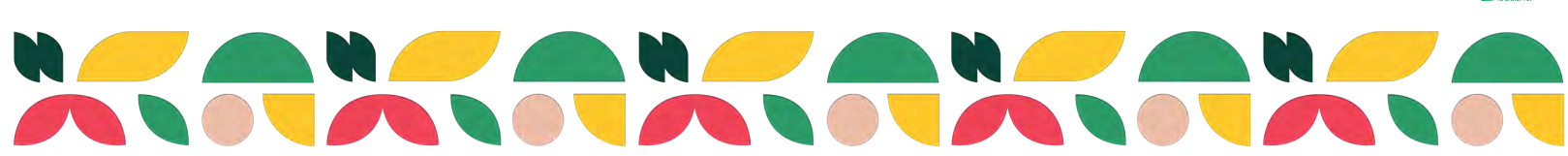
Are you interested in joining a Madison County 4-H Shooting Sports Club? Below are our clubs that you can join. If you have any questions, contact Meghan Cope via email at mawolff@illinois.edu.

▼ **Grant Prairie Shooting Sports**
Meeting: Seasonal
Discipline- Shotgun
Location: New Douglas
Leader: Jennifer Mucklow
(j.mucklow07@yahoo.com)

▼ **Open Sight Shooting Sports Club**
Meeting: Seasonal
Description: Archery
MeetingDate: Every other Friday at 2:30pm in Dorsey
Leader: Mindy Cory
(mindy.j.cory@gmail.com)

▼ **Iron Sight Shooting Sports Club**
Meeting Date: Seasonal
Discipline- Rifle
Location: Alton
Leader: Darrell Chrisenberry
(darrell.chrisenberry59@gmail.com)

▼ **Staunton Road Rangers Shooting Sports Club**
Meeting Date: Seasonal
Discipline- Pistol, Rifle, and Shotgun
Location: Edwardsville
Leader: Max and Tamsey Bremer
(maxandtams@gmail.com)



4-H GINGERBREAD HOUSE

Contest



Rules:

- Take a picture of your finished Gingerbread House and send to Meghan via email mawolff@illinois.edu by **December 15, 2025**
- The Gingerbread House must be created by a 4-H member.
- 2 age groups- Cloverbuds age 5-7 & 4-H members age 8-18
- One entry per member
- Open to Madison and St. Clair County 4-H
- Prizes for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place for both age groups!

Questions should be directed to Meghan at mawolff@illinois.edu



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SAVE THE DATE



Around the World with 4-H International Night



**January 27th,
2026**

**Our 4-H Clubs have
selected a country to
explore how 4-H
operates there. Join
us to learn about 4-H
in different
countries!**

Location - Expo Hall at
the Madison County
Fairgrounds

Time - 6 pm

Please register if you will be
attending the Around the World
with 4-H by Jan. 23



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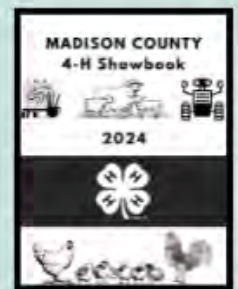
Madison County 4-H Showbook Cover Design Contest



Entries are due **Feb. 2, 2026** to Meghan Cope via email mawolff@illinois.edu.

Entry Requirements:

- "Madison County 4-H Showbook" and the year "2026" must be shown somewhere in your design.
- Use any 4-H fair or project theme.
- Must be a 4-H member. This includes Cloverbuds.
- Your artwork must be drawn or printed in black ink only.
- Your entry must be on white unlined paper.
- No entries with trademark characters/symbols other than the 4-H clover are accepted.
- Put your name and club on the back of your design in pencil.
- Design must be vertical.
- One entry per person



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M A D I S O N C O U N T Y F A I R

