WELCOME TO

ST. JOSEPH COUNTY 4-H

I'M ENROLLED… NOW WHAT?

A New Member & Family Welcome Guide

Head • Heart • Hands • Health

WELCOME!

You do not have to know everything on day one! 4-H is a place to try something new, learn by doing, meet people, and grow with the support of your family, club leaders, volunteers and other members. This guide is just to help the ease of transition between enrollment and actively participating in meetings, the Fair, etc.

1. So… What Exactly Is 4-H?

4-H is a fun, learn-by-doing educational program for youth people. Its mission is to help youth become self-directed, contributing members of their communities.

In St. Joseph County, 4-H is supported through Michigan State University Extension. Your club and project leaders are your day-to-day guides; the county Extension office helps coordinate enrollment, projects, events, and county-level opportunities.

What do the H's stand for in 4-H?

I pledge,

- My HEAD to clearer thinking,
- My HEART to greater loyalty,
- My HANDS to larger service and
- My HEALTH to better living for my club, my community, my country and my world

What can I learn?

- Responsibility and time management
- Animal care and agriculture
- Public speaking and demonstrations
- Leadership and teamwork
- Creative and practical skills
- Goal setting and record keeping
- Sportsmanship and resilience
- Community service and citizenship

Who can participate?

4-H is open to ALL without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, heigh, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status.

The St. Joseph County 4-H Youth Program is open to all youth 8-19 years of age by January 1 of the year they will exhibit their still projects at the St. Joseph County Grange Fair. St. Joseph County offers a Cloverbud program for youth 5-7 years of age by January 1 of the year they will exhibit.

2. I’m Enrolled — Now What?

Start here. Put a check beside each step as your family gets connected.

☐ Confirm your 4-H enrollment is complete.

☐ Find out which 4-H club you are joining and when it meets. Not sure which club? See next page for options.

☐ Save your club leader’s contact information.

☐ Choose one or more projects that genuinely interest you. Not sure? There is a list after the Club contacts with project descriptions.

☐ Ask your leader what your project requires this year or refer to the Fair book* that is usually released later in the year.

☐ Add important county, club, project, and fair dates to your family calendar. Follow the St. Joseph County 4-H page on Facebook and enroll in notifications for the newsletters that come through. Not sure if you’re enrolled? Reach out to the extension office to confirm.

☐ Attend club meetings and educational activities.

☐ Start your project early — small steps throughout the year are easier than a last-minute rush.

☐ Ask questions when you are unsure. That is part of learning!

☐ Look for a way to help your club or community.

☐ Keep track of your progress, photos, expenses, learning, and accomplishments if your project requires records.

☐ Have fun and celebrate what you learn!

If you are confused, ASK. Your leader would much rather answer a question early than have a family discover a deadline or requirement after it has passed.

***Until the current year is released, last year's book is on the website to get an idea for guidelines**
https://www.canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/4_h_fair

There's A 4-H Club Near You!

Contact the leader(s) below if you are interested in joining a 4-H club in your area.
(See next page for 4-H enrollment deadlines for tenured (returning) and new 4-H members.)

COMMUNITY CLUBS

Barnyard Buddies (Countywide)
Sandy Summey, 269-718-7521

Burr Oak (Burr Oak)
Deb Adamski, 269-489-2836
Laurie Maystead, 269-506-3424

Circle 8 (White Pigeon)
Sherry Gipson, 269-483-8189

Country Side (Centreville/Nottawa)
Gail Miller, 269-467-6395
Debbie Davis, 269-806-7889

Farmtastic (Mendon/Vicksburg)
Greg & Emily Redmond, 269-209-7112

Fawn River Clovers (Sturgis)
Bill Kelley, 269-625-2406
Jodi Kelley, 269-625-2408

Happy Herdsman (Mendon/Three Rivers)
Ralph & Sandy Gage, 269-273-0083

Howardsville (Howardsville/Three Rivers)
Chelsie Beadle, 269-646-9409
Billy Kruger, 269-271-0779
Kaley Thornburgh, 269-760-2975

Kuntry Starz (Sturgis/White Pigeon)
Holly Smith, 269-625-7184

Leonidas Do-Best (Leonidas)
Corey Iobe, 269-496-9078
Connie Myers, 269-317-7099

Lucky (Constantine)
Dolores Kulp, 269-435-7298

Mendon Green Clovers (Mendon)
Ed Klein, 269-998-4720

Rolling Clovers (Centreville/Three Rivers)
Teagan Stuby-Hekter, 269-251-0785
Diana Yeager, 269-503-4131

Sunshine Hills (Constantine/White Pigeon)
Bonnie Alvarado, 269-873-3927

HORSE CLUBS

Desperados (Mendon/Vicksburg)
Racheal Hartman, 269-718-2161

Town & Country (Countywide)
Joy Bond, 517-980-9561
Jane Goodman, 916-228-9947

Tumbleweed (Countywide)
Andrea Littlefield, 269-625-7998
Bobbi Newland, 269-535-1215

