



JANUARY 9th, 2026

4-H Family News

Ingham County



Michigan 4-H Day with the Detroit Tigers



Contact Us:

Glenda Weiss

4-H Program Coordinator
weissgle@msu.edu

Michigan State University Extension
Ingham County Hilliard Bldg
121 E. Maple Street, PO Box 319
Mason, MI 48854
Ph: 517.676.7207

Rachel Ochylski

4-H Urban Program Coordinator
ochylski@msu.edu

Michigan State University Extension
Ingham County Human Services Bldg
5303 S. Cedar Street
Lansing, MI 48911
Ph: 517.676.7300

Ingham County 4-H

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/ingham/4-h/>

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/Ingham4HyYou>

Join Us Online

WILD SPARTANS

SCIENCE * RESEARCH * CAREERS * CONSERVATION

"NATURE'S DETECTIVES: HOW INSECTS HELP SOLVE CRIMES AGAINST PEOPLE, ANIMALS, AND THE ENVIRONMENT THROUGH FORENSIC ENTOMOLOGY"

WITH DR. SAMANTHA SAWYER,
FORENSIC ENTOMOLOGIST AT THE UNIVERSITY OF NEW HAVEN

January 13 | 6:30 PM EST

Registration required:

<https://events.anr.msu.edu/WildSpartansSeriesFall2025Spring2026/>

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2026 State 4-H Rabbit and Cavy Show and Expo

- Breed, Market, Fur Class Entry Fee: \$4.00
- Rabbit Hopping Fee: \$2.00
- Other Contests Entry Fee: \$2.00
(Photography, Educational Display, Breed Identification, Skillathon)

Showmanship registration deadline
January 14, 2026

Jan 24, 2026

Enter animals day
of Show
7:00 am-10:00am

MSU Pavilion

for Agriculture and
Livestock Education

Perpetual trophy for all
Best In Shows!



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\$4
Entry Fee



State Rabbit
and Cavy Show
Web Page:

shorturl.at/bKwsV



SCAN HERE

We are happy to announce that this spring States' 4-H are offering another round of the **Spring Pen Pal Program!** They are currently working to recruit international youth, but please mark your calendar for the below dates.



•Program Dates

1.March 1: US registration opens

2.April 1 - June 1: Pen pal program runs with weekly emails

•Age: Participants must be between the ages of 9 – 18 as of April 1, 2026.

•Frequency: participants will be expected to send one email/letter weekly for the duration (approximately 10 emails/letters). There will be weekly discussion topics to help get the conversation going, but these are only suggestions.

•Regular Email Schedule Between Participants: For example, international students send emails to their U.S. partners every Monday, and U.S. students reply every Friday.

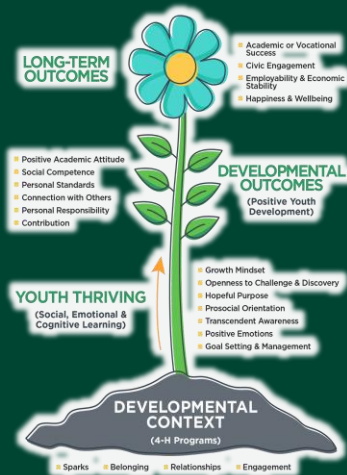
•Cost: \$10 USD that can be paid online only.

•Registration deadline: Friday, March 20, 2026, or when all spots are filled. Please keep an eye on your emails for notification of when registration opens! Feel free to reach out to me Jan Brinn brinn@msu.edu if you have any questions about this years Michigan 4-H International Exchange Programs.



STATEWIDE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

4-H Thriving Model of Positive Youth Development



Relationships are the foundation of a successful 4-H program! These relationships include building friendships with other members and leaders, building great working relationships and trust between program leaders and members, and adult leaders working together to organize great opportunities for youth.

We hope you can find others in the 4-H program in which you can build positive friendships and/or mentorships. Join us for any events and meetings to get to know everyone in the program.

Youth thriving is the first step in building youth who are #BeyondReady! Contact your local 4-H staff for more information.

