

KSU YOUTH LIVESTOCK PROGRAM UPDATE



www.YouthLivestock.ksu.edu

April 2026



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WE'RE SOCIAL!



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WHAT'S BEEN HAPPENING IN THE YLP?

The KSU Youth Livestock Program is off to an exciting start in 2026! We were honored to have fantastic speakers, volunteers, and participating families join us for K-State Junior Beef Producer Day in the new Bilbrey Family Event Center. We appreciated everyone's enthusiasm and flexibility as we transitioned to this new venue. It is so wonderful to see youth excited about their projects, while meeting lifelong friends they'll see in the barn throughout their show careers. The spring and summer are packed full of events and activities, and we can't wait to see everyone over the next few months! Good luck with your 2026 livestock projects...and Go Cats!

PROGRAM RECAPS

- ◆ K-State Junior Beef Producer Day

UPCOMING EVENTS

- ◆ K-State Junior Sheep Producer Day
- ◆ KASLA
- ◆ Discovery Days
- ◆ "Champions" K-State Livestock Judging Camp
- ◆ Dr. Bob Hines Kansas Swine Classic
- ◆ Social Media
- ◆ YQCA
- ◆ State Livestock Nominations
- ◆ Livestock Sweepstakes

IMPORTANT DATES

- ◆ May 1 - Market Beef
Nominations Due
- ◆ June 15 - Small Livestock &
Commercial Heifer
Nominations Due



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THE YLP OFFERS:

- Jr. Producer Days
- KASLA
- 4-H Livestock Sweepstakes
- State Livestock Nominations
- Dr. Bob Hines Swine Classic
- ASI @ Discovery Days
- Local Show & Clinic Links
- Educational Materials

Check out the materials posted on the KSU Youth Livestock Program website!



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K-STATE JUNIOR BEEF PRODUCER DAY

Over 450 youth, parents, and project leaders from 72 Kansas counties, and two Nebraska counties, were welcomed to the new Bilbrey Family Event Center on Saturday, March 7, 2026. This was the first youth livestock event hosted at the new venue. Brady Jensen, of Jensen Ranch, kicked off the program with a presentation on Project Selection. Next, families chose three breakout sessions that most closely fit their interests, including Nutrition with Dr. Jaymelynn Farney, the Color Carnival of Meat Color with Meat Science Extension Specialist, Dr. Erin Beyer, Getting Off on the Right Foot, which included information on facilities, equipment, halter breaking, and daily home preparations for the show with the K-State Livestock Judging Team, and Showmanship with Brady Jensen. After lunch, families selected three more breakout sessions from Cattle Health with Dr. Bryan Weaver, Beef Cattle Reproduction with Dr. David Grieger, Becoming a Wildcat with Rachael Stadel, and Clipping and Fitting with the K-State Livestock Judging Team. At the conclusion of the program, an optional instructor-led YQCA session was taught by Extension Agents Charlene Miller and Makinna Peterson. The event was sponsored by Merck Animal Health, Valley Vet Supply, Primalac On-Feed by Star Labs, Otto Ranch Creations, Zinpro, Fink Beef Genetics, the Kansas Beef Council, K-State Department of Animal Sciences & Industry, K-State Extension, and the KSU Youth Livestock Program. A Bill House Agricultural Grant from the Community Foundation of Southeast Kansas also helped support the K-State Junior Beef Producer Day program.

K-STATE JUNIOR SHEEP PRODUCER DAY

The 2026 K-State Junior Sheep Producer Day will be hosted Saturday, April 11, at the Bilbrey Family Event Center in Manhattan, KS. The registration deadline has passed, but we look forward to hosting a great crowd of youth and families who plan to attend! There will also be an optional YQCA instructor-led training provided at the end of the formal program. Any youth who is interested in earning their certification will need to register through the YQCA website prior to attending the training.