SHOOTING SPORTS CLUB

Straight Shooters (SJC Conservation Club)
Nelson Schug, 248-379-8654

DOG CLUB

Courageous K-9's (Sturgis)
Katy Myers, 269-858-9670

3. Your First 30 Days in 4-H

WHEN	FOCUS	WHAT TO DO
WEEK 1	GET CONNECTED	Meet your leader • Save contacts • Find the club calendar • Attend a meeting
WEEK 2	CHOOSE	Talk about interests • Pick projects • Learn what each project requires
WEEK 3	GET STARTED	Gather supplies • Make a practice plan • Begin learning or working
WEEK 4	GET INVOLVED	Try an activity • Help your club • Ask about demonstrations, service, workshops or events

REMEMBER

Your first year is a learning year. You are allowed to be new and you have a large amount of volunteers here to help guide you!

4. Choosing Your 4-H Project

A project should give a young person something meaningful to learn and work toward. Start with the child's interests — not what someone else thinks they should do.

☐ 🐴 Horse & Pony	☐ 🐄 Beef	☐ 🐖 Swine
☐ 🐑 Sheep	☐ 🐐 Goats	☐ 🐔 Poultry
☐ 🐇 Rabbits	☐ 🐶 Dogs / Companion Animals	☐ 🌱 Gardening / Plants
☐ 🍳 Foods & Nutrition	☐ 🎨 Arts & Crafts	☐ 📸 Photography
☐ 🧪 STEM / Science	☐ 🧵 Sewing / Fiber Arts	☐ 🏠 Home & Family
☐ 🎤 Communication / Public Speaking	☐ 🌎 Community Service & Citizenship	☐ ⭐ Other county-approved projects

My child's project ideas

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

St. Joseph County 4-H Projects:

ANIMAL PROJECTS

ANIMAL SCIENCE-RELATED (MISC.)
- Animal Science/Aquatic Science
- Veterinary Science

COMPANION ANIMALS
- Cats & Cat Care
- Dog Care & Training
- Pocket Pets

HORSES & PONIES
- Horses & Ponies

LIVESTOCK
- Beef Cattle
- Dairy Beef
- Dairy Cattle
- Goats
- Poultry
- Rabbits
- Sheep
- Swine

STILL EXHIBIT PROJECTS

CAREERS
- Career Exploration

CLOTHING/PERS. APPEAR./MODELING
- Crocheting
- Knitting
- Modeling
- Personal Appearance
- Sewing
- Wardrobe Personalization

COLLECTIONS
- Coin Collections
- Stamp Collections
- Other Collections

COMMUNICATION SKILLS
- Creative Writing
- Demonstrations (Animal Sci.)
- Demonstrations (Still Exhibit)
- Public Speaking/Illustrated Talk

CRAFTS
- Ball-Point Tube Painting
- Caning
- Ceramics
- Ink on Glass
- Jewelry Making
- Latch Hook
- Leathercraft
- Leatherwork
- Macramé
- Paint-by-Number
- Puzzles
- Other Crafts (not listed)

CREATIVE ARTS
- Cake Decorating
- Candy Making
- Flower Arranging
- Gift Wrapping
- Rubber Stamping
- Scrapbooking
- Other Creative Arts (not listed)

CROP SCIENCE
- Corn
- Hay
- Small Grains
- Soybeans
- Weeds and/or Other Crops (not listed)

FOLK ARTS
- Basket Making
- Blacksmithing
- Buckskinning/Indian Lore
- Calligraphy
- Candle Making
- Diamond Dot
- Hand-Molded Pottery
- Stenciling
- Soap Making
- Tin Punch
- Weaving
- Wood Burning
- Wood Carving
- Wooden Toys
- Other Folk Arts (not listed)

FOOD NUTRITION & FITNESS
- Food Preparation
- Food Preservation (Canning, Freezing, Drying, etc.)
- Nutrition & Fitness
- Outdoor Meals

GENERAL/PROMOTIONAL/MISCELLANEOUS
- 4-H Promotional Display
- Self-Determined Project

HEALTH & SAFETY
- Emergency Preparedness
- Fire Prevention
- First Aid
- Health
- Physical Fitness
- Safety
- Substance Abuse Prevention

HOME & FAMILY
- Child Care
- Family Life
- Genealogy
- Home Design
- Rugs

HORTICULTURE
- Fall Ornamentals
- Flower Gardening
- Great Pumpkin
- Indoor Gardening
- Landscaping
- Vegetable Gardening