January 13: Wild Spartans

Online

This month's session is "Nature's Detectives: How Insects Help Solve Crimes Against People, Animals and the Environment through Forensic Entomology." Tiny creatures can tell BIG stories about the world around us: explore creepy-crawly clues and learn how science and nature work together to solve puzzles. Ask questions through a live Q&A. This free virtual series is for youth ages 12-19.

www.canr.msu.edu/events/4-h-wild-spartans-january

January 13: Avoiding Money Mishaps

Online

In today's digital world, young people are increasingly targeted by fraudsters, scammers and predatory lenders. This interactive webinar will empower youth with the knowledge and tools to protect themselves and their personal information.

www.canr.msu.edu/events/avoiding-money-mishaps-jan13

January 21: Adulting 101 – Fraud Fighters: How to Stay Scam-Free

Online

From fake jobs offers to phishing texts, scammers are everywhere. This workshop breaks down the latest tricks and shows you how to guard your info, your credit, and your peace of mind.

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/events/adulting-101-2026>

January 24: 2026 State 4-H Rabbit and Cavy Show and Expo

Farm Bureau Pavilion, Lansing

4-H'ers exhibit rabbit and cavy projects and participate in educational knowledge contests: showmanship, skillathon, breed identification and rabbit hopping. **Register by January 14.**

www.canr.msu.edu/events/2026-state-4-h-rabbit-and-cavy-show-and-expo

January 26: Michigan 4-H Volunteer Webinar Series: Beyond Ready Basics

Every great 4-H experience has a few powerful ingredients—and volunteers play the biggest role in making them happen. Explore the four vital elements that help youth thrive: discovering sparks, feeling a sense of belonging, building developmental relationships, and staying meaningfully engaged.

www.canr.msu.edu/events/michigan-4-h-volunteer-webinar-beyond-ready-basics-bringing-the-vital-elements-to-life-in-your-4-h-club

February 7: 4-H Winterfest

Eagle Village Retreat Center, Hersey

4-H Winterfest is a hand-on learning camp for youth ages 8-12. Youth pick workshops and participate in team building activities. Come and have fun this winter! **Register by January 23.**

www.canr.msu.edu/events/2026-winterfest





STATEWIDE 4-H NEWS



Register for Michigan 4-H Capitol Experience!

At Michigan 4-H Capitol Experience, teens learn how to change the world for the better through engagement in Michigan's state government and public policy process. The program is scheduled for March 15-17, in Lansing.

The three-day event, open to high-school-aged youth, includes tours of the Michigan Capitol, interactions with state legislators, meetings with state agency staff, lobbyists and state-level experts and learning how policy is made. During the program, youth work in small teams to draft legislation on: agriculture; civil rights and youth advocacy; crime and law enforcement; education and teacher retention; environment and natural resources; health; and jobs, the economy and infrastructure.

The cost to attend is \$365, which includes lodging at the Okemos Conference Center. Please contact your local 4-H program coordinator to inquire about local funding opportunities. To learn more and/or find the link to register, visit www.canr.msu.edu/4_h_capitol_experience/.

Earn prizes with the Michigan 4-H Cash Composition Contest

Did you know youth are being targeted by scams too? That's this year's theme for the 2026 Michigan 4-H Cash Composition Contest! Michigan youth aged 9–19 are invited to participate through writing an essay on this year's question.

Top entries receive a \$100 gift card, thanks to contest sponsor, Extra Credit Union. MSU Extension will host two webinars to help with fraud awareness and essay writing. Essays are due by March 1. For contest details and essay submission information, visit: www.canr.msu.edu/4-h-money-smarts/money-smart-kids-contest.



Apply for the Michigan 4-H State Awards!

Michigan 4-H true leaders ages 10 and older have an opportunity to be recognized for the great work they do in 4-H and develop their career skills by completing a state award application. A Michigan 4-H State Award is the highest honor bestowed on a Michigan 4-H member and provides an opportunity to receive recognition for their engagement in rich learning experiences that result in outstanding knowledge and life-skill development.

State award applications are divided into four categories: Mark of Excellence contest (10-11 years), junior state award (12-15 years), senior state award (16-19 years) and group awards (13-19 years). An Achievement Award was added last year for 18–19-year-olds. Each application and selection process varies, dependent on the applicant's age.

