



January 2026

Thank You!

Thank you to the following people and businesses who donated to the Cascade County 4-H Program over the last month!



Phillip & Janel Krezowski

William Kessler

Rod & Julie Pribyl

Susan & George Drummond

Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

Lisa Henry

Zeller Family

Cory & Lisa Jassen

Norman Lorang



4-H Volunteers

Do you know someone that would like to help with project areas of 4-H? Our county is always looking for new volunteers. Please have them contact Jenn at jennifer.volkmar@montana.edu.

Office Closure

The Extension Office will be closed January 1.

KMON MAGGIE Contest

January 17th-18th, 2026

Register now on www.judgingcard.com to enter a team. Available contests include: Poultry, Ag Sales Judging, Meats Judging, Agronomy Judging, Livestock

Did you know?

4-H is the youth education program of Montana State University Extension. Club membership is recognized as an optimal 4-H experience but there are also other ways youth can be involved in 4-H such as school enrichment, special interest, afterschool, camps, conferences and individualized study.

4-H Club members are expected to...

- Complete a member enrollment card and enroll in at least one project
- Pay membership dues, if applicable.
- Attend and participate in meetings—club and project
- Set goals and measure progress towards those goals
- Keep records in each project in which they are enrolled
- Complete the projects in which they are enrolled and evaluate their 4-H experiences through their record books
- Participate in community service activities
- Participate in club and/or county fund-raising activities as necessary.

4-H Shooting Sports Leader Trainings

- Chouteau County Extension is hosting an archery training in Fort Benton on January 9th and 10th.

As of right now, we are in need of more instructors for rifle, pistol, archery, and shotgun. We would love to have you join us in teaching these disciplines.

Our Cascade County 4-H Shooting Sports Coordinator can be reached at cascadecoshootingsports@gmail.com if you have any questions on what being an instructor entails or any other question on the projects.

4-H Camp Junior Director Applications Will Open January 9th

Applications for Camp Junior Director (JD) positions will open on January 9 and close on February 9 for camp taking place June 6–10. This year, Cascade County Junior Directors will partner with Teton County to create a larger, collaborative camp experience with JD teams from both counties. Applicants must meet all eligibility requirements, including being 13 years old by October 1, 2025, to apply. Priority will be given to youth who demonstrate leadership through participation in multiple leadership activities and home leadership roles at the county and/or state level, not solely within their club. A \$25 application fee is required. Please watch for the application email—it will be coming out soon!



Montana 4-H Leadership Academy 4-H members 12+

Join the Montana 4-H Leadership Academy workshop on Sunday afternoons in 2025-2026 4-H year.

The leadership academy is a network of Montana 4-H members interested in exploring and developing their own leadership skills while serving their county 4-H program in new ways.

Each month the officer team members will present a different workshop topic that they have found to be important as they have grown their own leadership abilities. This workshop should be paired with a local county leadership meeting to work on county projects that serve the local 4-H program and community.

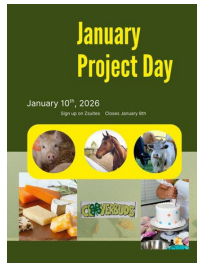
January Topic: Planning and Running a Project

Cascade County 4-H Teen Night

Get ready for a Cascade County 4-H Teen Night for all members to enjoy. January 16th from 6:00-9:00 pm.

Join fellow County members for a night of fun with games and activities at the Extension office. Sign up on ZSuite now.

January Project Day



The January 10th Project Day will be held at the MSU Extension Office from 9am-12pm. Please make sure to pay attention to workshop times so you do not double book your child when you sign up on ZSuite. Sign up opens January 1st and closes **Wednesday January 7th**.

Remember to sign in for club points.

Cloverbuds are only allowed to participate in the Cloverbud Workshop and need to make sure they come for only this session.

Youth do not need to be enrolled in the project to participate in the Project Day workshop.

This month will feature workshops like these:

Dairy Detectives: 10:30 -12:00 Members become Dairy Detectives as they investigate how milk is produced, what's inside it, and how it becomes cheese and butter. Through demonstrations and hands-on labs, we will make both cheese and butter and have a cheese tasting of various varieties. Members will discover the science, nutrition, and fun behind dairy foods.

Ag and Natural Resource Presentation: 10:30-12:00 Our very own MSU Ag and Natural Resource Regional Special Amy Kelley will be with us to talk about promotions of youth livestock programs and skill-a-thons.

Chatcolab

Registration for *Chatcolab 2026: One Sky, Many Stars* is now open.



Held from 1pm on Sunday, June 15 through 9am on Friday, June 20, 2025. It's time to return to Summer Camp - but not just any summer camp - **Chatcolab** - an Experiential learning experience for all ages that has been around since 1948!

