In This Issue:

Online Enrollment for 4-H Families ................................................................. 2
2016 4-H Events Dates ..................................................................................... 2
Winter Shooting Sports Project Indoor Practices ........................................... 3
Market Beef & Dairy Steer ID Deadline ........................................................... 3
Winter 4-H County Fundraiser ........................................................................... 3
Winter Weather Policy ...................................................................................... 4
Bowl Teams ....................................................................................................... 4
Exploring Agriculture Career Day – February 15th ....................................... 4
Share the Fun ..................................................................................................... 4
Performing Arts Day ......................................................................................... 5
Save the Date: Youth Day At The Capitol March 29 ...................................... 2
Attention Minnesota 4-H Dairy Families!....................................................... 5
Citizenship Washington Focus (CWF) ............................................................. 5
Youth Application for State 4-H Beef Committee ........................................... 6
County Dog Training .......................................................................................... 6
Message from Dorothy ...................................................................................... 6
2016 SS&W Spring Leader Certification Trainings: Two Sites! .................... 7
Are You Looking for Work Experience in the Youth Development Field? 7
M4-HAVA 2016 Annual Conference ................................................................. 7
Judging 4-H Exhibits at Minnesota County Fairs ........................................... 8
2016 4-H Rube Goldberg Challenge: Crush and Recycle a Can! ............... 8
What do Minnesota 4-H First Year Member Parents Have to Say? ........... 8
Calendar .............................................................................................................. 9

CONTACT US

Meeker County Extension Office
114 N Holcombe Ave, #260
Litchfield, MN 55355

Phone: 320-693-5275
Phone: 1-877-993-5275
Fax: 320-693-5289

www.4-H.umn.edu
www.extension.umn.edu/county/Meeker
Online Enrollment for 4-H Families

Remember all members and volunteers need to re-enroll each year!

Enrollment for the new 4-H year is now open and Minnesota 4-H families are reminded and encouraged to go to 4HOnline to enroll/re-enroll both youth members and adult volunteers. The process is quick and easy; even families with multiple youth should be done in 10 minutes or less. Re-enrolling early ensures that critical communications will be received, especially as it relates to deadlines and project specific information. Detailed information about online enrollment and re-enrollment is available at www.4-h.umn.edu/4honline.

Youth, their parents and adult volunteers, as part of enrolling or re-enrolling, will all be agreeing to the Minnesota 4-H code of conduct, which is available for review, along with other policy and authorization statements at www.extension.umn.edu/youth/mn4-h/policies/ or by contacting your local Extension office: www.extension.umn.edu/county.

If you are not yet an adult volunteer, but are willing to share your time and talents to make a difference, 4-H needs you! The first step to becoming an adult 4-H volunteer is to complete the volunteer application process. Learn more at www.4-H.umn.edu/volunteer/#application.

All returning 4-H members and volunteers will re-enroll online by May 16th. User guides and information are available online. This is statewide.

New Members: Youth new to 4-H can join at any time throughout the year!

Re-Enrollment Deadline for Receiving County Scholarships: January 1st – NEW IN 2016!!!

Re-Enrollment Deadline: May 16th.

Animal Science ID Deadline: The Animal Science ID deadlines are February 16th (for market beef) and May 16th (for all others) to the Extension Office.

These ARE strict MN 4-H deadlines, and the consequence below applies. If a member is already enrolled and wants to add or drop projects, then he/she should go online and make their changes by May 16th.