More information about the Michigan 4-H State Award process and Mark of Excellence Contest can be found online at bit.ly/stateaward. Applications are due April 1. For more information, contact your 4-H program coordinator or email Betty Jo Krosnicki at nashbett@msu.edu or Janice Zerbe at rajzerj@msu.edu.



2026 MI 4-H Dairy Conference

Registration for the 2026 MI 4-H Dairy Conference is now OPEN!

Join the MI 4-H Dairy Youth Program from February 27th-March 1st, 2026, at Michigan State University for a fun-filled educational opportunity for any 4-H youth ages 12-19 and gold-level 4-H volunteers! This conference will feature industry professional guest speakers that cover topics that include dairy judging, nutrition, calving, carcass evaluations, and more! Participants will also go on tours of the MSU Meat Lab and the new MSU Dairy Cattle Teaching & Research Center! The conference utilizes hands-on learning experiences that include dissections and a nutrition lab.

Saturday evening will include a trip to Zap Zone XL for all participants!

Registration closes on February 5th, 2026.

Registration Link:

<https://events.anr.msu.edu/2026michigan4hdairyconference/>

Questions? Please reach out to Kendra at vanorde4@msu.edu.



National 4-H Conference

National 4-H Conference



April 10-15 Arlington, VA

For youth ages 15-19 who are currently enrolled in 4-H

Registration: <https://MI-National4HConference.4honline.com>

Changemakers ages 15-19, want to strengthen your leadership skills, learn how to advocate for 4-H and other causes you care about, and experience our nation's capital all at once? National 4-H Conference is now open for registrations! Join us April 10-15, 2026 to learn more about the federal government and its agencies, and how to use your voice to impact change at every level!

More information is available on our website at:

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/national-4-h-conference/>.

The registration link is: <https://MI-National4HConference.4honline.com>.

Avoiding Money Mishaps Webinar

Avoid Money Mishaps!

Learn how to protect yourself from fraud, scams, and identity theft in our FREE webinars—plus, get ready for an upcoming essay contest on the same topic!

Pick your date:

Jan 13 @ 6 PM EST or Feb 11 @ 6 PM EST

Same content, two chances—don't miss out!

Register now: <https://bit.ly/avoidingmoneymishaps>



IMPORTANT INFORMATION



**PRE-REGISTRATION IS OFFERED AND
APPRECIATED FOR CLINIC PARTICIPATION,
EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS, AND CLINIC
AUDITING.**

**CLINIC PARTICIPATION IS LIMITED TO THE
FIRST 12 RIDERS/HANDLERS.**

SATURDAY CLINICS: \$50.00 FOR ONE OR \$90.00 FOR BOTH
CLINICS

SUNDAY CLINICS: \$50.00 FOR ONE OR \$125.00 FOR ALL THREE
SUNDAY SESSIONS

**PRE-REGISTRATION IS \$15.00/DAY OR PAY @20.00
AT THE DOOR FOR EACH DAY**

**4-H CLUBS QUALIFY FOR A GROUP DISCOUNT IF
THEY PRE-REGISTER UNDER THEIR 4-H CLUB**

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WEEKEND SCHEDULE

FRIDAY, JANUARY 30

6:30PM-8:30PM: HORSE JUDGING CLINIC

SATURDAY, JANUARY 31

MQHA TACK SALE: 9AM-4PM

NO ADMISSION FEE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC!

**8:30AM-12PM: PRACTICE HORSE JUDGING
CONTEST**

**1-3:30PM: EDUCATIONAL SESSIONS IN
CLASSROOMS A, B, AND C**

**1-3PM: LEVEL 1 SHOWMANSHIP CLINIC WITH
RYAN COTTINGIM**

**4-6PM: LEVEL 1 HORSEMANSHIP CLINIC WITH
RYAN COTTINGIM**

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1

**9AM-12:00PM: PRACTICE HIPPOLOGY CONTEST IN
CLASSROOM A/B/C**

**8-10:00AM: "REFINING YOUR SHOWMANSHIP SKILLS"
SHOWMANSHIP LEVEL 2 CLINIC WITH RYAN
COTTINGIM**

**11AM-1PM: LEVEL 2 HORSEMANSHIP CLINIC WITH
RYAN COTTINGIM**

2-4PM: TRAIL CLINIC WITH RYAN COTTINGIM



2026 EQUINE CONNECTION WEEKEND

FRIDAY, JANUARY 30, 2026 THROUGH
SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2026
AT THE FARM BUREAU PAVILION AT
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

