



SUSSEX COUNTY 4-H PREPARE FOR FAIR!

2026 NEW JERSEY STATE FAIR®/SUSSEX COUNTY FARM & HORSE SHOW

IMPORTANT FAIR DATES		
Date	Event	Time
Saturday, July 11	Shotwell Building Set up (Volunteers Needed)	9-3 pm
Sunday, July 26	Drop off projects (Outdoor Educations, STEM, Home Furnishings, Arts & Crafts, Art, Ceramics, Needlecraft, Photography, Construction, Hobbies & Collections, Woodcraft, Canine & Feline Studies, Clothing, Dairy Studies) at Shotwell Bldg. (Volunteers Needed)	3-5 pm
Tuesday, July 28	Club booth set up and Project Specific Drop off (Club Banner/Sign) at Shotwell Bldg.	3-8 pm
Wednesday, July 29	Club booth set up and Project Specific Drop off (Club Banner/Sign) at Shotwell Bldg.	3-8 pm
Friday, August 31	Drop off Fruits, Vegetables, Flowers, & Herbs at Shotwell Bldg.	10 am
	2026 NJSF/SCF&HS Opens	5 pm
Tuesday, August 4	Market Animal Social and Auction	5-9 pm
Wednesday, August 5	Summer Blossoms Open Garden	6:30 pm
Thursday, August 6	Food Departments entries drop off	10am -12 pm
	Lois Chamming Best of the Best Awards	6:45 pm
	Round Robin Showmanship (Ag Arena)	7-10 pm
Saturday, August 7	2026 Fair Closes! Limited Project/Ribbon pick up in Shotwell.	10-10:30 pm
Sunday, August 9	Shotwell Building Project/Ribbon Pick-Up and Exhibit Breakdown/Clean-up (Volunteers Needed)	9am-?
	4-H Animals Released/Livestock Barn clean-up to take place	TBD

2026 NEW JERSEY STATE FAIR®/ SUSSEX COUNTY FARM & HORSE SHOW

The 2026 Fair will open at 5:00 p.m. on Friday, July 31 and continue until 10:00 p.m. Saturday, August 8.

Livestock Barn Clean Ups and release of animal exhibits will take place on Sunday, August 9 starting at 6:00am at the discretion of the Ag. Area Coordinator and Ag. Division President.

Shotwell Building entries/ribbons may be picked up Saturday, August 8 between 10-10:30pm. Exhibit Breakdown/Clean-up will be completed on Sunday, August 9 starting at 9am. All exhibits must be picked up by 10:30 am or they will risk being discarded if prior arrangements have not been made.

PROJECT RECORD BOOKS

To be eligible for fair passes all project record books and entry forms are to be submitted to the 4-H Office by Wednesday, July 1. If your project is not complete, (your project is competing at the fair or you have competitions after the fair) your record book should still be up-to-date and submitted with a Fair Review Label.

For those, whose project record books will still be a “work in progress” by 7/1

An up-to-date record book should include:

- **Start of Year Goals**-completed and signed,
- **Activities/Events**—up to date including club meetings, competitions attended, participation in public presentations and club meetings
- **Financial Records** (up to date; totals are not required)
- **Fair Review Signatures*** (signatures by the member, parent and club leader required)
*adhesive labels are available upon request from the 4-H Office.

Record books should be completed with all appropriate signatures. Any books turned in without the proper signatures (i.e., start of year goals and end of the year or fair review) will not be accepted.

After the Fair, complete record books are to be re-submitted for year-end evaluation. A completed record book should include the above sections, as well as:

- ∞ Looking Back (reflections on the year’s accomplishments),
- ∞ Thinking Ahead (goals for the coming year),
- ∞ Financial Records totals for all areas including the net project cost table,
- ∞ 4-H Story and All end-of-year signatures.

Project Books deemed exemplary by the Advisory Council may receive top honors and receive an Amazon gift card at the “Best of the Best” Lois Chamming awards during the fair

Record Books with Fair Review labels should be returned to the 4-H Office no later than October 1.

Fair Passes

The New Jersey State Fair has implemented a new 4-H fair pass policy.

To be eligible for any multiday fair pass, a member needs to be enrolled in 4-H as of January 1 and a member's project record book and entry form(s) are to be submitted to the 4-H Office by July 1.