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfxaeTNDqfVLbU0vlpGQ01aPYy8wBGlcWYf61tiu8L-W7FDwA/viewform>

Assistance and funding for this camp is available through the 4-H Foundation.

Independent Study Approval

Your 4-H Project Plan need to receive approval from the 4-H Agent. This is an important step as it gives you an opportunity to receive feedback on your plan. The 4-H Project Plan is due to the **Extension Office by January 15**. The plan will be returned to you with feedback.

Project Deadlines -

December 15: Returning 4-H member enrollment due online at 4h.zsuite.org.

January 15: Project Plan Agreement due to the Extension Office.

Mid-June: Exact Date to be announced in alignment with the Livestock record book review date .

June 25: Montana State Fair entries due.

August 20: Completed records due to your club leader.

What's Up with 4-H

Let us know what you are doing in 4-H in Cascade County!

We would love to have you submit photos and/or blurbs from and about events and activities you're participating in or updates on your projects throughout the year. Show off your skills and tell us what you love about what you're doing in 4-H!

Project Reminders

Remember to review the updates in the rule books if you are in Horse, Livestock, or Shooting Sports projects. There are deadlines and requirements that you will need to fulfill for the project. If you have questions, please reach out to that committee.

The add/drop date for all projects is May 1st. You will need to go into your household profile on ZSuite to add or drop projects. If you have problems, contact the office for help on the process. No changes can be made after May 1st. If you feel you won't be able to complete all your projects, please make sure you drop them by this date as it affects qualifications for awards and scholarships.

Reminder to Volunteers and Leaders:

In order to vote as a committee member, you must have your enrollment fully completed in Zsuits. This includes having your payment submitted, background checks cleared, and all required waivers signed.

Please make sure these steps are completed to ensure your eligibility to participate in voting.

Montana 4-H Congress

Plan for the future if you are 13 and older.

Montana Congress Contests include:

[Career Communications](#)

[Demonstrations and/or Illustrated Talk](#)

[Fashion Revue](#)

[Gavel Games \(Parliamentary Procedure\)](#)

[Horse Judging](#)

[Horse Hippology \(Horse Skill-a-Thon\)](#)

[Livestock Judging](#)

[Public Speaking](#)

[Quilt Contest](#)

[Stir-Up \(foods\)](#)

[Video](#)

Focused Project Days

We would like to know if you are interested in doing extra Project Days focused on a specific project. We are currently piloting a program of trying them on a Friday for those who don't go to school on Fridays to participate. If you want to participate, but Friday doesn't work, let us know!

If you are interested in participating in a focused project day or are interested in putting one on for a specific project, please contact Jenn at jennifer.volkmar@montana.edu.

This is a great opportunity for teen leaders to practice their leadership skills and for any member to fulfill a Learning Experience requirement for record books.

Youth Leadership



Calling all young agriculturists!

Don't miss these phenomenal keynote speakers that will be joining us for our Young Farmers & Ranchers Leadership Conference from January 23-25 at the Holiday Inn in Great Falls, Montana. For more information and to register, visit mfbf.org.

Flint Rasmussen is widely considered the most famous rodeo entertainer in history, and has spent over three decades redefining what it means to be a "man in the can." Born and raised in Choteau, Montana, Flint's journey from a small-town athlete to an international icon is a testament to the power of authenticity, hard work, and the Montana spirit.

Danny Munch is an economist for the American Farm Bureau Federation and serves as a vital bridge between complex market data and the hardworking families who power American agriculture. Based in Washington, D.C., Danny specializes in analyzing the economic shifts that directly impact the bottom line for farmers and ranchers across the country.

Eric Tilleman is a native of Chinook, Montana, and has spent his entire career championing the future of Montana agriculture through education, leadership, and public service. Currently representing House District 23 (South Great Falls and Cascade), Eric brings a unique blend of classroom experience and legislative action to the Montana House of Representatives.

Rec Lab Proposals



District 7 invites you to submit workshop proposals for the 2026 Montana 4-H Rec Lab, happening March 27–29 in Columbus, MT. Workshops will be held on Saturday, March 28.

This year's theme:

"4-H Escape: Do You Have the Skills to Unlock Your Potential?"

Bring your creativity and skills to life with a workshop that challenges participants to grow in leadership, communication, and team-building — the core of Rec Lab's mission!

Workshop proposals will be submitted through Google Forms at the link here: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSfcMYQsAHodX-ry3QCH-U8g-71JWZSvfSVSW8BS0YjvISOZlQ/viewform?usp=dialog>

Deadline to submit proposals is Monday, January 5, 2026

Both teens and adults (4-H volunteers, Extension professionals, community members & people from other organizations) are encouraged to submit workshop proposals. Please share with those who might be interested in presenting from your communities!

Shooting Sports Competitions

There are quite a few Shooting Sports competitions coming up. The list will be updated as competition information is confirmed. If you are interested in attending one, please contact your discipline instructor for more information.