- HORSE JUDGING
- HIPPOLOGY
- SHOWMANSHIP
- HORSEMANSHIP
- TRAIL

JOIN US FOR A WEEKEND OF FUN AND
LEARNING!

CLINIC SESSIONS WITH AQHA
PROFESSIONAL RYAN COTTINGIM AND
OTHERS!

****HORSES ONLY NEEDED FOR COTTINGIM
CLINICS, LIMITED TO 12 PARTICIPANTS****



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[HTTPS://PCI.JOTFORM.COM/FORM/253146086083053](https://pci.jotform.com/form/253146086083053)



4-H WINTERFEST FEBUARY 7-8 2026



LOCATION: EAGLE VILLAGE - HERSEY, MI

COST: \$120 FOR 4-H MEMBERS

REGISTER TODAY: [HTTPS://4HWINTERFEST2026.4HONLINE.COM](https://4hwinterfest2026.4honline.com)

WHO SHOULD ATTEND:

Youth who attend 4-H Winterfest will spend two days learning about team building and different project areas while meeting youth from around the state. 4-H Winterfest offers participants and chaperones an opportunity to experience Eagle Village in an overnight camp setting. Youth participate in hands-on sessions.

Workshop 1 - Saturday

Amaze Your Friends With Magic

Launch into Science

Broom Ball

Art Explorers: Fun and Easy Crafts

Crafts Around the World: North America

Ice Dyeing

Workshops- Sunday

Workshop #2

Workshop #3

Cat Curiosity

Cat Curiosity

Lego Science

Lego Science

Paper to Pulp

Paper to Pulp

Stop Motion Animation

Stop Motion Animation

It's a Wrap! Jewelry wire wrapping

It's a Wrap! Jewelry wire wrapping

WORKSHOP 1 DESCRIPTION:

Amaze Your Friends With Magic- Come and learn several easy magic tricks that will amaze your friends and family.

Launch into Science-Get ready to build, launch & learn! Participants will dive into hands-on STEM challenges – including designing & testing their very own marshmallow catapult. From creative problem solving to engineering fun, this session will spark curiosity & teamwork while showing how science & innovation come to life!

Broom Ball- Learn the skill and techniques to broom ball. Have fun outdoors on the ice challenge your coordination and teamwork to score the most goals!

Crafts Around the World: North America -Enjoy and be introduced to a simple cultural traditional craft from North America. We will learn how to make the simple craft of “Guatemalan Worry Dolls” and having fun creating as we learn about the culture and the country.

Art Explorers: Fun and Easy Crafts- A hands-on session using basic tools to create and personalize leather goods like bracelets, book markers, and coasters and craft a dazzling suncatcher using pony beads and crystals for an instant touch of sparkle wherever it hangs.

Ice Dyeing- Discover the science behind stunning, and surprising, designs when colors split. You'll explore how melting ice and dye interact, creating vibrant patterns while learning about chemistry and color theory in action. This session blends art and science for a colorful experiment you can wear or share!

WORKSHOP 2& 3 DESCRIPTION:

Cat Curiosity- Ever wanted to learn about cat showmanship? Fun facts about our fancy furry friends? Want to pet one up close and personal? Well, here's your chance! Join us for 4-H related activities and information regarding cat showmanship at the county fair level. We will have hands-on demonstrations and even have a live cat to examine. Please be allergy aware!!

Lego Science- Use Legos to answer science questions such as: Can you building a hurricane-proof building? How do wrecking balls work? and How many Lego can you balance off one brick?

Paper to Pulp- Get creative from start to finish! In this session you will make your own paper, design a custom journal & learn simple journaling techniques. Have fun, reflect, create & express yourself one page at a time!