If enrollments are not received by the May 16th deadline, the participant can still exhibit at county fair, participate in the auction and receive premium, but will receive no ribbon placing higher than a blue (including champions and reserve champions) and will not be eligible for State trips

2016 4-H Events Dates

March 12th – Share the Fun & Performing Arts Day Practice

March 13th – Share the Fun & Performing Arts Day

April 2nd – Food Review & Demonstration Day

April 16th – State Project Bowl

July 14th – Fashion Review

July 19th – Dog Obedience & Rally Show

July 25th – Fair Clean up Night

July 26th – Dog Agility & Showmanship Show

July 30th – County Horse Show

Aug 3rd – County Fair Entry Day

Aug 4th – 7th – County Fair

Aug 24th - 28th - State Fair Livestock Encampment
Winter Shooting Sports
Project Indoor Practices

Dates: Saturdays, February 6th, February 27th, March 5th, March 19th, April 2nd, April 16th

Time: 1 – 3 p.m.

Location: Steffes Group Inc. building (24400 MN Hwy 22 S., Litchfield, MN 55355)

Disciplines Offered: Air rifle/pistol, archery

Market Beef & Dairy Steer ID Deadline

All market beef and dairy steers need to be identified by February 16th. Forms must be postmarked or submitted to the County Extension Office by the 16th.

The process that will be followed in 2016 is as follows:

1. 4-H Family picks up MN 4-H ear tags and tag applicator (if needed) from the County Extension Office. Please note that the cost per RFID tag to families this year will be $2.25 per tag. This is to be paid when you pick up tags. Farm tags cannot be used for market beef and dairy steers.

2. 4-H Family puts tag in animal’s ear by February 16th and completes the information worksheet (available at http://www.extension.umn.edu/youth/mn4-H/projects/animal-science/animal-ID/).

3. 4-H Family self-enters information into 4HOnline and prints entry report for personal record. NOTE: Data entry must be completed by 11:59 p.m., February 16th, 2016. You will not be able complete identification after that point.

For more details, please see the beef ID letter that was mailed to all beef project members in January.

Winter 4-H County Fundraiser

At the October 19th 4-H Council Meeting, it was decided to sell fruit through MinnTex Citrus, as well as locally made candy from Sweet Depot and coffee from Minnesota Coffee Roasters. It is very important to realize that this fundraiser is what propels the year-long fundraising efforts of the Meeker County 4-H Federation. These proceeds fund many activities! Just a few include: your 50% scholarship to the Minnesota State Fair (yes, the initial price is double), summer camp payouts for both campers and counselors, county wide programs like the awards celebration and family fun night, insurance for all members and screened volunteers, club funding, and more! This equates to ALL Meeker County 4-H’er’s reaping the benefits of our program and because of that, we need 100% participation. In exchange, there will be $200 set aside for individual incentives awarded to the top 5 sellers (1st - $75, 2nd - $50, 3rd - 5th - $25). As an incentive for selling, clubs will receive 10% of their total sales back for club use. This is a great way to raise some funds for your club, as well as support our county program. Again this year the top four clubs with the highest average sales and donations per club member will have first preference for a 4-H foodstand shift. Shift time choices will be done in order from the top average sales club – the fourth highest average sales club. For families that choose to forego the selected fundraisers, it is recommended that you make a $25 donation to cover the cost of lost fundraising efforts. Fundraising packets are now available and will be given to club leaders. Have fun selling!
Winter Weather Policy

Just in case the weather becomes questionable and you are concerned about whether or not an event will take place, please watch for an email and listen to KLFD Radio, AM 1410, for cancellation notices and other pertinent information. Thanks.

Bowl Teams

Project Bowl is a 'quiz bowl” competition where all asked questions deal with a specific topic of interest. Currently, there are seven different bowls that include: Dairy/ Dairy Goat, Dog, General Livestock, Horse, Poultry, Rabbit, and wildlife. Meeker County has organized teams in horse, rabbit, dairy/dairy goat, poultry, and general livestock bowl for this year. For each bowl there are two divisions- junior and senior. Junior teams are composed of 4-H'ers in grades 3 thru 8 and senior teams are composed of members in grades 4 thru college freshmen. Teams of four to six members compete with each other in giving oral answers to questions read by a moderator.