12/15/25 - 2/15/26 Custer County 4-H Postal – Air Pistol and Rifle - registration entry form postmarked no later than February 13, 2026

1/10/26 Lewis & Clark County
Invitational: Archery, Pistol, Rifle, 3D - Helena

1/16–17/26 Archery, Rifle, Pistol - Miles City

1/24/26 Archery, Rifle, Pistol, Hunting - Kalispell

2/1/26 Carbon County Archery Shoot - Red Lodge

2/6–7/26 Fallon County Invitational - Baker

2/7/26 2026 Pondera County
Invitational/Postal - Conrad

2/14/26 Fred Grant Memorial
Invitational - Ronan

2/28/26 Chouteau County Archery
Invitational - Fort Benton

2/28/26 Mineral County Archery Shoot - Superior

3/6–8/26 State 4-H Shooting Sports
Invitational - Bozeman

3/14–15/26 Ennis Archery Shoot - Ennis

3/28/26 Missoula County 4-H Archery
Invitational - Missoula

6/21-26/26 National 4-H Shoot (all disciplines) - Grand Island, NE

Safe Sitter Class

Sunny Spirits 4-H Club helped get a Safe Sitter class set up on January 3rd for those in the babysitting project. Those not in the babysitting project, but who want to learn, are also encouraged to register. To register, please go to:

www.montanahealthandsafety.com.

Miles City All Beef Livestock Judging Contest

The event will be held on February 7th at the Miles Community College Ag Advancement Center in Miles City (340 I-94 Business Loop).

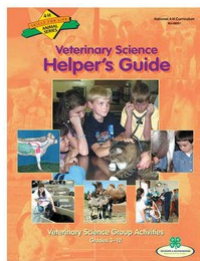
The contest will include 9 classes of beef cattle with 3 sets of reasons. Registration will begin at 8:00 a.m. with the contest starting at 9:00 a.m. Divisions for the event are Novice – ages 8-9-10; Junior – ages 11-12-13 and Senior – ages 14 -19 and an adult jackpot competition.

Registration will be done through the Judging Card website this year, we are working through a few details and will have the events posted very soon. Please contact your local Extension agent for more details

4-H Project & Member Spotlights

Veterinary Science

This curriculum has been developed to provide youth a chance through doing a chance to identify threats to animals, helps and well being, It also includes animal management and practices. Allows for members to develop and understanding of the veterinary profession and how to be a wise animal owner.



Fantastic Foods

This project is designed to help youth have fun in the kitchen as they learn basic food preparation skills, prepare different food, and do fun experiments and go on fact-finding missions. You will practice hands on activities in food preservation, meal preparation and service, managing resources, introductory canning careers in the food industry and must more.



Member Spotlight:

Bonnie Asmussen

Throughout the year, we'll be highlighting and celebrating our members in the newsletter! This is a great way to get to know each other, share experiences, and showcase the wonderful people who make our program strong. Be on the lookout for upcoming spotlights. This month our Member Spotlight is Kinlee Loch from the 468 Club!

Q: How long have you been involved in 4-H?

A: 7 years

Q: What inspired you to join?

A: Some of my friends were in 4-H and after all the stories they told me I wanted to join.

Q: Advise he would give:

A: I would say start with a project that you can easily find help with from either friends, family or Online Sources like You Tube

Q: Interests or hobbies outside of 4-H:

A: Outside of 4-H I play volleyball, basketball, livestock judging and competing in FFA contests.

Q: A fun fact about you (something people may not know):

A: I spend a lot of time trying different crafts and so far my favorite are drawing and clay work.

Q: Your favorite memory or experience so far:

A: My favorite memory from 4-H would be when we went camping at the Lewis and Clark Caverns as a club.

Financial Opportunities & Updates

Farm Service Agency (FSA) Youth Loans

FSA makes loans to individual young persons to start and operate income-producing projects of modest size in connection with their participation in 4-H, FFA, tribal youth group, or similar agricultural youth organization. The project being financed with an FSA Youth Loan needs to provide an opportunity for the young person to acquire experience and education in agriculture-related skills. Call the Great Falls FSA office at (406) 727-7580 for more information.

Montana Department of Agriculture Junior Agriculture Loans

The Montana Junior Agriculture Loan Program was developed to assist and encourage members of agricultural youth organizations in financing agricultural projects. Projects can involve crop and livestock production, custom farming, marketing and distribution, processing, and other financially feasible activities. Loans are made from the assets of the Agricultural Finance Program. Program support and technical assistance are provided by the MSU Extension Service, Montana agricultural educators, and private financial institutions. Visit <https://agr.mt.gov/Topics/E-G/Grants-Pages/Junior-Agriculture-Loans> for more information.

