



# Jefferson County 4-H Newsletter

UW-MADISON EXTENSION

December 2025

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### Jefferson County Extension Office

Open Monday – Friday:  
8:00am - 4:30pm

#### Jerry Wilcenski

4-H Program Educator

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920-674-7299

#### Katelyn Broedlow

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920-674-7440

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Jefferson, WI 53549  
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## December Extension Office Holiday Hours

The Jefferson County Extension Office will be closed for the Holidays from Wednesday, December 24 through Friday, January 2! The office will reopen on Monday, January 5 at 8:00am.



## University of Wisconsin-Madison Nondiscrimination Statement

The University of Wisconsin–Madison Division of Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming in compliance with state and federal law.

## December 2025 4-H CALENDAR

For a complete list of dates and events please visit the online 4-H Calendar. ([Click here for calendar](#))

| Date                                | Time    | Meeting                                             | Location       |
|-------------------------------------|---------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| December 1                          | 6:00pm  | Meats Judging Practice                              | Extension      |
| December 2                          | 6:00pm  | Rabbit Project Meeting                              | Extension      |
| December 2                          | 7:00pm  | Poultry Project Meeting                             | Extension      |
| December 3                          | 7:00pm  | Horse Committee Meeting                             | Extension      |
| December 7                          | 12:00pm | Dairy Quiz Bowl Practice                            | Extension      |
| December 8                          | 6:00pm  | Meats Judging Practice                              | Extension      |
| December 9                          | 7:00pm  | Livestock Committee Meeting                         | Extension      |
| December 14                         | 12:00pm | Dairy Quiz Bowl Practice                            | Extension      |
| December 15                         |         | Newsletter Items Due to Katelyn                     |                |
| December 15                         | 6:00pm  | Meats Judging Practice                              | Extension      |
| December 16                         | 7:00pm  | JCHP Countywide Meeting                             | Fair Park      |
| December 21                         | 12:00pm | Dairy Quiz Bowl Practice                            | Extension      |
| December 22                         | 6:00pm  | Meats Judging Practice                              | Extension      |
| December 28                         | 12:00pm | Dairy Quiz Bowl Practice                            | Extension      |
| December 29                         | 6:00pm  | Meats Judging Practice                              | Jelli's Market |
| December 29                         | 7:00pm  | Dairy Committee Meeting                             | Extension      |
| December 30                         | 6:00pm  | Lego Project Meeting                                | Extension      |
| December 24<br>Through<br>January 2 |         | <b>Jefferson County Extension Office<br/>Closed</b> |                |



## PROJECT NEWS

**Information for specific projects is listed in this section. If you need help with a project not listed please call the EXT Office at 920-674-7295. Projects are listed in alphabetical order. If you want to lead a countywide project please contact the Extension Office for more information.**

**([Click here for online 4-H calendar](#))**

### Cloverbud Project

Are you in 5K-2nd grade and interested in seeing what 4-H is all about? Join our Cloverbud Project! We will explore different areas of what 4-H has to offer.

We're so excited to be hosting Cloverbud meetings again this 4-H year. After most of the meetings, we'll send your Cloverbud home with a few more activities to extend their learning about the topic. Registration is required—<https://forms.gle/EePUV9hkXjMual5s8>

Cloverbud Meetings will be held at 6:00pm at the Extension Office one Monday a month during the months of October, November, January, March and May.

- Monday, January 19 - 6:00pm— Extension Office
- Monday, March 16 - 6:00pm— Extension Office
- Monday, May 18 - 6:00pm— Fair Park

Have questions? Reach out to the Extension Office at 920-674-7295.

### Dairy Project

Looking for an easy gift that helps out the Jefferson County Dairy Youth? Kwik Trip gift cards will be sold as a fundraiser prior to the holidays. Order forms will be emailed to members and must be returned along with the money to the Extension Office by Monday, December 1<sup>st</sup>.

The next Dairy Committee meeting will be held on Monday, December 29 at 7 pm at the Extension Office. All dairy youth and adult volunteers are encouraged to attend! If you have any questions or ideas please reach out to Tracy Brandel [mtbrandel@gmail.com](mailto:mtbrandel@gmail.com) or Ashley Schlender [ashleyschlender@gmail.com](mailto:ashleyschlender@gmail.com).

### Dog Project

Watch for info in the 2025-2026 4-H year!

If you have any questions about the dog project, contact Kate Anderson at (920) 723-3614 or [2mtmanderson@gmail.com](mailto:2mtmanderson@gmail.com).