INFORMATIONAL ZOOM SESSIONS FOR STATE LIVESTOCK NOMINATIONS

There will be two informational Zoom sessions for families to learn more regarding the state livestock nomination process. All market animals and commercial breeding females families would like to be eligible to show at the Kansas State Fair Grand Drive and/or KJLS must be nominated. On April 8, [market beef and commercial heifers](#) will be the focus. Then, on May 6, we will cover [small livestock](#) (hogs, sheep, meat goats). The sessions will provide information over the process in general, tips and reminders, as well as a demo of logging in and using the ShoWorks system. This will include setting up exhibitor accounts, entering animals into the nomination system, suggestions for those who would like to family nominate animals under multiple exhibitors in their family, and some overall tips and suggestions to be successful. Registration is required and may be accessed by clicking the specie hyperlinks above. Participants must register by noon on the Monday prior to the zoom meeting to receive the link. Both sessions will begin at 6:00 p.m.

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HELPFUL HANDOUTS

Handouts and project show guides from Junior Producer Events can be found on the Youth Livestock Program website:

www.YouthLivestock.KSU.edu

These handouts provide knowledge of how to care for and maintain your youth livestock project. Please refer to these resources for the beginner showman who needs guidance with their project as well as experienced showmen looking to learn new things.



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K-STATE “CHAMPIONS” LIVESTOCK JUDGING CAMP

The K-State Livestock Judging Team recently released their annual “Champions” livestock judging camp dates for this summer. Camp sessions will be June 1-3 and June 8-10. In addition to evaluating livestock, this camp focuses on reason development and presentation, as well as incorporating performance data into the decision-making process. Prior livestock judging experience is necessary. It is open to youth 14-18 years old and participation is filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Registration will close April 10. Visit the [K-State Judging Camps](#) page of the website for additional details and registration links.



K-STATE ANIMAL SCIENCES LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

The K-State Department of Animal Sciences and Industry is currently accepting applications for the K-State Animal Sciences Leadership Academy (KASLA). The program will be hosted June 10-13 on the K-State campus. Students will participate in tours and workshops, have mentor time with faculty, and evaluate current events within the industry. Participation is limited to 20 high school students. The program is sponsored by the Livestock and Meat Industry Council (LMIC) Inc., with the goal to develop young leaders within the livestock industry and prepare them for a successful future in this field. Applications are due April 30. The forms and details are available under the [K-State Animal Science Leadership Academy](#) tab of the youth livestock program website. For further details, contact Ashley Hartman via [email](#), or by phone at 785-532-1272.



ANIMAL SCIENCE AT DISCOVERY DAYS

Come join #KSU ASI in June during Kansas 4-H Discovery Days! Several animal science-related sessions will be offered while youth “Lead With Heart, Think With Courage, Act With Wisdom”. Take a tour of the K-State Sheep & Meat Goat Unit, basic and advanced meat judging, beef cattle reproduction, and chuckwagon cooking, are just a few of the classes available. Check out the course catalog for opportunities to join us at KSU ASI!

DR. BOB HINES KANSAS SWINE CLASSIC

The Dr. Bob Hines Kansas Youth Swine Classic will be hosted July 10-11 at the Riley County Fairgrounds in CiCo Park in Manhattan. This two-day event is comprised of educational opportunities, including a swine skillathon, photography contest, showmanship, and a prospect and market hog show. Kansas youth ages 7-18 are invited to exhibit. Entries must be submitted online by 5:00 p.m. on the deadline. Payment must also be postmarked by the deadline, which is June 22. Show details and the entry link will be posted on the [Dr. Bob Hines Swine Classic](#) page of the [Youth Livestock Program](#) website later this spring.



KSU YOUTH LIVESTOCK PROGRAM UPDATE

SAVE THE DATE!

- April 20**
Market Beef DNA Envelope
Orders Due
- April 30**
KASLA Applications Due
- May 1**
Market Beef Nominations Due
- June 5**
Small Livestock & Commercial
Heifer DNA Envelope Orders Due
- June 10-13**
KASLA
- June 15**
Small Livestock & Commercial
Heifer Nominations Due
- June 22**
Dr. Bob Hines Swine Classic
Entry Deadline
- July 10-11**
Dr. Bob Hines Swine Classic
- July 15**
Grand Drive Entries Due
- August 1**
Livestock Sweepstakes
Registration Due
- August 15**
KJLS Entries Due
- August 22-23**
Livestock Sweepstakes
- September 11-13**
Kansas State Fair Grand Drive
- October 2-4**
Kansas Junior Livestock Show
(KJLS)

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KSU YLP SOCIAL MEDIA

The KSU Youth Livestock Program uses a variety of social media platforms to make announcements, issue reminders, release program information, distribute updates, and share photos. Make sure to “Like” the Kansas State Youth Livestock Program on [Facebook](#), and “Follow” us on Instagram.

