



FEBRUARY 2026

4-H Family News

Shiawassee County Clover Connection



Happy February!

We hope everyone is staying safe and warm during this stretch of cold winter weather. While winter may have us bundled up, it certainly hasn't slowed us down. We have a lot of exciting things happening here in Shiawassee County 4-H, and we're looking forward to sharing them with you.

This edition of the Clover Connection is packed with helpful information and upcoming opportunities for our 4-H families. Inside, you'll find details on workshops, state-level award opportunities, and other programs. Whether you're looking for hands-on activities, leadership opportunities, or ways to get more involved, there's something here for everyone.

Thank you for being part of our 4-H community. We hope you enjoy this month's newsletter.

Sincerely,

Alexis Wheeler

4-H Program Coordinator

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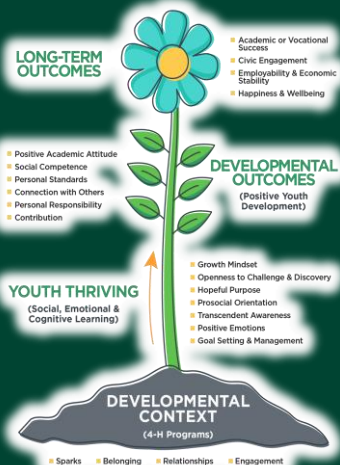


@ Shiawassee County 4-H Program



STATEWIDE CALENDAR OF EVENTS

4-H Thriving Model of Positive Youth Development



Building a sense of belonging in our 4-H program has been a long-standing tradition. What does this look like?

It may be a project leader, club leader, or event organizer welcoming you to each meeting or event. It may look like a “roll call” or “ice breaker” at the beginning of a meeting.

The initial welcome allows people to know that they have been seen in the room. So, the next time someone asks you a roll call question of “What’s your favorite cheese?”, know that there is a reason.

We want to get to know you. We want to hear your voice. We want the ability to start building relationships by finding likenesses among us.

Contact your local 4-H staff for more information.
#BeyondReady

February 10: 4-H Wild Spartans

Online

In this month’s session, take a walk through the woods on the wild side with “Walking a Path of Conservation.” 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-february

February 11: Michigan 4-H Volunteer Webinar Series: Building Belonging – Teambuilding Strategies for Stronger 4-H Experiences

Online

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.

www.canr.msu.edu/events/michigan-4-h-volunteer-webinar-building-belonging-teambuilding-strategies-for-stronger-4-h-experiences

February 11: Avoiding Money Mishaps

Online

This webinar will focus on how youth can protect themselves from fraud, scams, identity theft and predatory lending.

www.canr.msu.edu/events/avoiding-money-mishaps-feb11

February 11: 4-H Chef Tasty Dog Treats

Lenawee MSU Extension Demo Kitchen, Adrian

Youth ages 5-11 will prepare delicious treats to bake at home for your dog. Ages 5-7 need adult helper. Registration deadline is February 7.

www.canr.msu.edu/events/4-h-chef-tasty-dog-treats

February 19 –March 26: Online Guiding Principles for Highly Successful Parenting Webinar Series

Online

Guiding Principles is a FREE online course for parents of toddlers to teens to learn strategies for helping children, parents and families be successful.

www.canr.msu.edu/events/guiding-principles-for-highly-successful-parenting-webinar-series-february-2026

February 19: Ace the Interview: Skill Building and Practice for Teens

Washtenaw County MSU Extension Office, Ann Arbor

This free workshop will help youth (ages 12-19) confidently handle interview experiences with tips and hands-on practice. Any teen is welcome to attend! Registration deadline is February 17.

www.canr.msu.edu/events/ace-the-interview-skill-building-and-practice-for-teens





STATEWIDE 4-H NEWS



Participate in the World Food Prize Michigan Youth Institute

As millions across the globe deal with food insecurity, the World Food Prize Michigan Youth Institute (WFP MIYI) offers young people an opportunity to be part of the solution. Held May 7 in East Lansing, or by participating from anywhere else using Zoom video/web conference technology, the event seeks to inspire and prepare the next generation of global leaders to end world hunger.

To participate, youth should be in grades 7-12 and register by the March 15 deadline. As part of the registration process, youth are required to prepare a three- to five-page research paper about a developing country and one of 22 key factors that affect food security. At the event, youth present and discuss their papers with other attendees and research and industry experts.

The top performing students at the WFP MIYI will be selected to attend the World Food Prize Global Youth Institute in Des Moines, Iowa, in October. For more information, visit <https://www.canr.msu.edu/wfpmyi/>. Registration opens February 1 and closes March 15.

Tickets now available for Michigan 4-H Day at the Breslin

Join MSU Extension and Michigan 4-H on March 1 for the 20th celebration of Michigan 4-H Day at the Breslin! This fun family event will be held at the Jack Breslin Student Events Center as the MSU Women's Basketball team takes on the Ohio State Buckeyes!

Those interested in attending can purchase tickets at a price of \$7.50 plus fees. This is a discounted rate available to the Michigan 4-H and MSU Extension communities; complimentary tickets are no longer available due to the rising popularity of college sports. MSU Extension and Michigan 4-H youth, volunteers, partners, stakeholders, alumni, staff and their families are all encouraged to attend.