### Horse Project

The next Horse Committee Meeting will be held on December 3 at 7:00pm at the Extension Office.

### Lego Project

The next Lego Project Meeting will be held on December 30 at 7:00pm at the Extension Office.

If you have questions about the Lego project, contact Charles Johnson [crjohnson.51510@gmail.com](mailto:crjohnson.51510@gmail.com) or 920-342-9783.

### Livestock Project

Includes: beef, dairy, goat, poultry, rabbit, sheep and swine.

#### **Upcoming Meetings:**

December 2—6pm—Rabbit Meeting—Extension  
December 2—7pm—Poultry Meeting—Extension  
December 7—Meat Raffle—The Real MacCoys, Whitewater  
December 9—Beef Project Kick-Off Meeting—Extension Office

#### **Meats Judging**

The Meats Judging Team will begin practices on December 1 at 6pm at the Extension Office.

If you are interested in joining the team or learning more about meats judging, please contact Lindsay Baneck at [lindsay.knoebel@gmail.com](mailto:lindsay.knoebel@gmail.com).

### Natural Science Project

Natural Science Projects include Beekeeping, Birds, Insects, Fishing, Forestry, Wildflowers, Hunting & Wildlife, Adventures, and Environmental projects.

As you see there are many things you can do as a natural science project. Each project area has a variety of possibilities. What are you interested in doing this 4-H year? Do you like wildlife, wildflowers, or adventures? What do you want to learn more about? Club Leaders, do you want ideas for a club meeting activity? Would the club members like a Natural Science activity? **Have questions or comments, Email or text Sharon Schweitzer, 920-650-7110 or [rwses@idcnet.com](mailto:rwses@idcnet.com)**

For anyone who was **hunting this fall**, consider sharing your **experience as a project under Hunting or Adventures**. Create an exhibit as a booklet, poster or display of the hunting experience with a log of events and pictures. Or do a **poster illustration the type of bow or gun** that might have been **used**. A poster can also be made by anyone in Archery or Fire arms. **Safety Rules** is another area that can be shared with an **exhibit**.

**In December, Project Activities can focus around Christmas. Decorate your trees or bushes for the birds.**

**Make Cone Bird Feeders** by filling or covering **Evergreen Cones** with a **peanut butter and birdseed mixture**. Then hang them as ornaments in your trees or bushes for birds or other wildlife.

No tree. Create a tree with cut or fallen branches in front of a window where you can watch the feeders for visitors. You will want to see who comes to eat. Have a bird ID book handy and a notebook to record the visitors to your cone feeders. Watch for signs of visitors other than birds.

Create an exhibit by taking pictures and keeping a Nature Log by entering dates and details tell about making the cone

feeders, when and where you placed them, and who comes to visit or eat at them. Pictures illustrate the details of the entries in your nature log (the recorded activities you did or saw).

**Here are some other ornaments birds or small critters may like.**

**Make –**

**Strings of popcorn**– but make sure that it's **all natural**; **no butter or salt added**.

**Create Cheerio bracelets**– **An O circle** - String together "Cheerios" in the shape of a bracelet circle to slide over the tips of branches.

**A String of pearls** can be made using a needle and thread to string together different kinds of grapes. You can also add raisins and cranberries.

**Hang out Apple and orange slices** - Thinly slice (1/4"-1/2") apples and oranges, string through a bit of thread in each, and hang each piece separately from branches.

**December** also is the time for the **Christmas Bird Count**.

The **Christmas Bird Count** is held each year by the National Audubon Society. The Friends of Rose Lake will hold a count here in Jefferson County on **December 14th**. You may join them for a great experience in observing birds and our county. It's always interesting to find out how many different birds are hanging around for Christmas. For more info or to join Sharon,

**Text 920-650-7110 or email [rwes@idcnet.com](mailto:rwes@idcnet.com) for the bird list or more info.**

You can also **do your own count** at your bird feeders. Identify and count the birds at your feeder. Make a chart listing the birds, days, times, and weather. Contact Sharon for a bird list or find one on the Audubon or Cornell websites. The Christmas Ornaments and Christmas Bird Count are great as Bird project activities that can be shared as Fair entries. Take pictures, make notes and enjoy watching the birds. It's a surprising joy to see a bird others haven't!

**December** also brings thoughts of **winter activities**. The **activities you do all the time, are Natural Science project activities**. For example, taking a winter hike can be an adventure activity. Watching and Looking for tracks or signs of wildlife can be a wildlife project. Writing a winter poem or story about your hike or the birds at your feeder can be an exhibit.