Regional Bowl dates and locations are:

- March 5th: Foley
- March 12th: Hastings
- March 19th: Bemidji
- March 19th: Redwood Falls
- April 2nd: Snow Date
- April 16th: State Bowl (Sauk Rapids)

Rabbit Bowl practices are held on Saturdays

Horse Bowl practices are held Tuesday evenings in Meeker County Family Services Center, Room 130.

Poultry Bowl practices are held on Sundays from noon to two at Steffes Auctioneers in Litchfield.

Exploring Agriculture Career Day – February 15th

We are offering an exciting opportunity for 4-H'ers in grades 8 – 12 to discover the vast array of careers available in the field of Agriculture! Come to the first ever regional 4-H Exploring Agriculture Career Day on Monday, February 15th (Presidents Day) at the University of Minnesota – St. Paul Campus. Check-in starts at 8:45 a.m. and the day will end at 2:30 p.m. The event will be held at the North Star Ballroom located in the St. Paul Student Center. Participants will complete a career inventory, hear from panelists who work in various agricultural fields, explore college options, learn about college financial planning, and take tours of the U of M campus. The cost for the day is $7.50/participant which includes lunch. Don’t miss out on this exciting opportunity! Free busing and t-shirts for the event are being provided by a generous donation from the Meeker County Corn Growers Association. Find your inspiration, register today! Registrations deadline: Monday, February 8th. Registration Form:

http://www3.extension.umn.edu/sites/default/files/download/Ag%20Day%20Registration%20Flyer_Meeker.pdf

Share the Fun

Date: Sunday, March 13th

Tentative Start Time: 2:30 p.m. (Following Performing Arts acts)

Location: Family Services Center in Litchfield

Practice: Saturday, March 12th

All clubs are encouraged to participate!
Performing Arts Day

Date: Sunday, March 13th
Start Time: 1 p.m.
Location: Family Services Center in Litchfield
Practice: Saturday, March 12th
Registration deadline: February 24th

Save the Date: Youth Day At The Capitol March 29

Minnesota 4-H will be participating in the 2016 Youth Day at the Capitol on March 29. Join youth from throughout the state in learning about our state legislative process, and share your perspective on local issues with policy makers! Additional information will be posted online in late January at www.4-H.umn.edu/events/youth-day-at-thecapitol/index.html. The annual event is co-sponsored by the Minnesota Alliance With Youth, Ignite Afterschool, Youthprise, Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board, Minnesota School-Age Care Alliance and YWCA of Minneapolis. To learn more about how you can participate, contact Nicole Pokorney, Citizenship & Leadership Team Member, at 507-536-6304 or pokorney@umn.edu.

Attention Minnesota 4-H Dairy Families!

Four reminders Minnesota 4-H dairy project members will want to keep in mind for 2016: 1. All animals must be owned or leased AND identified (data entered into 4HOnline or an ID worksheet submitted to the Extension office) before the animal’s first freshening. If you want to ID a first calf heifer for the first time, please note this must be done BEFORE she calves. 2. All other ID'ing for dairy project animals must be completed by May 15. You will receive details from your county office. 3. All leased animals need a lease agreement resigned/renewed each year. To renew leases, download last year’s lease agreement OR obtain a copy from the Extension office. Obtain the appropriate signatures to renew and, if need be, update the agreement. Finally scan and email the updated lease agreement to the Extension office OR take it to the Extension office. The deadline for this is May 15. Remember, all lease forms need to be completed and uploaded prior to the animals first freshening. 4. If your "family unit" includes someone who has graduated out of 4-H or is not enrolling in dairy this year AND ID'ed in their name last year, you will want to reassign those animals to another family member. The exception is animals shown by this past dairy project member AFTER freshening. Those animals are not eligible to be shown by another 4-Her. Complete details are available on the Dairy Information Sheet, which is posted at www.4-H.umn.edu/animal-id.

