



# CLOVER CHRONICLES

January 2026

Isabella County

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## Curious about AI & Robotics in Agriculture?

Join Dairy Dreamers 4-H club for an exciting presentation on how technology is shaping the future of farming! There will be speakers lined up do a presentation on Artificial Intelligence and Robotics in Agriculture.

Everyone is welcome to attend this free event at the Isabella County Commission on Aging on Saturday, January 17, from 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM. Lunch will be provided. Please RSVP to the Extension office if you would like to attend by calling or emailing (989-317-4079 or antveli3@msu.edu).

## 2026 4-H Calendars Now Available

4-H calendars are available for pick-up at the Extension office. Stop by and get one!

## Royal Ambassador Program

Packets will be available on Monday, January 12. They will be online and at the Extension office. All packets will be due on Friday, May 1 at 4 PM. Any questions, please contact Lillian Albaugh at 989-513-8202.

## Seeking Teen 4-H Council Representatives

Are you a teen passionate about leadership and making a difference in your community? Isabella County 4-H is looking for youth representatives to join the 4-H Council!

### What is the Isabella County 4-H Council?

The 4-H Council is the main decision-making body for the county 4-H program. It works alongside staff to plan programs, set policies, and guide the future of 4-H in Isabella County. Monthly meetings are held the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM, at Lincoln Township Hall and are open to all 4-H leaders and interested people.

Link to Teen Representative application: [http://www.canr.msu.edu/isabella/isabella\\_county\\_4\\_h/newsletters-and-forms](http://www.canr.msu.edu/isabella/isabella_county_4_h/newsletters-and-forms)



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## THANK YOU - TSC Paper Clover Campaign

We would like to say a big **THANK YOU** to everyone who volunteered to work a shift (or several shifts) during the fall Paper Clover Campaign at TSC! We greatly appreciate your help!

## CLUB CORNER

**Crackerjack** - In December our members baked cookies and put together 12 boxes of cookies. We went Christmas caroling and passed out cookies to the places we sang at. Past members joined us to sing, we've been doing this for 50 plus years!

**Evergreen** - At our January meeting, we discussed our roles and jobs for our upcoming Spaghetti Supper that will be held on February 7 from 4:30 pm - 7:30 pm at the Rosebush St. Henry's Hall. We also split into groups of specific species and started getting ready for the fair.

**Pony Creek** - Animal weigh in dates were provided. 4-H Council is seeking teen council members and various dates were provided for upcoming experiences. Our group did a bake sale at TCS over the Thanksgiving Holiday. Melisa Foster will be an assistant administrative leader to our club. We ended with finger foods to celebrate the Christmas Holiday.

**Western Spurs** - In December, we had the wonderful opportunity to visit Rosebush Manor to spread some holiday cheer. Club members decorated residents' doors with fun and festive holiday decorations, helping bring the spirit of the season throughout the building. While decorating, members also spent time visiting with residents, sharing smiles, conversations, and companionship. This meaningful experience allowed our club to give back to the community while brightening the holidays for everyone involved.

## Fair Auction Checks - Reminder

Still Exhibit & Small Animal Auction checks are only valid for a couple more days. Please cash your check soon if you haven't already done so.

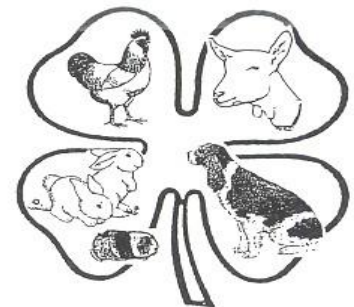
## 4-H Capitol Experience

**Save the dates: March 15-17 in Lansing**

For youth in 9th grade to age 19. Scholarships are available from Isabella County 4-H Council. Contact Liz ([antveli3@msu.edu](mailto:antveli3@msu.edu)) for more information or visit: [https://www.canr.msu.edu/4\\_h\\_capitol\\_experience](https://www.canr.msu.edu/4_h_capitol_experience)

## Small Animal News

- If you have been enrolled in a small animal project for at least two years and are enrolled as a Teen Leader, and are interested in applying to be a Teen Superintendent during fair week, please complete the appropriate form and turn it in at the Extension office by January 13. You will be contacted in February if you are selected for one of the positions.
- If you are a rabbit member, you will also want to start making some connections for your 2026 fair project. A good resource would be the State 4-H Rabbit show on January 24, at the MSU Pavilion. See details on the flier on page 8.