Also creating a shelter area for small mammals, amphibians or insects. That would be part of a conservation project. Or are there too many of a species in your yard or local area? If so, What kind of management practices are good and when should they be used? These project areas or topics may be covered in other newsletters or with your request.

**Christmas** is a great time to **add items to the gift lists that you could use or would like and use in doing a Natural Science Project**. For example, add an ID book about birds, wildflowers, WI mammals. Or an extra backpack or a new sleeping bag for an adventure hike or camping trip.. Maybe a new fishing pole or a tip-up for ice fishing.

Enjoy the Holidays and the wonderful world we have around

us. Let's be **Thankful** for it, **Enjoy** it, and **Care** for it.

If you have questions about the Natural Science project, contact Sharon at 920-650-7110 or [rwes@idcnet.com](mailto:rwes@idcnet.com).

## **Plant & Soil Science Project**

Include these project areas – Crops, Vegetables, Flowers, House Plants and Plant Crafts

**December, Christmas and Winter are the seasons to learn about Evergreen trees and shrubs.** Make a list of them, pine, spruce, etc. **Watch for them in indoor and outdoor arrangements.** Use any trimmed branches you may have in an arrangement of your own. Take pictures to **record your arrangement and the steps making it**. Use the pictures to create a poster as an exhibit showing your arrangement. The **poster could be a project exhibit for fair**.

**Poinsettias are the main Christmas flower. Research their growing requirements and the hybrid variation.**

Other **Christmas plants** are the Amaryllis, Christmas Cactus, Rosemary, Holly, and Mistletoe. They also have some special growing needs. One is an herb that you can enjoy and use in cooking. Learn more about them and what it takes to grow them. It is also important to know which of these plants can be poisonous to pets and children. **Consider growing a Christmas Cactus as a houseplant project.**

**Succulents, cactus** and other plants that need less sunlight are good ones for a houseplant project during winter. Possible choices are Aloe Vera, Jade Plant, Snake plants, Spider plants, Chinese evergreens or a Bromeliad. Be careful with houseplants in the winter. They can freeze easily. If you purchase or receive a houseplant to take home, protect them in a paper bag or box .

**Consider what kind of Plant and Soils Project are you interested in doing this 4-H year?** If houseplants aren't your interest, are you thinking of growing garden vegetables or flowers or both? Does your family grow grain crops? Will you be helping them with the crops? Or would you like someone to share growing a crop with you? Watch for more information in the January Newsletter.

Text 920-650-7110 or email, [rwes@idcnet.com](mailto:rwes@idcnet.com) with question, comments or concerns.

## **Shooting Sports**

Watch for info in the 2025-2026 4-H year!

If you have questions about the shooting sports project, contact David Saxby at [jeffersonwi4hshootingssports@gmail.com](mailto:jeffersonwi4hshootingssports@gmail.com)

## **LEADER NEWS**

### **Leaders Board Meeting**

The next Leader's Board Meeting is on Thursday, February 19 at 6:30pm at the Extension Office.

### **Leaders Association Meeting**

The next Leader's Association Meeting is on Thursday, March 19 at 6:30pm at the Extension Office.

## OLDER MEMBERS

### Junior Leaders

Junior Leaders is for youth in 6th -12th grades. Any 4-H member in those grades is welcome to join our group!

If you have any questions, please contact Alyssa at 920-723-9039 (call/text) or jakewith07@yahoo.com.

## CLUB NEWS

### Farmington All Stars

The Farmington All-Stars met twice in the last month, first at Jelli's Market in Helenville and second at the Farmington Town Hall.

On Oct. 19, the club met at Jelli's, inducting the new club officers and holding a brief meeting before doing fun activities, including a pizza party, corn maze exploration and Halloween games.

Serving as the new club officers for 2025-26 will be: President Sarah Wagner, Vice President Peyton Greving, Secretary Lela Wagner, Treasurer Emma Sheldon, and Reporter Michael Wilson. Brad Wagner and Ella Greving will share the Sunshine Officer duties.

On Nov. 4, the club met at the town hall for a regular business meeting, discussing a potential grant opportunity. Members will meet separately to come up with an idea for a permanent, movable educational display that the club can put up at the Jefferson County Fair.

The club is also collecting donations for care packages to go out to military personnel serving overseas, as well as nursing home residents in the local area. These donations are due at the December meeting.

Coming up during the winter break will be a community service activity at Alden Estates in Jefferson. Club members will be playing Bingo with residents again, on a date yet to be set.