- Those 4-H members with live animal exhibits that will be on the grounds for at least 4 days will receive a full 8 1/2-day Fair pass, as usual. This includes alpacas, cattle, goats, horses, poultry, sheep, and swine.
- The Fair will offer 4-H members entering static exhibits 4-day fair passes. These would include 4-H members who are only entering projects in the Shotwell Building or are not exhibiting animals at the fair for four or more days. Exceptions have been made for a few non-livestock 4-H clubs that provide over four or more days of member lead activities or service that engages the public.

4-H members who would receive 4-day passes will have the opportunity to earn 8-day passes (or any part thereof) if they choose to participate in volunteer community service activities that help the Fairgrounds in the Fall and Spring. Those 4-H members receiving 4-day passes will be eligible for additional days based on hours of volunteer service prior to the Fair. Two hours of volunteering will earn one additional day pass.

For this year leaders will complete the [Fair Pass Form](#) for their club as usual and the office will note whether the members receive a 4 or full weeks pass. They will also note if a 4-Day pass member earned additional day passes. The Fair Pass Form is due to the 4-H office by July 1, before 4:30pm.

4-H Exhibit Catalogue

The [2026 4-H Exhibit Catalogue](#), and all forms are available for download from the Sussex 4-H Website (www.sussex4h.org), as well as below. If you cannot, please contact the 4-H office to request a hard copy.

All Entry Forms are to be submitted to the 4-H Office by Wednesday, July 1 before 3:30 p.m.

Sussex 4-H [Shotwell Exhibit Entry](#)

Sussex 4-H [Club Booth Entry](#)

Sussex 4-H [Livestock Entry](#) (for Alpaca, Beef, Dairy, Goat, Sheep, Swine)

Sussex 4-H [Equine Entry](#)

Sussex 4-H [Poultry Entry](#)

Sussex 4-H [Rabbit Entry](#)

4H Members may have entries in multiple departments including livestock and static. In addition to showing an animal(s), all 4-H members are encouraged to submit artwork (paintings, photographs, pastels, etc.) and/or crafts (models, collections, albums, etc.)

Please be aware that there have been changes and additions to the following departments in the past few years, so be sure to double check Section and Class # before filling out any Entry Form:

- **Department 4: is now Outdoor Education** (formally Forestry & Conservation).
NEW Sections
 - ENT: Entomology
 - GLG: Geology
 - GEO: Geocaching
 - HSS: Survival Skills

- **Department 6: STEM – HAS BEEN ADDED**
- **Department 16: Fine Arts**
– now includes Diamond Art (Section D #9&10), and
- Group Led Painting (Section B #7)
- **Department 31: Dairy-** Please review the department carefully before completing the [Livestock Entry Form](#). Class numbers have changed, and new classes have been added.
Dairy Studies Addition non-livestock entries have been added (Section EDD)

Please be sure to follow the entry rules carefully to ensure your projects are properly entered. Entries that are not properly entered may be subject to disqualification. YOU (member/parent) are responsible for properly entering your project (or reviewing your child’s entry form). Club leaders should assist you. If the maximum number of projects entered for a class or department is exceeded, project(s) may be disqualified.

If you have questions about how a Shotwell Building entry should be classified, check with the 4-H Office. *Tip: Emailing a picture of the entry will help us respond to your question promptly!*

Please note that all animals entering the fairground must have a CVI or Animal Health Certificate. All animals from outside of NJ are required to have a CVI.
Some species may require additional testing and certifications.

Be sure to review the [NJSP/SCF&HS exhibitor guidelines](#) for your species to confirm what is required.

SHOTWELL BUILDING

Volunteers are needed to assist in setting up the Shotwell Building. We will be dusting off and putting together displays and booths as we set the floor plan for the fair.

Help is needed on Saturday, July 11, starting at 9am, if interested please email Tanya Patrie at patrie@njaes.rutgers.edu or you may [sign up online](#).