**Isabella County 4-H**

# AI IN AGRICULTURE SERIES

**INNOVATING THE FUTURE OF FARMING**

## What You'll Learn

- How AI is being used in crop management, precision ag, and livestock monitoring
- Real-world examples of AI tools used by farmers today
- How technology is improving efficiency, sustainability, and decision-making
- What AI means for the future of agriculture and careers in ag

## **Free Registration**

Open to 4-Hers and non 4-Hers

**January: AI & Livestock / Robotics in Agriculture**

**February: Feeding your Ruminant**

**March: Seed to Store**

**April: Pollination Presentation**

**JANUARY  
17TH**

**11:30AM-1:30PM**

Isabella County Commission on Aging  
2200 S Lincoln Rd Mt Pleasant MI  
48858



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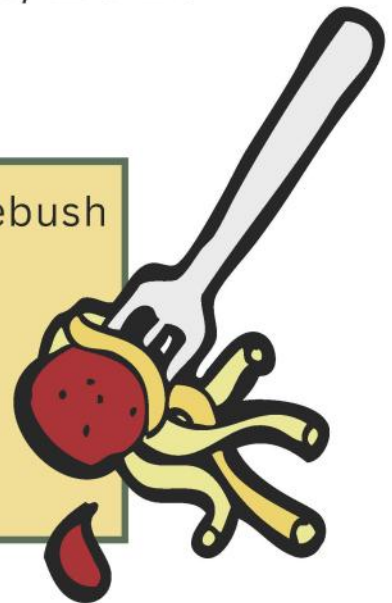
# *Evergreen 4-H Club Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser*

Saturday, February 7th, 2026  
4:30-7:00pm



18 USC 707

St Henry's Parish Center, Rosebush  
Recommended Donation:  
Adults: \$10  
Children (ages 6-12): \$7  
Children 5 and Under: Free  
Dine In or Take Out Available



PROCEEDS TO  
BENEFIT CLUB  
AND FAIR  
EDUCATION  
PROJECTS



## Adulting 101

We have an exciting new line up of Adulting 101 sessions coming up in 2026! Join us monthly for FREE online sessions to build life skills helpful in transitioning to "adulthood."

Learn more and sign up here:

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

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# 2026 ADULTING 101



- FRAUD FIGHTERS - JANUARY 21 AT 6:30 PM
- INFORMED RENTER - FEBRUARY 19 AT 5:00 PM
- SLEEP WELLNESS - MARCH 4 AT 5:30 PM
- EAT SMART: HEALTHY MEALS ON A BUDGET - APRIL 13 AT 5:00 PM
- COOKING WITH CONFIDENCE - MAY 18 AT 6:30 PM
- AI AND YOU: SMART, SAFE & SAVVY - JUNE 11 AT 6:00 PM
- THINK BEFORE YOU CLICK - JULY 8 AT 6:00 PM
- ROADMAP TO A SMART USED CAR PURCHASE - AUGUST 12 AT 5:00 PM
- ARE YOU READY? - SEPTEMBER 23 AT 5:00 PM
- MENTAL HEALTH TOOLKIT - OCTOBER 7 AT 6:00 PM
- REALITIES OF ANIMAL CARE - NOVEMBER 12 AT 7:00 PM

\*ALL TIMES LISTED ARE EASTERN STANDARD TIME



## FREE ON ZOOM







# 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.

<https://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.

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/events/avoiding-money-mishaps-jan13>

### January 21: Adulthood 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/adulthood-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.**

<https://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.

<https://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.**

<https://4hwinterfest2026.4honline.com>







# STATEWIDE 4-H NEWS

## Capitol Experience



COMING  
SOON

MARCH 15-17<sup>TH</sup>, 2026



Cost \$365  
Scholarships may be available  
through your local 4-H office!