Michael Wilson, Reporter

### Ideal Clever Clovers

On Saturday, November 15th, the Ideal Clever Clovers 4-H Club met at the Dwight Foster Public Library in Fort Atkinson at 10:30am.

For our November meeting, we installed our 2025-2026 club officers and gave out gifts of appreciation to present members and leaders.

Discussion included next month's activity: decorating holiday cookies, watching holiday movies and enjoying popcorn. Members also talked about future meetings' activities like: a visit to Little Amerika, tie dyeing t-shirts and more!

After the business meeting, members, leaders and family members enjoyed a potluck lunch.

Our next club meeting will be held on December 20th at 10:30am at the Dwight Foster Public Library in Fort Atkinson.

Kathleen Maloney, Reporter

## Jefferson Boosters

At the beginning of the meeting we each shared 1 or 2 things we are thankful for. Then Cadence F. read the secretary's report. Micha J. shared he went to project learning day and Isaac A. shared they went to the poultry meeting. Jacob S. shared he went to a lego club, Cadence F. also shared she went to project learning day and the awards banquet. Our club met with our committee groups. Then the community talked about donations we can do. Then Coreen N. did a project talk on knitting with a knitting machine, and Henry E. taught us how to wolf whistle. At the end of the meeting food donations for the Jefferson Food Pantry were collected.

Avalee A., Reporter

## 4-H COMMUNICATIONS

### 4-H Family Newsletter

The 4-H Family Newsletter is a source of information for families to learn about opportunities, activities, workshops, deadlines and other information about Jefferson County 4-H. Leaders and members may submit articles. The newsletter is assembled and distributed through the EXT Office. The newsletter also serves as the essential source of information for Jefferson County Fair, Meat Animal Project Committee (MAP) and other important project and activities.

If you are hosting a project meeting, activity or event that the entire county would benefit from, please be sure to submit your article to the EXT Office by the 15th of each month. This includes any project meeting dates, community service or fundraisers that might be relevant to members outside your club. This is an easy way to help grow your programs and events. Spread the word! Please note the EXT Office may edit submissions based on newsletter space.

### Weekly Clover Connection

The Clover Connection is sent via email through 4honline each week usually on Mondays. The Clover Connection includes important information for the upcoming week. Please watch your email each week for important news and changes. *Note: If you "unsubscribe" to these emails, you will NOT receive any emails through 4honline.*

### 4-H Calendar

For up to date information on what is happening in 4-H, check out the [4-H Calendar](#). Dates are being added, changed, or cancelled all the time. Watch the calendar for updates!

## 4-H Food Stand at the Fair Park

Our next volunteer opportunities for the 4-H food stand at the Jefferson County Fair Park are listed below. Please consider volunteering and sign up for one of the following dates:

- November 29 | [Sign Up Here!](#)
- December 6 & 7 for a Gun Show—CANCELLED
- December 13 & 14 for a Dog Show - [Sign up here!](#)
- February 28 & March 1 for a Dog Show - [Sign up here!](#)
- March 7 & 8 for a Rabbit Show - [Sign up here!](#)

## 4-H State Project Guide

A 4-H project is an area you want to learn more about during the year. There are projects on just about any topic you would like to study and explore, from art to woodworking, from computers to rabbits, from sewing to mechanical science.

So how do you know what projects are available to you? This resource lists all the possible projects that 4-H offers, with a table of contents list on the first two pages and more detail in the pages that follow. In addition, your club organizational leader or county-based educator can tell you what projects and resources are available in your county.

For the upcoming 2025-2026 4-H year, use these guides:

- [Full 4-H Project Guide](#)
- [4-H Project Guide Quick Version](#)

## Jefferson County Agri-Business Club Grant

The Jefferson County Agri-Business Club is pleased to offer the opportunity for local agricultural-related groups to apply for a grant to “jump start” some activity or special project that is not covered within your group’s regular budget. The Club has awarded grants to local agricultural organizations for many years. The funds are generated from the Club’s county fair food stand and our holiday cheese and meat sales.

To apply, fill out the 2025-26 Grant Application form, found on the Club’s

website, [jeffersoncountyagribusinessclub.com](http://jeffersoncountyagribusinessclub.com). After submitting the paperwork, due no later than **December 30, 2025**, potential grant recipients will be asked to present their proposed project to the Club membership at our January 20, 2026 meeting and answer questions about the project’s details. The meeting will be held at Fairview Sports Bar and Banquet Facility in Jefferson.