The following is the schedule of when specific entries are to be checked in and when display booths may be assembled:

Exhibit Drop-Off Schedule		
Date	Department	Time
Sunday, July 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor Education • STEM • Home Furnishings • Arts & Crafts • Art • Ceramics • Needlecraft • Photography • Construction • Hobbies & Collections • Woodcraft Engineering • Clothing • Animal Studies • Dairy Studies 	3:00pm-5:00pm

Tuesday, July 28 Wednesday, July 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Club Booth Display • Shooting Sports 	3:00pm-8:00pm
Friday, July 31	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vegetables • Herbs, Flowers, Fruits 	10:00 a.m.
Thursday, August 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food and Nutrition Drop off 	10:00 am - 12:00pm

Again, be sure to review the [2026 Exhibit Catalogue](#) when filling out the sections and classes on your [Shotwell entry form](#) as there have been many edits to the catalog in the last few years, specifically: Food & Nutrition, Arts & Crafts, Ceramics, Photography, Outdoor Education, Fine Arts, and the Needlecraft departments.

Submitted entries must be from the 2025/2026 Program year. In addition, we will be strictly enforcing that no entry may be the result of a school project/assignment. Entries discovered as such will be disqualified.

A [guide to filling out the Shotwell Entry form](#) can be found online at www.sussex4H.org if assistance is needed, or you may contact the 4H office for additional help.

'Notecard(s)' for your exhibit(s) are also welcome. Index cards should be placed with your Shotwell Building entries on display. They answer questions such as, *What I learned while making this project; What inspired me to make/do this project;* etc. These also help the Judges understand the motivation behind each project and the effort that went into each entry, allowing them to award projects accordingly.

CLUB BOOTH THEME

The theme for the 4-H club booth displays for the 2026 NJ State Fair/Sussex County Farm & Horse Show is:

Red, White, Blue, and Green

We are looking for booths to incorporate Celebrating the Nation's 250th anniversary. Show what America means to you—history or heritage, important moments or people, cultural traditions, hopes for the future, symbols of unity and democracy, ideas of community, creativity and innovation. While also incorporating how your 4-H club supports these as well.

4-H Club booth judging criteria that are mandatory items to be included is the display of the 4-H clover, the 4-Hs, and the club's name prominently displayed.

With the 4-H criteria met, you should then center your 4-H booth around a creative display of this year's theme. Think of a slogan that goes with the theme and promotes 4-H. Points are awarded for creativity and originality.

Interactive displays are encouraged, but all parts and décor must remain in the booth. Please remember that booths should be a collaborative effort by the whole club. A 4-H booth should let club members display their hard work to the public.

Booths measure approximately 4 ft. wide, 4 ft. high and 3 ft. deep.

Club Leaders need to complete the [Club booth registration form](#) to register for the fair and reserve your booth. Forms are due by Wednesday, **July 1 by 4:30 p.m. to the 4-H office.**

4-H INFORMATION TABLE IN THE SHOTWELL BUILDING

4-H Members who have static (still) exhibits in the Shotwell building are required to table-sit for at least one 2-hour shift at the information table in the Shotwell 4-H Building.

4-H members that do not have other fair responsibilities may not receive their NJSF Premiums for their Shotwell Building Exhibits if they do not participate in at least one [Shotwell Building Information Table shift](#). Shotwell Building is the “Barn” of those who exhibit there. Clubs and individuals who display exhibits in the Shotwell building should take ownership of the building, just as those with livestock projects do for their barns.

As 4-H Ambassadors, we ask you to promote 4-H and distribute information. It is a wonderful opportunity to talk about your 4-H experience, and help families sign up to receive information about becoming a 4-H member and/or becoming an adult volunteer. We also ask that you assist in the sale of 4-H 50/50 tickets and help maintain the building's cleanliness and safety. A guardian must be present; as the 4-H office staff will not be responsible for supervision of youth at the table.

Those who do not have Fair Passes can be issued Day passes for those who would like to volunteer for four (4) or more hours. Members may [sign up for a shift online](#) or by calling the 4-H Office at 973-948-3040.

PICK-UP OF EXHIBIT ITEMS

Club booths and large exhibits may not begin to be taken down and clean up until 9:00 a.m. Sunday, August 9.

Members with individual exhibited item(s) may pick up their items at two times:
Saturday, August 8 10:00 p.m. – 10:30 p.m.
Sunday, August 9 9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Any items left after 10:30 am on Sunday, August 9, will be discarded unless prior pick-up arrangements have been made with the 4-H Staff.

