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Aitkin County Fair T-Shirt Design Contest

The Farm Bureau has awarded Aitkin County 4-H funds to make Aitkin County Fair 4-H t-shirts!

Members: please submit your t-shirt design ideas by May 1 to stran017@umn.edu or 217 2nd St NW, Room 134, Aitkin, MN 56431.

Design tips: keep it simple, printing will be one color, chosen design may end up needing to be altered to some degree.
Get Your Free 4-H T-shirt!

NEW for 2016! Every Aitkin County 4-H member that pre-registers and shows at the 2016 Aitkin County Fair (in a 4-H class/show) will get a free 4-H t-shirt! T-shirt size will be requested on your fair registration form.

Platbook Cover Photo Needed

We are still looking for a cover photo for the new Aitkin County Platbook (to be published this summer).

Members: please submit your original digital photos by May 1 to stran017@umn.edu.

Cover photo will be chosen and other photos could be used on the inside of the book.

Farm 2 Institution Workshop

Long Lake Conservation Center

**Tuesday, March 29th, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

Cost is $15 to attend. Lunch from locally sourced food will be provided.

All farmers/producers and institutions big and small are encouraged to attend.

The event will include several renowned speakers on key topics such as:

- Good Agricultural Practice (GAP) Certification
- Regulations concerning meat, produce, baked and canned goods
- Expectations for purchasing from local farms
- Cooking with whole foods
- A panel of farm and institutional relationships that are working locally
- Networking sessions for farmers and institutions to get to know each other

Register online at [http://www.renewingthecountryside.org/farm_to_institution](http://www.renewingthecountryside.org/farm_to_institution)

Contact Erik Heimark 218-232-1303 or heima022@umn.edu with questions.

Council Meeting

The next meeting of the Aitkin County 4-H Council is **Monday, April 11** at 7:00 p.m. in the Home Ec Room at Palisade Community Center.

Winter Cancellation Policy

County 4-H meetings and events will be cancelled if:

- schools are closed for the day or close early
- the temperature is -20F and/or the wind chill is -40F
- travel is not advised due to snow, wind or ice storms or there are any doubts as to what the weather will do during an event

Call the Extension Office at 218-927-2538. Any weather related 4-H cancellations will be on the 4-H office answering machine. We will try to make cancellation decisions by 3:00 p.m.

Summer Camp Counselors Needed

4-H camp counselors are needed to help lead summer camp, to be held near Park Rapids **June 7-10**.

Youth leaders in grades 9 and up are encouraged to consider this fantastic experience. If interested, click [http://z.umn.edu/prcamp](http://z.umn.edu/prcamp) to become a 4-H camp counselor or contact your county Extension office for an application. Applications are DUE to your County Extension office no later than **April 1**.
Each county has a specific number of camp counselors they are responsible to provide. Being selected to be a camp counselor is not a privilege or a right; rather it is an opportunity to learn effective leadership skills. Preference is given to first and second year counselors. Those who have already had the opportunity to serve as a counselor for two years are only accepted when the desired number of counselors cannot be reached.

New camp counselors are required to attend counselor training May 13 & 14 in Brainerd at the Crow Wing County Land Services Building. Training begins Friday at 6:00 p.m. and ends Saturday at 3:00 p.m. Returning counselors have the option to attend the full training if they wish, but are REQUIRED to attend the May 9th afternoon planning session. Selected youth will pay half of the training cost. Your county council/federation pays the remaining half. Counselors pay nothing for 4-H Summer Camp.

4-H Summer Camp

Mark your calendars!

Summer Camp dates have been set for June 8-10 at Northern Pines Camp near Park Rapids. All 4-Hers in grades 3-6 are invited to attend. More information and registration details will be available soon!

Livestock Quality Assurance & Ethics (LQA&E)

Are YOU Certified?

All youth in grades 6 and above participating at the State Fair and the NE 4-H Livestock Show as a 4-H livestock exhibitor in beef, dairy, sheep, swine, poultry, rabbits, meat and dairy goat and lama must have completed the Livestock Quality Assurance and Ethics workshop. Certification is required prior to county fair qualifying show and is good for three fair seasons. The level of training required is determined by the grade of the youth at the time the training takes place.