The Jefferson County Agri-Business Club celebrated its 52<sup>nd</sup> anniversary last year. The mission of the club is to promote an active interest in agribusiness and to serve as a resource to all who care about Jefferson County agribusiness. The goal is to promote the agribusiness community to the local and state population. This is accomplished through education, media, visits to local agribusinesses, fundraisers utilizing agricultural products, offering scholarships toward ag careers, and offering funds, such as these grants, to organizations that promote the ag community in Jefferson County.

To learn more about this organization visit [www.jeffersoncountyagribusinessclub.com](http://www.jeffersoncountyagribusinessclub.com) or visit their Facebook page, [www.facebook.com/JeffersonCountyAgriBusinessClub](http://www.facebook.com/JeffersonCountyAgriBusinessClub). If you are interested in becoming a member, one does not have to be directly involved in agribusiness. All are welcome.



# DIRECTORY

## Leader's Association Board

| Name                            | Club                 | Phone        |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Cindy Jaquith, President        | Stone School         | 920-723-9517 |
| Becki Durkee, Treasurer         | Lake Ripley          | 608-444-4509 |
| Alyssa Jaquith, Secretary       | Stone School         | 920-723-9039 |
| Karen Gefvert, Director         | Rock River Clovers   | 608-617-2772 |
| Lisa Small, Director            | Ixonia Victory       | 920-285-7204 |
| Kimberly Kreger, Director       | Ideal Clever Clovers | 920-723-1191 |
| Willy Jacobson, Director        | Twin Rivers          | 920-723-1773 |
| Hunter Jacobson, Youth Director | Twin Rivers          |              |

## Countywide Project Leaders

| Project                  | Name                              | Contact                                                                                                                                  |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Clothing                 | Kimberly Kreger                   | 920-723-1191                                                                                                                             |
| Dairy                    | Tracy Brandel<br>Ashely Schlender | <a href="mailto:mtbrandel@gmail.com">mtbrandel@gmail.com</a><br><a href="mailto:ashleyschlender@gmail.com">ashleyschlender@gmail.com</a> |
| Dogs                     | Kate Anderson                     | 920-728-3614                                                                                                                             |
| Horse & Pony             | Jordan Soleska                    | <a href="mailto:jchpchair@gmail.com">jchpchair@gmail.com</a>                                                                             |
| Junior Leaders           | Alyssa Jaquith                    | 920-723-9039                                                                                                                             |
| Lego                     | Charles Johnson                   | 920-342-9783                                                                                                                             |
| Livestock                | Justin Thom                       | 262-490-1313                                                                                                                             |
| Plant & Natural Sciences | Sharon Schweitzer                 | 920-650-7110                                                                                                                             |
| Poultry                  | Joy Brattlie                      | 608-220-3933                                                                                                                             |
| Rabbits                  | Joy Brattlie                      | 608-220-3933                                                                                                                             |
| Shooting Sports          | David Saxby                       | <a href="mailto:jeffersonwi4hshootingsports@gmail.com">jeffersonwi4hshootingsports@gmail.com</a>                                         |

## Extension Jefferson County Staff

| Name               | Program Area                            | Phone        | Email                                                                                |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Katelyn Broedlow   | Support Staff—Administrative Specialist | 920-674-7440 | <a href="mailto:kbroedlow@jeffersoncountywi.gov">kbroedlow@jeffersoncountywi.gov</a> |
| Jerry Wilcenski    | 4-H Program Educator                    | 920-674-7299 | <a href="mailto:wilcenski@wisc.edu">wilcenski@wisc.edu</a>                           |
| Steven Chmielewski | Community Development Educator          | 262-548-7781 | <a href="mailto:steven.chmielewski@wisc.edu">steven.chmielewski@wisc.edu</a>         |
| Alison Pfau        | Regional Dairy Educator                 | 920-674-7298 | <a href="mailto:alison.pfau@wisc.edu">alison.pfau@wisc.edu</a>                       |
| Julie Hill         | Horticulture Outreach Specialist        | 262-374-4191 | <a href="mailto:julie.hill@wisc.edu">julie.hill@wisc.edu</a>                         |
| Chrissy Wen        | Area Extension Director                 | 262-741-4951 | <a href="mailto:christine.wen@wisc.edu">christine.wen@wisc.edu</a>                   |
| Josh Kamps         | Regional Crops Educator                 | 608-673-0680 | <a href="mailto:joshua.kamps@wisc.edu">joshua.kamps@wisc.edu</a>                     |