Stop Motion Animation-Bring your ideas to life by transforming everyday objects into exciting stories. You'll design, snap, and edit your own stop motion mini movies using creativity and digital tools. This session combines science, technology, and creativity to show how innovation moves—literally—frame by frame!

It's a Wrap! Jewelry wire wrapping-Enjoy and be introduced to the art of jewelry wire wrapping. You will learn the basics and wrap special stones of Michigan, creating necklaces, keychains, or whatever your creative minds discover and make.



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CONTACT US:

For more information and to register, go to:

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/volunteering/mi-4-h-volunteer-webinar-series>



For questions, please contact:

Christine Heverly

sisungch@msu.edu

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2026 Michigan 4-H Volunteer Winter/Spring Webinars

This webinar series will provide Michigan 4-H volunteers with a variety of learning opportunities to help them grow as a Michigan State University and Michigan 4-H volunteer.

All webinars take place at 12pm (noon) EST. Registration is required for each individual webinar- registration is free! Recordings will be posted on the website for later viewing.

Sessions include:

January 26, 2026: Beyond Ready Basics: Bringing the Vital Elements to Life in Your 4-H Club: Every great 4-H experience has a few powerful ingredients—and volunteers play the biggest role in making them happen. In this session, we'll explore the four Vital Elements that help youth thrive, discovering sparks, feeling a sense of belonging, building developmental relationships, and staying meaningfully engaged.

February 11, 2026: Building Belonging: Teambuilding Strategies for Stronger 4-H Experiences: Teambuilding isn't just an activity—it's a pathway to deeper belonging and higher engagement in 4-H. This webinar will show volunteers how simple team-building practices can help youth feel included, communicate effectively, work together, and grow their leadership skills.

March 25, 2026: From Sparks to Skills: Using AI Responsibly in 4-H: This webinar will help volunteers understand what AI is, how it impacts youth development, and how to use it responsibly within the 4-H program. We'll explore practical guidance from MSU Extension resources, discuss ethical considerations, and share tips for supporting youth as they navigate this evolving technology.

April 22, 2026: Let's Talk It Out: Handling Conflict with Ease: Conflict happens—even to the best volunteer groups. This laid-back session is all about learning how to handle tough conversations without the stress.

May 4, 2026: Supporting Youth Entrepreneurs: Your Role in 4-H Animal Projects: Learn how to support youth in making smart decisions that lead to financial and personal growth using activities from MSU Extension's curriculum *Youth Business Guide to Success*.



2026 Calendar of Statewide Animal Science Events

4-H Animal Science Staff

Autumn Converse
4-H Livestock and Veterinary
Science Educator
conver20@msu.edu

David Lindsay
4-H Equine Educator
lindsa75@msu.edu

Kendra Van Order
4-H Dairy Educator
vanorde4@msu.edu

Jermo Reese
4-H Animal Science Program
Instructor
reesejer@msu.edu

Jacob Stieg
4-H Poultry Point of Contact
stieg@msu.edu

Kat VanDouser
4-H Dog Point of Contact
krollkat@msu.edu

Glenda Weiss
4-H Rabbit & Cavy Point of Contact
weissgle@msu.edu

January 24	4-H State Rabbit Show
Feb. 27- March 1	4-H Dairy Conference
March 7	4-H Spring Livestock Workshop
March 14	4-H Horse Communications Contest
March 21-22	Norma Agnew 4-H Hairy Horse Show
March 21	4-H Rabbit and Cavy Workshop
March 22	4-H Rabbit and Cavy Quiz Bowl
April 11	4-H & FFA Horse Judging State Contest
April 12	4-H Hippology State Contest
May 13	4-H & FFA Meats Judging State Contest
June 16-17	Michigan Youth Livestock Judging Camp
June 27	4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl
July 1	4-H & FFA Livestock Judging State Contest
July 6-7 & 8-9	4-H Animal and Veterinary Science Camp
July 13-16	4-H Youth Dairy Days
August 13-16	4-H State Horse Show
September 19	4-H State Dog Show

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