Citizenship Washington Focus (CWF)

Thousands of young people from across the United States come to the National 4-H Youth Conference Center every summer to participate in CWF, a citizenship and leadership program held in Washington, DC. Through a series of speakers, committee work, field trips and social events, participants learn the importance of citizenship and social responsibility and are given the opportunity to explore, develop, and refine skills needed to be an outstanding leader on both a local and national level.

Dates

- **July 2nd, 2016**: A.M. Required pre-conference workshop then depart for Washington D.C.
- **July 9th, 2016**: Arrive Back in Minnesota in P.M.

Application

- **January 16th, 2016**: All pre-application materials accessed on website.
- **February 16th, 2016**: CWF full application materials accessed on website. With a postmark date
beginning February 16th, all required application materials and $700 down payment due.

- Check with your county 4-H program coordinator if there are other requirements for participation.

Additional information: www.4-H.umn.edu/events/citizenship-washington-focus/index.html

Contact: Judith A. Conway, conw0076@umn.edu

**Youth Application for State 4-H Beef Committee**

Minnesota 4-H is looking for 4-H beef members 9th grade and up to be part of the state fair beef show committee. We will select three members for one year terms to help plan and organize the state fair 4-H beef project experience. We are looking for members with extensive beef project and leadership experience. 4-H members selected will work with adult volunteers and staff members to enhance the competitive and educational opportunities with the beef project at future state fairs. See the application for more details. To apply, please complete the Minnesota 4-H youth beef committee application at www.4-H.umn.edu/projects/animal-science/beef. Please return the completed form by February 15th, 2016.

**County Dog Training**

Again this year, Melissa Baggenstoss will serve as our Meeker County 4-H Dog Project Leader. Please note that this year’s practices will be held on Mondays from 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Meeker County Fairgrounds. For spring practices, watch for weather updates and practice cancellations, as necessary. Please save the following Mondays for practices:

April: 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th

May: 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd, 30th

June: 6th, 13th, 20th, 27th

July: 11th, 18th

*NOTE: Agility members must attend at least six (6) training classes!!! Attending County 4-H training is preferred, but you may also attend a recognized training school. If you attend a recognized training school, documentation is needed to prove attendance at a minimum of six classes. Simply working with your dog in the backyard does not count.

**Message from Dorothy**

**Dear 4-H families and volunteers,**

This month, hundreds of 4-H'ers from around the state will participate in one of our five 4-H Building Leadership and Understanding (BLU) youth leadership conferences.

The annual regional youth conferences are planned and facilitated by our Minnesota 4-H State Ambassadors. The ambassadors use a youth-teaching-youth approach to teach their peers about leadership and engage participants in hands-on activities, games, small group discussions, and a dance during each event. This year’s topic is called, “Find Your Element.” The focus will help youth explore how they can live out the passions in their lives. The 4-H BLU conferences are one important way that we provide youth with hands-on opportunities to learn and practice leadership skills.

If you aren’t familiar with 4-H BLU, or the statewide 4-H Youth Exploring Leadership and Learning Outloud! (YELLO!) youth conference in June, I encourage you to explore these wonderful leadership opportunities for youth (and adult volunteers!)

Go to our web site at www.4-H.umn.edu/events/blu/index.html and www.4-H.umn.edu/events/yello/index.html.

Sincerely,

Dorothy M. Freeman
Associate Dean and State 4-H Director
2016 SS&W Spring Leader Certification Trainings: Two Sites!

The Minnesota 4-H 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, muzzleloading, 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, not to practice your own shooting skills.

April 23-24, 2016
St. Mary’s Church and Kanabec County Gun Club, Mora

April 23-24, 2016
Worthington Regional Office, Worthington

Registration materials will be available online Feb. 1 at www.4-h.umn.edu/events/shooting-sports-certification/. Deadline to register is April 8, 2016. Disciplines fill quickly, so make sure registration forms are sent in early!

Are You Looking for Work Experience in the Youth Development Field?