We will be releasing a weekly tip for the nomination process on Tuesday evenings. Follow [#NominationTipTuesday](#) to learn more about making sure nominations are complete. These reminders are helpful for new families, as well as seasoned veterans!

The KSU Department of Animal Sciences & Industry also has active social media accounts, so go “Like” their page to follow all events related to KSU ASI!

The Kansas State Fair and KJLS disperse valuable information via their Facebook pages, from entry information, to unloading routes and stalling information. If you are interested in those events, make sure you are following [The Grand Drive](#) and [Kansas Junior Livestock Show](#).

YOUTH FOR THE QUALITY CARE OF ANIMALS (YQCA)

Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA) is a national, multi-species livestock quality assurance program that focuses on food safety, animal well-being, and life skill development for youth producing and/or showing livestock. Youth may participate in an instructor-led class for \$3/child, or complete the web-based course for \$12/child. The YQCA program transitioned to a new platform in March of 2022. All families must have an account on this platform to complete and manage certifications for children in their family. The website is www.yqcaprogram.org. **The YQCA requirement will continue for all Kansas State Fair Grand Drive and KJLS exhibitors.** *Youth participating in the instructor-led course will need to complete the pre-test prior to the class. After you login, click on your username, then select “Enrolled ILT Trainings” to view the pre-test for each child.* Those taking the online course are encouraged to use [Google Chrome](#) to minimize technical difficulties. Additionally, the YQCA staff has created videos and Help Docs to guide families in obtaining their certification. These materials are located on the YQCA program website.

Youth are encouraged to complete their certification as soon as possible. It must be completed for 2026 prior to state nomination. Youth who are 7 years old should attend an in-person course with a parent/guardian. Nominations received without a valid YQCA certificate will be considered incomplete. Families should download each child’s certificate after completing the class, so it is ready to upload into the nomination system, along with the Declaration Form. Others have also found it helpful to email a copy to themselves, so the number and expiration date are accessible on-the-go. Exhibitors who are only showing registered breeding females will submit their number during show entry. Visit the YQCA program website or local extension office for details on class options.



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IMPORTANT DATES!

April 8

Informational Zoom Meeting for
Market Beef & Comm. Heifers

April 20

Order Deadline:
Market Beef DNA Envelopes

May 1

Nominations Due:
Market Beef

May 6

Informational Zoom Meeting for
Small Livestock

June 5

Order Deadline:
Small Livestock DNA Envelopes

June 15

Nominations Due:
Swine
Sheep
Meat Goat
Commercial Heifer

July 15

KSF Grand Drive Entries Due

August 15

KJLS Entries Due

RESOURCES:

- ◆ Rookie Guide
- ◆ Zoom Meeting
- ◆ 2026 Updates
- ◆ Specie Checklist
- ◆ Quick Tips
- ◆ Deadline Table
- ◆ #NominationTipTuesday
- ◆ Grand Drive Rules
- ◆ KJLS Rules

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STATE LIVESTOCK NOMINATIONS & DEADLINES

The 2026 state livestock nomination season has arrived! The current materials have been released and are posted on the KSU Youth Livestock website under [Nomination Information](#). All families are highly encouraged to plan ahead and use the resources. To be eligible to exhibit in the Kansas State Fair Grand Drive &/or KJLS, market animals and commercial breeding females must be formally nominated by the appropriate deadline. Also, ALL meat goats, regardless of gender or division (wethers and breeding does) must be nominated to be shown. State Nomination includes four major steps, primarily completed online. Extension Agents and FFA Advisors approve nominations online as well. Informational Zoom sessions will also be hosted for families [April 8](#) and [May 6](#) at 6:00pm - click the date to register and receive the link!

** Nomination information, forms, checklists, and the Rookie Guide may be found on the KSU Youth Livestock website: www.youthlivestock.ksu.edu.**

4-Step Nomination Process:

1. Purchase Official DNA Envelopes in advance [online](#); Must be purchased in 2022-26.
** Order Deadlines: Market Beef - April 20; Small Livestock - June 5*
2. Enter animal & exhibitor data through online system ([ShowWorks](#)) by deadline.
**All Exhibitors - create an account. This includes returning exhibitors.*
3. Mail completed & signed DNA Envelopes, with submission receipt, by deadline.
4. Online approval by Extension Agents (4-H) and FFA Advisors (FFA).