NOTE: ALL certification must be up-to-date BEFORE the county fair. It is YOUR RESPONSIBILITY to make sure that your certification is current if you plan to participate in 4-H livestock exhibition opportunities beyond the county fair!! If you have been certified in the past, you will be notified if you are due to re-certify. Or, you can call the Extension Office and check if in doubt.

Trainings currently scheduled in our region are:

- **Saturday, April 1** - 12:45-4:00 p.m., Morrison County Government Center, 213 First Ave SE, Little Falls. Please enter through the Sheriff’s Department door.
- **Friday, April 8**, 6:15-9:00 p.m., Courthouse Annex II Basement, 119 Third St S, Long Prairie.
- **Tuesday, May 24**, 5:45-9:00 p.m, Crow Wing Land Service Building, 322 Laurel St, Brainerd.
- **Thursday, June 16** - 12:45-4:00 p.m., Aitkin High School, 306 2nd Street NW, Aitkin.

Watch your newsletter or check the LQA&E website for other dates and locations at [http://z.umn.edu/lqae](http://z.umn.edu/lqae). Your county Extension office will also have this information. For example, trainings that may be close to you include: Stearns County, April 30th; Pine County, June 4. Check the website for further details!

Animal Science Extravaganza

Hold the date, **Saturday, May 7** at the Crow Wing County Fairgrounds in Brainerd for a hands-on project day for beef, dairy, rabbit, poultry, sheep, swine, meat goat and dairy goat project members and their parents.

Youth will be able to bring their own project animal to learn about fitting, nutrition, clipping, showmanship, general health and much, much more. There will be a session for first-time or beginning level exhibitors as well as separate intermediate and advanced sessions. A veterinarian and feed nutritionist will be speaking with each
animal session on health care and feeding. Several sessions will be half-day so you can sign-up for two! Lunch and snacks will be provided.

Mark the date on your calendar and watch for more information.

2016 NE 4-H Livestock Show

The 2015 Northeast 4-H Livestock Show will be held September 17 & 18 in Brainerd. This is also the 82nd year of this show!

Blue ribbon winners in grades 3 and up at the county fair in beef, sheep, swine, market goat, poultry, rabbit and dairy steers are eligible to participate (animal/lot may not be exhibited at the State Fair). All participants in grades 6 and up must also be current in their LQA&E certification.

To participate, you must complete the registration forms and pay your fees at your county fair. Be sure to check with your county to see if scholarships are available!

Message from Dorothy

Dear 4-H families and volunteers,

Over the last few years, you may have heard or read about how youth need “social-emotional” or “soft” skills to succeed in learning, school, work and life. More and more, the value of these skills - including confidence, self-control, caring, and problem solving - is being examined to understand how they are acquired, and where and how they are being taught.

Youth learn these skills in a variety of environments - at school, in youth programs, and at home.

The Search Institute recently released a study called, “Don't Forget the Families,” which highlights the power of family relationships as a critical, but often neglected, factor in developing these skills. A key finding is that parent-child relationships are ten times more powerful than race, ethnicity, family composition, and family income in predicting whether children are developing these skills.

The Search Institute has created a useful booklet called “Bringing Developmental Relationships Home: Tips and Relationship Builders for Families” with activities and tips that families can use to help youth develop these important skills and strengths: http://z.umn.edu/families.

I encourage families to explore how you can help youth develop social emotional skills that will prepare them to succeed.

Sincerely,

Dorothy M. Freeman
Associate Dean and State 4-H Director

SS&W leader trainings

The Shooting Sports & Wildlife program development committee invites you to attend a 4-H Shooting Sports & Wildlife Leader Certification! The committee recommends that leaders attend the entire certification weekend every five years. Now is your chance to attend!

The training is designed for adults and youth (9th grade and older) that lead or would like to lead training in shooting sports or wildlife. Classes will be offered in the disciplines of coordinator, archery, rifle/pistol, shotgun, muzzle-loading, and wildlife. This training meets the 4-H project leaders’ requirements for certification and recertification. Although there is range time allocated in the schedule, the majority of the training is classroom work to become an effective instructor.