This year, we are offering 54 county-based 4-H summer intern positions throughout the state of Minnesota. Internships will provide an excellent opportunity to learn more about University of Minnesota Extension and explore job opportunities in 4-H Youth Development. Most positions will be for ten or eleven weeks, with flexible starting dates.

Candidates must have a high school diploma, and at least two years of undergraduate study is preferred. Candidates must apply on-line through the University of Minnesota job site. The application materials will include a standard application, résumé, cover letter, list of three references and a college transcript. The summer intern position is available here. The application deadline is Feb. 15.

For more information, please contact Michele VanDyke at mvandyke@umn.edu.

M4-HAVA 2016 Annual Conference

Please consider attending the 31st annual Minnesota 4-H Adult Volunteer Association Conference being held March 17-19 at the Bigwood Event Center/Best Western Inn in Fergus Falls, Minnesota. This year’s theme is Keen, Green, and Lean in 2016.

The M4-HAVA Conference is a great place for volunteers to learn about what is happening throughout the state and new trends going on in 4-H. You will meet other volunteers who are really excited about 4-H, leave with an arsenal of new activities and ideas from the 32 workshops offered to take back and share with your clubs and counties, and recognize outstanding volunteers and clubs during the annual banquet.

For more information on registration for the 2016 M4-HAVA Conference, Blue Ribbon Awards, and Membership visit www.4-H.umn.edu/volunteer/m4-hava/.
Judging 4-H Exhibits at Minnesota County Fairs

Minnesota 4-H depends on the skills, talents and dedication of hundreds of adults who judge 4-H projects at county fairs across Minnesota. In support of 4-H judges, Minnesota 4-H offers online training, toolkit resources and more. To learn more, or if interested in becoming a 4-H judge, visit www.4-H.umn.edu/county-fair/judges/.

2016 4-H Rube Goldberg Challenge: Crush and Recycle a Can!

The 2016 4-H Rube Goldberg Challenge is to create a machine that will crush an empty aluminum soft drink can and put it into a recycling container!

The third annual challenge asks teams of youth to design overly complex contraptions that accomplish this year’s designated task using everyday items that interact in a series of chain-reactions. Teams compete in contests at their county fair, and then will be eligible to compete at the Minnesota State Fair.

Teams are encouraged to register by May 15, 2016 and get started on their machines!

To learn more about the 4-H Rube Goldberg Challenge and how to register, go to:

www.4-h.umn.edu/events/engineering-design-challenge/index.html.

NOTE: No paper registration this year. Team leaders, members and youth coaches will sign up through 4HOnline accounts. Adult volunteer leaders must register before their team members can register.

What do Minnesota 4-H First Year Member Parents Have to Say?

In October 2015, the first-year member parent survey was administered to parents of new members in the 2014-2015 program year. We do this survey annually to learn more about the experiences of our families new to the 4-H program. This survey asks parents to give feedback on items such as how welcoming their experience was, if their child had opportunities for learning, and if policies were challenging.

What did we learn this year?:

- Overall parents and youth feel welcomed into the program.
- A quarter of parents felt that enrollment and membership policies were challenging.
- 94% of parents said the topics their child worked on were of interest to them.
- 80% of parents agreed that their child became really good at something they worked on.
- We have a large number of youth who are experiencing 4-H for the first time in their family. Over 45% of our survey respondents had never had exposure to the 4-H program in their family history.

Currently teams of educators are looking at this information and thinking about how we can improve the 4-H program to help all our members.