Tickets can be purchased through a two-step process. First, guests should register at <https://events.anr.msu.edu/4HBreslin2026/>. Within one week, registrants will receive a custom purchase link to the email provided in registration. Attendees must then use this custom link to purchase tickets for the event. Additional ticketing information is available on the registration website. Registration will close on February 17.

Tip-off for the game is scheduled for 12 p.m. Gates to the Breslin will open at 10:30 a.m., with a variety of pre-game activities hosted by MSU Extension professionals around the concourse. Participants are encouraged to show their pride and wear green and white 4-H or MSU Extension apparel. Families for whom cost is a barrier should contact their local 4-H program coordinator.



Show your 4-H pride wherever you go!

Did you know you can make a difference for 4-H every time you hit the road? By purchasing the Michigan 4-H specialty license plate, you're not only showing your 4-H spirit—you're helping fund programs that empower young people across the state. A portion of each plate sale and renewal benefits Michigan 4-H, supporting hands-on learning experiences that help Michigan youth become beyond ready for the future.

Whether you're a current member, alumni, volunteer, or simply a proud supporter, this is an easy way to give back and keep 4-H growing strong. Ordering is simple through the Michigan Secretary of State.



Drive your support forward—get your 4-H plate today and help create opportunities for the next generation of Michigan 4-H youth! Learn more at extension.msu.edu/4-HPlate.



COUNTY 4-H NEWS

Fun for the Whole Family: Cocoa Craze Workshop!



Shiawassee County 4-H is excited to host a Cocoa Craze Workshop, a fun and educational experience for the whole family!

Join us on **February 21 from 1:00-3:00pm** at the Shiawassee County MSU Extension Office. Participants will explore fascinating facts about chocolate from the Mayans to today. Who discovered chocolate? How is it grown? How has it influenced cultures around the world?

Enjoy delicious chocolate samples and learn why chocolate is often called the "Food of the Gods."

- **Cost:** \$5 registration fee
- **Registration Deadline:** February 13th
- **Registration Link:** <https://events.anr.msu.edu/cocoacraze/>

Save the Date: Regional 4-H Camp Counselor and Volunteer Training

Save the date for an upcoming regional 4-H camp counselor and volunteer training on **April 11**. Are you interested in becoming a camp counselor, or have you served in this role in the past? Are you looking for more in-depth training?

This regional opportunity is open to 4-H camp volunteers and counselors. It will be a great chance to build leadership skills, network with fellow camp staff and counselors, and learn how other 4-H camps are organized will gaining additional training and support.

More information will be shared in the future, so stay tuned!

4-H State Awards and Mark of Excellence



Michigan 4-H State Awards recognize youth for their 4-H involvement and achievements. Divisions include Juniors (Ages 12-15), Senior (ages 15-19), and Group (ages 13-19).

Applications are accepted **March 1—April 1** and must be submitted online. Youth may be eligible for cash awards and a \$50 scholarship toward 4-H Exploration Days, where State Awards will be presented on June 24th at Michigan State University.

For youth ages 10-11, the Mark of Excellence Award is available. Applications are due **April 1** to the Shiawassee County MSU Extension Office.

Learn more and apply for [Michigan 4-H State Awards](#).



County 4-H News

Save the Date: 2026 4-H Exploration Days



Save the date for 4-H Exploration Days, happening **June 24-26, 2026** at Michigan State University. This pre-college program is open to youth **ages 12-19** (as of January 1) and is designed to help participants build life skills while exploring new interests and potential career paths.

Youth will have the opportunity to choose two to three sessions centered around topics they are passionate or interested in, making this a truly personalized learning experience.

The cost to attend is **\$250**. Scholarships are available, and families are encouraged to contact the Shiawassee County MSU Extension Office for more information.

Registration opens in March, so mark your calendars and get ready for an unforgettable 4-H experience!

Mark Your Calendars: Small Animal Biosecurity Workshop

On March 21, the Shiawassee County Small Animal Association will be hosting a workshop about biosecurity at the First Church of Christ in Owosso from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00p.m.

This workshop will include hands-on activities on biosecurity and feature a guest speaker who is a veterinarian with MDARD. It is a great opportunity for 4-H members, parents, and leaders to learn more about keeping animals healthy and preventing the spread of disease.

More information will be shared on Facebook and in future newsletters. We are still working out a few details but wanted you to get this event marked on your calendars.

Looking to Volunteer? Join Shiawassee County 4-H

Are you an adult who enjoys working with youth and helping them grow through hands-on learning? Now is a great time to get involved with Shiawassee County 4-H! Volunteers are the heart of our program—whether you're leading a club, teaching a skill, or lending a hand at events, your time and talents make a last difference.

Ready to join us? Apply to become a 4-H volunteer today:
https://msu.samaritan.com/custom/502/application_info

Already a 4-H volunteer and looking for more ways to get involved? Contact the Shiawassee County MSU Extension Office, and we'd be happy to help! Maybe you have a skill or hobby you'd like to share with youth through a workshop or SPIN club. We'd love to explore those opportunities with you.