## 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/](http://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](http://www.canr.msu.edu/4-h-money-smarts/money-smart-kids-contest).

Extra Credit UNION

### 2026 Michigan 4-H Cash Composition Contest

Write a brief 300 word essay addressing fraud and scams, and have the chance to earn a \$100 gift card!

Essays Due: March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026  
Winners Announced: April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026

See website for contest details and requirements!

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## 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](http://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](mailto:nashbett@msu.edu) or Janice Zerbe at [rajzerj@msu.edu](mailto:rajzerj@msu.edu).



# 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](https://shorturl.at/bKwsV)



**SCAN HERE**

**Registration is open at:**

**<https://www.canr.msu.edu/events/2026-state-4-h-rabbit-and-cavy-show-and-expo>**



## ***Coordinator's Corner – January 2026***

Happy New Year, 4-H families!

As we welcome 2026, I can't help but feel excited about all the opportunities ahead for our Isabella County 4-H youth. A new year brings fresh energy, new goals, and so many meaningful experiences for our members to grow, lead, and discover their spark.

This year is packed with incredible statewide and county events including 4-H Capitol Experience, Winterfest, Exploration Days, and more. These programs allow youth to explore career interests, build leadership skills, meet peers from across Michigan, and see firsthand how their voices can make a difference.

One event I am especially excited about this year is our AI in Agriculture Series. When many people hear "artificial intelligence," there is often concern about AI taking over jobs or replacing people. In agriculture, however, AI is being used as a powerful tool to support farmers, not replace them. Today, farmers use AI for robotic milking systems, monitoring herd health, improving feed efficiency, and detecting animal health concerns earlier than ever before. These technologies help farmers make better, data-driven decisions while still relying on the knowledge, care, and problem-solving skills that only people can provide. For our youth, this opens the door to exciting career pathways in agriculture, technology, engineering, animal science, data analysis, and farm management. Through 4-H projects and hands-on learning, youth can explore how innovation connects to real-world farming and how they can be part of shaping the future of agriculture.

One important reminder as you look at these opportunities: cost should never be a barrier. Thanks to the incredible support of our community, local sponsors, and donors through efforts like the Tractor Supply Clover Campaign and our county endowment fund, we are able to cover a minimum of 50% of participation fees for every 4-H'er interested in attending events such as Capitol Experience, Winterfest, and Exploration Days. If you have ever thought, *"That sounds amazing, but I'm not sure we can afford it,"* please reach out—we are here to help.

2026 is shaping up to be an exciting year for Isabella County 4-H, and I look forward to seeing our youth step outside their comfort zones, try new things, and continue becoming Beyond Ready for whatever comes next.



Liz Antvelink  
4-H Program Coordinator, Isabella County

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msue37@msu.edu

Website:

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/isabella/>



<https://www.facebook.com/IsabellaCounty4H/>

# **SAVE THE DATES**

## **4-H Winterfest**

February 7, 2026

## **4-H Day at the Breslin Center**

March 1, 2026

## **Dairy Feeder Weigh-In**

March 21, 2026

## **Swine Tagging**

May 3, 2026

## **Sheep Weigh-In**

May 9, 2026

## **4-H Exploration Days**

June 17-19, 2026

## **Isabella County Youth & Farm Fair**

August 1 - 9, 2026

## **Isabella County 4-H Calendar**

January 17	AI & Robotics in Agriculture @ Commission on Aging	11:30 AM - 1:30 PM
19	OFFICE CLOSED	
27	4-H Council @ Lincoln Twp Hall	6:30 PM

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*"Accommodations for persons with disabilities may be requested by contacting the MSU Extension office at (989) 317-4079 at least 7 days prior to the scheduled event to ensure sufficient time to make arrangements. Requests received after this time will be met when possible."*

**Liz Antvelink, 4-H Program Coordinator**  
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Monica Jean, Field Crops Educator  
Eric Karbowski, District 6 Director  
Kara Lynch, Food Safety Educator  
Misty Oebel, Farm Stress Educator