CHICKEN FUNDRAISER DANCE



with

BENDERS & BACKROADS

02.07.2026

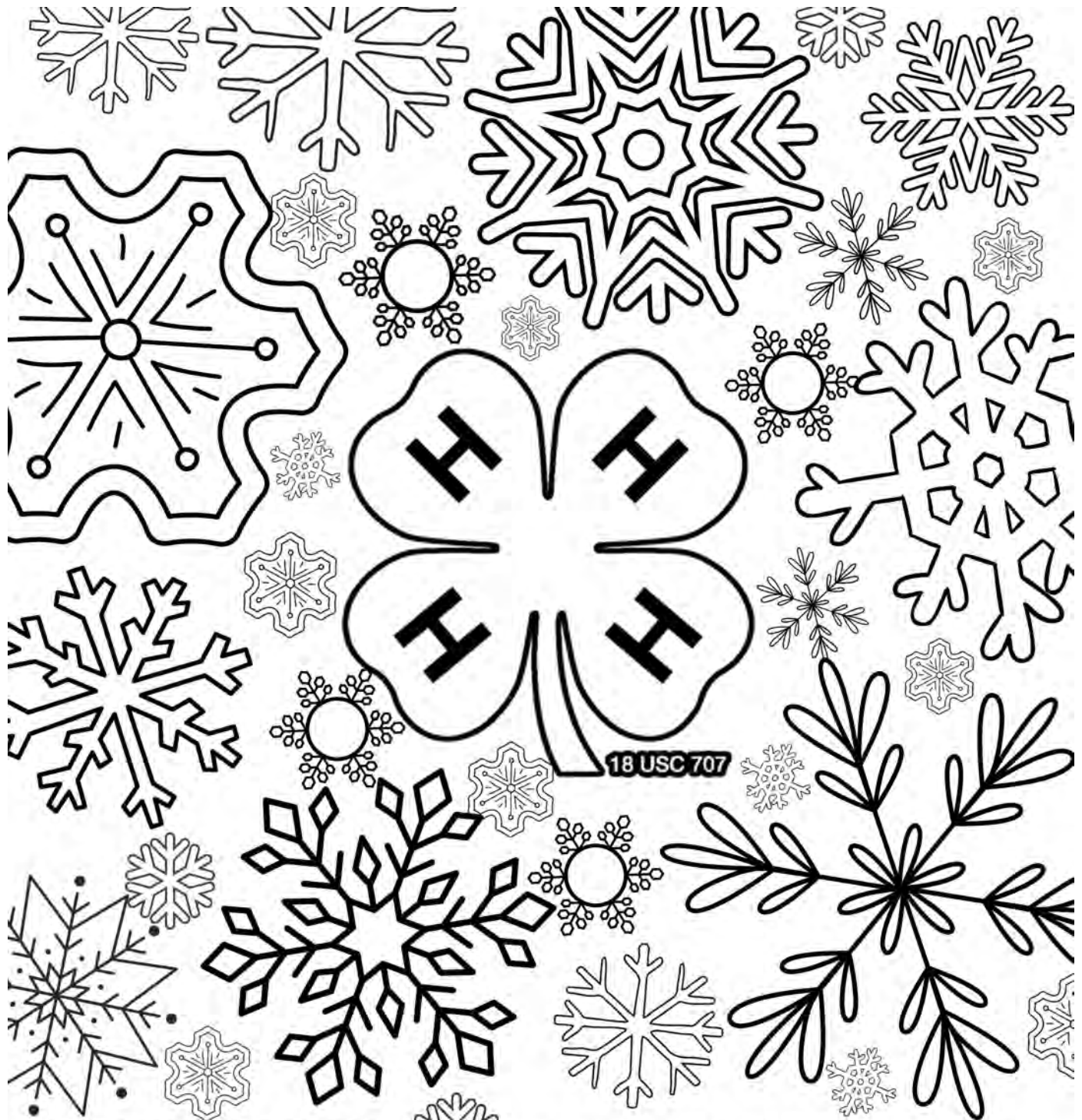
6:30 PM

\$30/TICKET

**LIVE AUCTION
RAFFLES
50/50 & MORE!**

Madison County Expo Hall
2025 Park Hill Drive
Highland, IL 62249





**4-H HELPS YOU
CELEBRATE BEING
ONE OF A KIND!**



**4-H IS THE PLACE ILLINOIS YOUTH
AGES 5-18 CAN MAKE NEW FRIENDS,
LEARN, AND LEAD! SCAN THE CODE
OR CONTACT XYZ TO LEARN MORE!**



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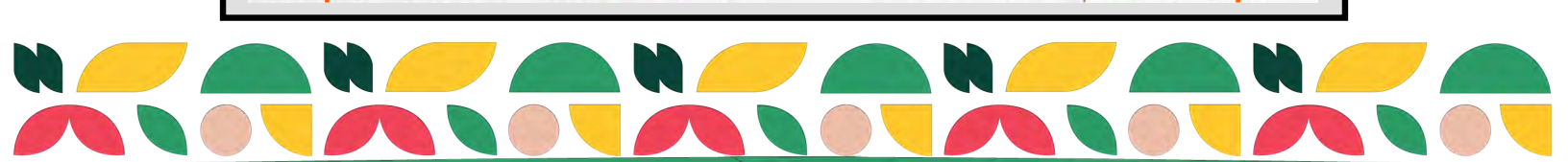
Happy Holidays



Serving Madison, Monroe,
University of Illinois Extension
& St. Clair Counties



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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

December 2025

- Dec 15 Deadline for 4-H Gingerbread House Contest
- Dec. 24 - Jan 1 Office Closed for Holiday Break

January 2025

- Jan 5 - Career Day at Hawthorne Animal Hospital
- Jan 15: ZSuites enrollment closes
- Jan. 27 - Around the World with 4-H - International Night

February

- February 3 - Showbook Cover Contest Due
- February 7 - Steer Weigh-In

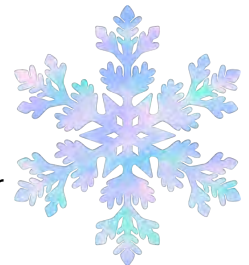
March

- March 23- Public Speaking Contest

HAPPY
Holidays!

4-H PROGRAM WEATHER POLICY:

When Madison County schools are closed due to inclement weather, county 4-H activities will also be closed unless otherwise notified. If the weather gets bad in the evening before the event, please watch your email and Facebook for cancellations.



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