A bin will be available for those that would like to donate their ribbons back to the 4-H Program.

If you would like to volunteer to help with the breakdown and clean-up of the Shotwell Building, please sign up at <https://signup.com/go/mFrRQmK>.

PREMIUMS

Please give a big thank you to **Visions Federal Credit Union**, and the **NJSF/SCF&HS Agricultural Division** for sponsoring this year's 4-H premiums.

Premiums will be issued to leaders for dispersal after the completion of fair duties.

Premiums are administered by NJSF/SCFHS. In the event a 4-H member does not fulfill their responsibilities, violates 4-H or NJSF/SCFHS rules, or fails to observe the 4-H Code of Conduct, premiums may be withheld.

BARN/CLUB SLEEPOVERS

The NJ 4-H Policy Supervision of Youth will need to be followed to include:

- At least **two** appointed 4-H volunteers must always be present serving as chaperones having completed the appropriate training and background check. One must take the role of Event Coordinator and agree to oversee and be responsible for the event. More appointed volunteers are encouraged to allow for maximum supervision.
- All participants (youth and adults) must complete and sign the [4-H Event Permission Form for Youth](#) or the [New Jersey 4-H Event Release/Agreement Form for Adults](#) and should be submitted to office staff prior to the listed event.
- Parents who are not appointed 4-H volunteers may supervise their own children but cannot be responsible for other children.

* Note- additional measures may be required

VOLUNTEERING AT THE FAIR

Community service and volunteering to help are part of 4-H. We encourage all to volunteer whenever/ wherever possible at the fair. The success of the NJSF®/SCFHS has been built on the contributions of hundreds of local volunteers over the years (including 4-H members, families, and leaders). The following are ways your club as a group or you as an individual 4-H member may *use your hands for larger service* throughout the fair.

4-H AMBASSADOR/INFORMATION TABLE REPRESENTATIVE

DESCRIPTION: Act as an Ambassador for 4-H in the Shotwell Building. Be available to share information and answer questions about 4-H. In addition, share knowledge about the items and exhibits displayed. Help sell 4-H 50/50s¹ and help maintain the cleanliness of the building. Shifts are 2 hours.

**You must be 18 years of age or bring along an adult to help*

DATE: Throughout the Fair

CONTACT: Tanya Patrie (patrie@njaes.rutgers.edu) or Dave Foord (foord@njaes.rutgers.edu) or sign up online at: [4-H Ambassador/Information table sign up](#)

50/50 Sales¹

DESCRIPTION: Assist the Sussex County 4-H Advisory Council in the Sale of 50/50 tickets. Proceeds from the sale support 4-H programming, as well as 4-H fair ribbons.

**Must be 18 years of age or older*

DATE: As soon as tickets are available and throughout the Fair

CONTACT: Tanya Patrie (patrie@njaes.rutgers.edu) or Dave Foord (foord@rce.rutgers.edu)

¹ *By law you must be over 18 to sell 50/50 raffle tickets. Youth members may not sell tickets.*

CLOVER, THE 4-H ROVER!

DESCRIPTION: Dress up as the lovable, 4-H mascot Clover, the 4-H Rover. Walk around the Fair, greet, shake hands, and pose with fairgoers young and old. Requirements are that you can safely wear the costume and that someone must assist and accompany Clover while roving.

Due to health and safety concerns, we will have a disinfecting spray available for cleaning between appearances.

DATE: Throughout the Fair

CONTACT: Tanya Patrie (patrie@njaes.rutgers.edu) or Dave Foord (foord@njaes.rutgers.edu)

AG DIVISION FOOD BOOTH

DESCRIPTION: Help with food prep, serving and other activities related to managing the Food Booth for the Agricultural Division of the Fair. Profits from the food booth are used to support animal project activities at the fair. This is a great chance to meet 4-H members from other clubs and gain work experience. Shifts are 10am-2pm, 2pm-6pm, 6pm-10pm daily.

**You must be 13 years of age or older to volunteer behind the counter (liability concerns).*

DATE: Throughout the Fair

CONTACT: Contact Nadine Olsen via email olsenn@embarqmail.com to volunteer for a shift.