LEADERSHIP/CITIZENSHIP
- Citizenship
- Teen Leadership

LEISURE EDUCATION & SPORTS
- Bicycle Care/Safety/Touring
- Fish, Fun & Fellowship
- Fly Tying
- Kite Flying
- Recreation Ideas/Games Kit
- Shooting Sports
- Sports (Individual)
- Sports (Team)

NATURAL RESOURCES
- Beekeeping
- Birds
- Conservation of Natural Resources
- Entomology
- Fish
- Forestry
- Mammals
- Rocks & Minerals
- Taxidermy
- Wildflowers

NEEDLECRAFT
- Candlewicking
- Counted Cross-Stitch
- Embroidery
- Needlepoint
- Plastic Canvas
- Quilts/Comforters
- Quilting (other than quilts)
- Stuffed Toys
- Other Needlecraft (not listed)

PERFORMING ARTS
- Dance
- Drama
- Music (Instrumental)
- Music (Vocal)
- Other Performing Arts (not listed)

TECHNOLOGY/INDUSTRIAL ARTS
- Aerospace
- Computer Science
- Electrical Science
- Engines (Auto/Small/Tractor)
- Model Construction
- Woodworking

VISUAL ARTS
- Cartooning
- Drawing
- Painting
- Sculpture
- Photography

WEATHER
- Weather

5. 4-H Vocabulary Cheat Sheet

TERM	WHAT IT MEANS
4-H Club	A local group of members guided by adult volunteers.
4-H Leader / Volunteer	An approved adult who helps members learn, organizes activities, and supports the club or project.
Project	A topic or area of learning a member chooses to explore.
Project Leader	A volunteer who provides specialized guidance in a project area.
Exhibitor	A member who enters a project or animal for an approved exhibition.
Still Project	A non-animal project that is displayed or judged.
Showmanship	An activity/class focused on how well a member presents and works with an animal, where offered.
Record Keeping	Tracking what a member did, learned, spent, earned, or accomplished as required by the project.
Demonstration	A member teaches others how to do or understand something.
Cloverbud	A younger 4-H participant in the age group defined by Michigan 4-H; activities and expectations differ from older members.
MSU Extension	Michigan State University Extension, which supports 4-H and other community education programs.
Superintendent	The person responsible for coordinating a department or area of an event/fair.
Premium	A payment or award associated with eligible fair exhibits when offered under current fair rules.

6. My 4-H Contacts

WHO	CONTACT INFORMATION
Club Leader	Name: _____ Phone/email: _____
Assistant Leader	Name: _____ Phone/email: _____
Project Leader	Name: _____ Phone/email: _____
County 4-H / MSU Extension	Name: _____ Phone/email: _____
Project Superintendent	Name: _____ Phone/email: _____
Fair Contact	Name: _____ Phone/email: _____
Emergency Contact	Name: _____ Phone/email: _____
Other	Name: _____ Phone/email: _____

Helpful official starting points

St. Joseph County 4-H: https://www.canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/

St. Joseph County 4-H Fair: https://www.canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/4_h_fair

Horse & Pony: https://www.canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/4_h_horse_and_pony

Livestock: https://www.canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/4_h_livestock

Still Projects: https://www.canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/4_h_still_projects

4-H Online: https://v2.4honline.com/

Packet Notes & Sources

This packet is a family-friendly orientation guide, not an official rulebook. Current MSU Extension, county 4-H, Horse Council, fair and project documents take precedence whenever requirements differ.

County resources consulted while preparing this packet include current/recent St. Joseph County MSU Extension materials, including the county 4-H website and project/fair resources. Horse & Pony guidance was cross-checked against the county's published 2025 Horse/Pony rulebook and fair materials; annual requirements should be refreshed before distributing the packet.

Official resources:

St. Joseph County 4-H: https://www.canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/

St. Joseph County 4-H Fair: https://www.canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/4_h_fair

Horse & Pony: https://www.canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/4_h_horse_and_pony

Livestock: https://www.canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/4_h_livestock

Still Projects: https://www.canr.msu.edu/st_joseph/4-h/4_h_still_projects

4-H Online: https://v2.4honline.com/

Potential New Member Handout — Why Join 4-H?

4-H IS MORE THAN A FAIR!

It's a place to discover what you can do.

🐴 Explore animals, agriculture, arts, science, cooking, photography and more.

🌟 Build confidence by doing real projects and learning real skills.

🤝 Make friends and become part of your community.

🎤 Learn communication, leadership and teamwork.

❤️ Give back through community service.

🏆 Set goals, overcome challenges and celebrate your accomplishments.

🎉 Have fun while learning by doing!

CURIOUS?

You do not need to be an expert. You do not need to own an animal. You do not need to know what project you want to do before you join. Come see what 4-H is about!

JOIN US!

Club: _____

Meeting day/time: _____

Leader/contact: _____

Learn more: St. Joseph County MSU Extension 4-H