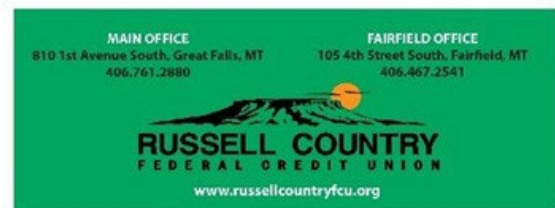


A "My 4-H Loan" is the perfect answer to help with your operating expenses.

Minimum Loan Amount - \$100.00
Maximum Loan Amount - \$4,000.00
Maximum Repayment Term - 12 Months
Minimum Monthly Payment Amount - \$25.00*

Call Us or Stop In. We're Here to Help!

*If the loan is not paid in full within the 12 Month Term, a Balloon Payment will be required to pay the remaining balance.
**Requires a qualified joint owner for 17 and under youth.



Russell Country Federal Credit Union

Russell Country Federal Credit has developed a program to assist youth and young adults from 8-19 years of age, who are actively participating in 4-H to learn financial responsibility and good saving habits. Visit <https://www.russellcountryfcu.org/4-h-suite/> for more information.

Montana Farmers Union 4-H Sentence Grant

Montana Farmers Union is awarding \$100 grants to 4-H clubs to further their project work. All you need to do is submit one sentence on how you would use the funds! Apply at montanafarmersunion.com

Cascade 4-H Foundation Scholarship

The Cascade 4-H Foundation Scholarship opens January 1, 2026.

At the heart of 4-H is a commitment to learning, leadership and service. To help promote those endeavors, Cascade 4-H Foundation supports scholarships to provide financial assistance to Cascade County 4-H members to pursue post-secondary education.

Up to seven scholarships of \$500.00 each shall be awarded with priority given to first time applicants.

The scholarship money awarded to repeat recipients will be up to \$1,000, allocating the proceeds equitably if less people apply than what has been budgeted for.

You can apply on ZSuite or by email. All applications must be received in full by March 31 or the following business day if the 31st falls on a weekend or holiday.

Applications consist of:

APPLICATION: Completed application, limiting essay questions to 300 words.

TWO LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION: Two letters of recommendation, preferably one from a 4-H volunteer.

CURRENT TRANSCRIPT: A current high school or post-secondary transcript must be provided.

Montana 4-H Foundation Grants

The Montana 4-H Foundation supports 4-H initiatives that focus on healthy living, citizenship, leadership, science, engineering, and technology. The mission of the Montana 4-H Foundation is to "help 4-H youth by raising private funds, managing financial resources and partnering with the MSU Extension Service to fund educational opportunities for Montana 4-H youth, volunteer leaders, and staff."

Montana 4-H grants provide opportunities for youth and adults to strengthen their skills and maximize their positive impacts on the communities in which they live.

[Grants - MONTANA 4-H FOUNDATION](#)

Meetings & Important Notices

Horse Leaders Meeting



The next meeting of the Cascade County 4-H Horse Leaders will be on Tuesday, January 6th at 5:30 pm at the Extension Office.

Shooting Sports Leaders Meeting



The next meeting of the Cascade County 4-H Shooting Sports Leaders Committee will be held on Tuesday January 6th, at 6:00pm at the Extension Office.

Leaders' Council Meeting



The next meeting of the Cascade County 4-H Leaders' Council will be on Tuesday, January 13th at 6:00 pm at the Extension Office.

Foundation Meeting



The next meeting of the Cascade County 4-H Foundation will be on Tuesday, February 17th at 6:00pm at the Extension office.

Livestock Leaders Meeting

The next meeting of the Cascade County 4-H Livestock Leaders will be on



Tuesday, January 6th at 7:00 pm at the Extension Office.

All meetings will also be virtual via WebEx. Please check your email for the links and meeting packets.

Important Dates

January

3 - Safe Sitting Class
6 - Horse Meeting 5:30
6 - Shooting Sports Meeting 6:00
6 - Livestock Leaders Meeting 7:00
10 - Project Day
11 - Junior Livestock meeting (at Timeless Seeds) 2 pm
13 - Leaders Council Meeting 6:00
16 -Teen Night

February

3 - Horse meeting 5:30 pm
3 - Livestock Meeting 7:00 pm
17 - Foundations Meeting 6:00 pm
21 - Shooting sports tournament

Organization Leaders:

If your club offers online links to your meetings please send them to the office as we can pass on to those who can not make in person.

Family Reminders:

All activity and events fees must be paid in advance in order to participate in Cascade County events. These costs allow us to reserve spaces, plan materials and support county programming. Please make sure your payments are completed ahead of time so we can continue offering great opportunities for our members. Thank you for helping us keep things running smoothly and timely. Some events you can pay online for other items you will need exact cash or check when paying at the extension office.