SNOOK AGRICULTURAL MUSEUM

DESCRIPTION: Supervising children while they use a corn shell-er and corn grinder. Working behind the counter of the old time General Store. Sweepers for the porch and building.

*Must be at least 14 years old.

DATE: Throughout the Fair

CONTACT: Barbara Cashen at bcashen@ptd.net

AG DIVISION FARM FUN

DESCRIPTION: Help with facilitating and supervising the fun activities of Farm Fun in Barn 6

DATE: Throughout the Fair

CONTACT: Donna Meisinger (862) 268-0805.

4-H Teen Council Dairy Barn

Description: Open to those enter 7th through 13th grade. Scoop ice cream and spin milkshakes while making new friends and earning job experience and volunteer hours.

Date: Throughout the Fair

Contact: Tanya Patrie (patrie@njaes.rutgers.edu)

4-H SPONSORED/RELATED ACTIVITIES SCHEDULED FOR THE FAIR

The following are fun and/or educational 4-H events scheduled to take place during fair week. Many are open to the public, but some are for specific 4-H Members. For more information, please contact Dave or Tanya at the 4-H office, (973) 948-3040. Scheduled events are subject to change at the discretion of the NJSF/SCF&HS and event organizers.

Sussex County 4-H STEM Club Combat Robotics Challenge

Saturday (8/1), B.O.A. BBQ Pavilion

This year, the Garden State Combat Robotics League in coordination with the Sussex County 4-H Stem Club will be hosting its 3rd event at the New Jersey State Fair, at the Board of Agriculture BBQ Pavilion. This all-day event will have Ant Weight, Bettle Weight, and Plastic Ant Weight. This is an "Open" type competition. 4-H STEM and robotics clubs that enter will be competing against adult teams.

4-H Market Animal Sale

Tuesday (8/4), 7 pm, Livestock Arena

4-H members learn to raise, show, and sell their livestock. This is the culmination of a 4-H member's daily commitment in feeding, housing, and care of their project animal, whether a steer, lamb, pig, goat, or rabbit. If 4-H members successfully raise a market animal evaluated as Excellent, they earn the privilege to sell their animal at the live auction. The goal is for 4-H youth to understand the finances of raising livestock.

Aim to Survive Shooting Sports Demos

Wednesday (8/5)-Saturday (8/8), 12pm-6pm, B.O.A. BBQ Pavilion

Join the Aim to Survive 4-H Club to participate in their Shooting Sports Demonstrations. Those in 4th grade and up will be test their shooting accuracy at our air rifle range. Cloverbud youth (K-3rd) will be able to test their skill at our modified archery range.

Summer Blossom's Open Garden

Wednesday (8/5) 6:30pm-8pm, Located behind Farm Fun Building

Join the members of the Summer Blossoms 4-H Clubs for a tour of their club garden located on the Fairgrounds behind the barn portion of the Conservatory. Use the Vet Check entrance roadway to access the garden entrance. See the beautiful flowers and vegetable plants they have been growing all summer long.

4-H Foods Bake Sale

Thursday (8/6) – 12pm Shotwell Building

The extra of the entered 4-H Food projects being entered will be available for a donation. Come early to get what is available while supplies last.

Lois Chammings' Best of the Best Awards

Thursday (8/6) 6:45 pm, Livestock Arena

The Chammings Award is given in recognition of outstanding skill and mastery in projects exhibited in the 4-H Shotwell Building during the Fair. One could say it is the top prize for static (non-animal) exhibits. Top honors are given out in the following areas: Plants/Horticulture, Fine Arts/Photography, Sewing/Construction, Crafts/Hobbies, and Foods. Outstanding Record books will also be acknowledged by the Sussex County 4-H Advisory Council.

4-H Round Robin

Thursday (8/6) 7:00 pm, Livestock Arena

4-H members who win the Senior or Junior showmanship honors in one of the following shows: 4-H Alpaca, Beef Cattle, Dairy Cattle, Dairy Goat, Meat Goat, Horse, Poultry, Sheep, Small Animals, and Swine are automatically entered to participate in the Showmanship activity. Participants will receive a quick lesson on showing each animal and then must demonstrate what they have learned. The quickest Senior and Junior learners with the best skills will receive a \$50 check.