Reminders:

- All state nominated animals must be tagged with a Kansas 4-H EID tag.
- Families need to have their animals tagged, new YQCA certificates downloaded, and Declaration Form complete before entering animals into the online system!
- DNA hair samples are required for all nominated animals and must be submitted in an official DNA envelope purchased through the online system. The signatures of all exhibitors within the family & a parent/guardian are required on the DNA envelope.
- Families will be prompted to upload their completed [2026 Declaration Form](#) when each child enters their first animal into the system; use one copy of the family form for all exhibitors within the family - typed signatures will be accepted.
- [YQCA certificate](#) for each child will be uploaded into system. Get certified early.
- The Declaration Form and the YQCA certificate must be uploaded at the same time!
- **Animals need to be entered in the system under each child in the family**, in addition to everyone signing the DNA envelopes. Otherwise, only those who have the animal listed under their exhibitor account at nomination can enter and show it later.
- Nomination fee (\$12.00/animal) is paid through purchasing DNA envelopes online.
- Ear notches are required for all swine.
- Sheep & meat goats must submit full scrapie tag numbers, including flock ID & animal number (correct format: KSS0035 18151). Both parts of number are required.
- Nomination entries (tag IDs) must be submitted online and DNA samples postmarked by the listed deadline. No exceptions. Dates are strictly enforced.
- Nomination is NOT entry. After the nomination process is complete, families must officially enter each child for the show in which they would like to participate!

**Follow each show's website for details: [Grand Drive](#) - [KJLS](#)*

DEADLINES

May 1 - Market Beef Nominations DUE (market steers & market heifers)

June 15 - Swine, Sheep, Meat Goat, & Commercial Breeding Heifer Nominations DUE

KSU YOUTH LIVESTOCK PROGRAM UPDATE

SEE YA THIS
SUMMER!



KANSAS 4-H LIVESTOCK SWEEPSTAKES

The Kansas 4-H Livestock Sweepstakes will be hosted August 22-23. This event includes the state 4-H livestock judging contest, meat judging contest, livestock skillathon, and quiz bowl, all in one, action-packed weekend. In addition to being the Kansas qualifier for the national 4-H contests, sweepstakes awards will also be tabulated for teams and individuals who participate in all of the contests throughout the weekend. Registration must be submitted by the local extension office by August 1. Watch the [KSU YLP website](#) and Facebook for more details in June!

MEET THE YLP INTERNS

Look for these faces at KSU Youth Livestock Program events and activities! We are excited to have Nissa Olsen and Hanna Bailey join our team as the 2026 interns. They have already hit the ground running by helping with the junior producer days, tag distribution, filling DNA envelope orders for state livestock nominations, and building graphics. We're thrilled to have them involved as we gear up for summer!

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To be added to the KSU
YLP email listserv, email
[Lexie!](#)

NISSA OLSEN



Nissa Olsen from Manhattan, Kansas is a graduating Senior studying Animal Sciences and Industry with a minor in Agricultural Sales. She grew up involved in 4-H and FFA, where she exhibited cattle at the state and national level. These experiences helped her to develop a passion for livestock, and helping others. On campus, Nissa is involved in Collegiate Cattlewomen, ASI Mentors, and

Snyder Leadership Legacy Fellows. She will earn her bachelor's degree in May and continue her education as a graduate student at K-State.



HANNA BAILEY



Hanna Bailey from Girard, Kansas is a sophomore studying Animal Science and Industry with a minor in Agricultural Communications and Education and a certificate in Marketing Technologies. She grew up on her family's 5th generation farm and was involved in 4-H and FFA and competed at the local, state, and national level.

Through these organizations she found a passion for working with youth in agriculture. While at K-State Hanna is on the Meat Judging Team, an Ag Ambassador, the Public Relations Director for Block and Bridle, a part of the Student Governing Associations Communications Agency, a Rudd Foundation Scholar, and is a member of Silver Key Sophomore Honorary, Collegiate Cattlewomen, and Ag Communicators of Tomorrow. She is excited to grow her skills and serve as the Marketing and Communications Intern for the Youth Livestock Program.