Thank you first year member parents for responding to this survey!
### Calendar

**FEBRUARY**
- 2 Horse Bowl Practice
- 6 Shooting Sports Practice
- 6 Rabbit Bowl Practice
- 6-7 BLU
- 7 Poultry Bowl Practice
- 9 Horse Bowl Practice
- 13 Rabbit Bowl Practice
- 14 Poultry Bowl Practice
- 15 Office Closed (Holiday)
- 15 Winter Fundraiser packets to Club Leaders
- 15 Application deadline for 4-H summer intern positions
- 15 Youth application deadline for state 4-H beef committee
- 15 Central Region 4-H Ag Career Day, U of M – St. Paul
- 16 Market Beef ID Deadline
- 16 Horse Bowl Practice
- 20 Rabbit Bowl Practice
- 20 Quilting Class
- 21 Poultry Bowl Practice
- 22 Ambassador Meeting
- 23 Horse Bowl Practice
- 27 Rabbit Bowl Practice
- 27 Shooting Sports Practice
- 28 Poultry Bowl Practice

**MARCH**
- 1 Horse Bowl Practice
- 5 Regional Project Bowl, Foley
- 5 Shooting Sports Practice
- 6 Poultry Bowl Practice
- 8 Horse Bowl Practice
- 12 Share the Fun & Performing Arts Practices
- 12 Regional Project Bowl, Hastings
- 13 Share the Fun & Performing Arts Day
- 13 Poultry Bowl Practice
- 15 Horse Bowl Practice
- 17-19 M4-HAVA 2016 Annual conference, Fergus Falls
- 19 Regional Project Bowl, Bemidji
- 19 Regional Project Bowl, Redwood Falls
- 19 Fundraiser Delivery
- 19 Shooting Sports Practice
- 20 Poultry Bowl Practice
- 21 Exhibit Building Committee Meeting, 6 p.m.
- 21 Ambassador Meeting, 6 p.m.
- 21 Foodstand Meeting, 6 pm
- 21 Federation Meeting, 7 p.m.
- 21 Livestock Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
- 22 Horse Bowl Practice
- 29 Horse Bowl Practice
- 29 Youth Day at the Capitol
APRIL
• 2 Food Review & Demonstration Day
• 2 Camp Counselor Training, Morris
• 2 Regional Project Bowl, Snow date
• 2 Shooting Sports Practice
• 4 Dog Training
• 9-14 National 4-H Conference, Washington, D.C.
• 11 Dog Training
• 11 ACGC babysitting clinic
• 16 State Project Bowl, Sauk Rapids
• 16 Shooting Sports Practice
• 18 Dog Training
• 18 Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
• 23-24 Shooting Sports Leader Certification Training, Mora
• 25 Dog Training

MAY
• 2 Dog Training
• 9 Dog Training
• 15 Re-enrollment Deadline
• 15 Livestock ID Deadline
• 15 2016 4-H Rube Goldberg Challenge registration due
• 16 Foodstand Committee, 6 p.m.
• 16 Ambassador Meeting, 6 p.m.
• 16 Federation Meeting, 7 p.m.
• 16 Livestock Committee, 7:30 p.m.
• 16 County Fair Premium Book Available
• 16 Dog Training
• 23 Dog Training
• 30 Dog Training

JUNE
• 30 Office Closed (Holiday)

JUNE
• 6 Dog Training
• 13 Dog Training
• 20 Council Meeting, 7 p.m.
• 20 Dog Training
• 21-23 Residential Camp, Morris
• 27 Dog Training

JULY
• 1 County Fair Registration Deadline
• 2-9 Citizenship Washington Focus
• 4 Office Closed (Holiday)
• 11 Dog Training
• 14 Fashion Revue
• 18 Dog Training
• 19 Dog Obedience and Rally Show. 5:00 p.m.
• 25 County Fair Clean Up Night
• 25 Federation Meeting, 7 p.m.
• 25 Livestock Superintendent Meeting, 7:30 p.m.
• 26 County Dog Agility and Showmanship show, 5:00 p.m.
• 30 County & State Qualifying Horse Show

AUGUST
• 3 County Fair Entry Day
• 4-7 Meeker County Fair
• 24-28 State Fair Livestock Encampment
• TBD State Fair General Encampment

SEPTEMBER
• 5 Office Closed (Holiday)