A time proven strategy for success is to travel barn to barn and learn how to show different animals from fellow 4-H'ers! Animal representatives should be available in their species barn on Thursday from 5:30 to 6:30 to demonstrate, showing their species and answer questions. Handouts are also available for each species. See a 4-H Staff person for assistance.

Love on a Leash's 4-H Seeing Eye Dog Training Demonstration

Saturday (8/8) Time-TBD, Livestock Arena

Please join the *Love on a Leash* 4-H Club for a Seeing Eye Dog Training demonstration held in the Livestock Arena beginning at 6:00pm. 4-H youth and volunteers will be showing the basic commands and behavior involved in training seeing eye puppies for The Seeing Eye Inc. of New Jersey.

4-H CODE OF CONDUCT

The 4-H Code of Conduct should be reviewed with your members and their family members. Parents, members, and volunteers have agreed to behave in accordance with the 4-H Code of Conduct when signing permission forms and registration forms for the fair. The “Code” appears on all fair registration forms and has also been digitally signed the agreement when enrolling/re-enrolling in 4-H Online at the beginning of the project year. The Code of Conduct represents a standard of behavior for all volunteers, 4-H members, and their parents.

For most, the “Code’s” requirements do not seem stringent or unreasonable. It asks all members of the 4-H community (parents, leaders, and members) to practice consideration for others, good sportsmanship, and honesty. None of these should be difficult to observe, they should come naturally.

Everyone should remember that at the fair an individual represents not just his or her club, but also the *whole* 4-H program. How leaders, parents, and members behave reflects on all of 4-H. This is not just *in the ring* or during competition but everywhere. People have an incredibly positive impression of the 4-H program. They read, hear and may have even seen 4-H clubs doing community service or marching in a parade. They come to the fair each year expecting to see 4-H’ers demonstrate their skill, expertise, and poise. The positive behavior demonstrated by 4-H’ers is part of the reason people return to the fair year after year.

While good behavior reinforces people’s impression of 4-H, it only takes one bad incident to embarrass the whole program.

Unfortunately, people generalize so when they see inappropriate behavior by one person, they associate it with the whole group.

Participating in the fair is not just about *individuals*. It is a celebration of your entire club, and what everyone in the Sussex County 4-H community has achieved. During the fair, check out what other clubs have done. Take time to recognize what others have done whether they are new members just starting out or long-time members demonstrating skills they have learned over their years in 4-H. We have a big program in Sussex County; take some time to see what 4-H means to others.



NEW JERSEY 4-H PROGRAM POLICY



New Jersey 4-H Code of Conduct

The primary purpose of the New Jersey 4-H Code of Conduct is to ensure the safety and well-being of all participants at 4-H sponsored events and activities. It applies to all participants, with participants defined as 4-H members, their parents/guardians, and volunteers.

As a participant in the 4-H program, I will:

- Conduct myself in a courteous manner and treat members, parents, 4-H volunteers, Extension staff, judges and others with respect. Appropriate language and behavior are expected at all times.
- Respect and adhere to the rules and guidelines of the 4-H program including all those specific to a 4-H event or activity.
- Uphold an individual’s right to dignity by supporting an environment of inclusion which welcomes involvement of participants from all backgrounds.
- Accept supervision and support from county and state 4-H staff while participating in the 4-H program. This includes acceptance of supervision and support from appointed 4-H volunteers coordinating 4-H events and activities.
- Obey local, state and federal laws.

All aspects of the 4-H Code of Conduct and Discipline Policy apply to your social media presence involving 4-H.

Participants who fail to adhere to the New Jersey 4-H Code of Conduct are subject to a range of disciplinary actions. Such actions will be taken in compliance with the New Jersey 4-H Discipline Policy and Procedure. When appropriate, immediate corrective action will be taken at the 4-H event to ensure the safety and welfare of all participants.

I understand if I fail to adhere to the above Code of Conduct, I will be subject to disciplinary action and potentially prohibited from attending and participating in the New Jersey 4-H Youth Development program.

Policy Adopted: January 2013, rev. September 2015

Cooperating Agencies: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and County Boards of Chosen Freeholders. Rutgers Cooperative Extension, a unit of the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, is an equal opportunity program provider and employer.