April 23-24
St. Mary's Church/Kanabec County Gun Club, Mora
OR
Worthington Regional Office, Worthington

Registration materials will be available online at www.4-h.umn.edu//events/shooting-sports-certification/. Deadline to register is April 8.
Disciplines fill quickly, so make sure registration forms are sent in early!

Scholarships for college

Are you entering college this fall? Did you know that each year the Minnesota 4-H Foundation awards over $20,000 in scholarships to college-bound 4-H’ers? Applications are due April 15. Visit the Minnesota 4-H Foundation website at http://z.umn.edu/sga to learn more. Direct questions to Erin Kelly-Collins at erinkc@umn.edu/612-624-7667.

Red Wagon Awards

The Red Wagon Awards honor young people in grades 6-12 in Minnesota who have shown resilience and overcome obstacles to achieve academic gains, give back to their community and grow to become leaders among their peers.

In 2016, the Minnesota Alliance with Youth will be honoring three Minnesota youth and one youth-led community service club, each nominated by caring adults, peers or partners in their local community. Each individual winner will receive a $500 education scholarship, and the winning youth service group will receive $500 to support the work of their group. Any young person or youth-led service group in grades 6-12 in Minnesota is eligible for nomination.

The nomination form is available online through April 1.

The award winners will be honored at the 2016 Alliance fundraiser and Red Wagon Awards celebration on June 23 at Macalester College. For nomination criteria and additional information, visit mnyouth.net/work/red-wagon-awards/.

Youth Day at the Capitol

Enrolled Minnesota 4-H members are invited to attend a Youth Day at the Capitol (YDAC) event with the Minnesota Alliance with Youth from 9:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 29! The YDAC will provide both training and engagement opportunities for youth in grades 6-12 to participate in the legislative process. Screened volunteer chaperones will also be needed. The deadline to apply is March 11. Additional details are available at 4-h.umn.edu/events/youth-day-at-the-capitol.

Presidential Inauguration

Minnesota 4-H will be selecting a group of 50 youth from across the state to attend the 2017 presidential inauguration in January. The application material will be posted in early March and will be due in mid-April, with selection occurring in May. This will be a competitive application process, and open to Minnesota 4-H members in grades 9 through one year past high school, as of January 2017. More information will be posted Mar 1 at http://z.umn.edu/cwfinauguration.
### Calendar

#### MARCH

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Regional project bowl, Foley</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Youth Day at the Capitol deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>17-19</td>
<td>M4-HAVA Annual Conference, Fergus Falls</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Regional project bowl, Bemidji</td>
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<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Farm 2 Institution workshop</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Youth day at the Capitol</td>
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#### APRIL

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>Camp counselor applications due</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Livestock Quality Assurance &amp; Ethics training, Little Falls</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Red Wagon award nomination deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Regional project bowl – snow date</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Livestock PDC training webinar</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Livestock Quality Assurance &amp; Ethics training, Long Prairie</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>SS&amp;W leader certification registration deadline</td>
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<tr>
<td>9-14</td>
<td>National 4-H Conference, Washington, D.C.</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Council meeting, Palisade, 7:00 p.m.</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>MN 4-H Foundation scholarship applications due</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>State project bowl, Sauk Rapids</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>County livestock PDC training webinar</td>
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<td>23-24</td>
<td>SS&amp;W leader certification, Mora</td>
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#### MAY

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>T-shirt designs due to 4-H office</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Platbook photos due to 4-H office</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Animal Science Extravaganza, Brainerd</td>
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<td>13-14</td>
<td>Camp counselor training, Brainerd</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Rube Goldberg registrations due</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>Animal ID deadline</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Livestock Quality Assurance &amp; Ethics training, Brainerd</td>
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#### JUNE

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>Summer camp (grades 3-6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Livestock Quality Assurance &amp; Ethics training, Aitkin</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Red Wagon awards given, Macalester College</td>
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#### JULY

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<td>2-9</td>
<td>Citizenship Washington Focus</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>General (static) project judging day</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-9</td>
<td>Aitkin County Fair</td>
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