UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION

4-H Clover Update newsletter

January statewide articles

The following articles will be sent to 4-H youth, families and volunteers via 4-H Online on **Friday, January 2**. You can also share, adapt with local registration information (e.g., scholarships, transportation), and promote these articles locally.

The 4-H Clover Update newsletter features news about Minnesota 4-H. Check your inbox or mailbox for local 4-H news, events, and opportunities.

Last chance to submit nominations for shining volunteers

Northern Lights is a statewide volunteer recognition opportunity designed to celebrate volunteer impact across the 4-H program. Regardless of how long you have served, or what area of the program you contribute to, we want to shine a light on the inspiring work done through volunteers.

The nomination process can be completed in about 15 minutes, and all eligible Northern Lights nominees will also be considered for the *National 4-H Salute to Excellence* award. Nominate a volunteer or group of volunteers who bring light to their local program and community today!

Nominations are due Jan. 12. Submit one today! If you prefer to submit a paper application email MN4-HVol@umn.edu to request one.

Learn more about the Northern Lights recognition program.

Learn about volunteering with 4-H

4-H volunteers contribute to youth thriving. They make their communities stronger and develop skills they can use in other settings. These are all great reasons to take a step to becoming a volunteer—If you've been thinking about volunteering but aren't sure where to start there are steps you can take to learn more:

1. Attend our virtual volunteer information session to learn more about what volunteering means to 4-H and meet 4-H staff who can support you in being connected to future opportunities.
2. Complete our volunteer interest form. The info you share will be given to 4-H staff so they can work with you to find or create a volunteer role that meets your skills, interests, and availability.
3. Reach out directly to your local 4-H staff to inquire about specific volunteer opportunities in your community.

Whether you join us for one day or for multiple events, we value the impact we make together for our youth and our communities! For more information contact MN4-HVol@umn.edu.

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We're hiring summer interns!

Do you know an undergrad college student looking for work experience in the youth development field? We have 4-H summer intern positions available throughout the state of Minnesota for summer, 2026. These positions are designed to provide meaningful professional youth development work experience for the student intern working alongside an Extension educator. **Positions will begin in mid-May to early June and range from 8-13 weeks**. Please contact your local Extension educator or sagrimes@umn.edu with questions. Learn more and apply.

Teen teachers wanted: Unleash your inner scientist: 4-H Superheroes of Science!

Become a green superhero of science teen teacher—lead Cloverbud youth through our 4-week 4-H Superheroes of Science adventure! Dates: **Thursdays, Jan. 22, Jan 29, Feb. 5, (6:30 - 7:15 p.m.)**. Final session, **Feb. 12 (6:30 - 7:30 p.m.)**. This adventure includes hands-on experiments that will be seriously fun as you lead virtual gatherings. You'll receive a kit with all the supplies you need, delivered right to your door. The GSOS teen teacher virtual training will take place **Sunday, Jan. 11 from 7 to 8:30 p.m.** Our weekly virtual prep meetings will take place on **Sundays (Jan. 18, Jan. 25, Feb.1, and Feb. 8) from 8 to 8:30 p.m. Registration deadline: Jan. 8**. Learn more and apply.

January Minnesota 4-H State Ambassador update

Minnesota 4-H State Ambassador Maddy shares about her time at the National 4-H Congress, how you can help others and stay safe this winter, and upcoming 2026 events! Learn more.

Experience youth leadership and service in action at BLU

Minnesota youth in grades 6+ are invited to join Building Leadership and Understanding (BLU) workshops this February, led by the Minnesota 4-H State Ambassadors. These events help participants develop leadership, communication, and conflict-resolution skills while engaging in a statewide service project focused on disaster relief and emergency response. With both overnight and 1-day options offered at locations across the state, BLU provides a fun and impactful way for youth to grow and serve their communities. Learn more and register.

4-H animal science PDC kickoff webinar

4-H volunteers, youth members and staff are invited to join us on **Jan. 22 from 7 to 8 p.m.** for the Minnesota 4-H animal science project development committee (PDC) kickoff webinar. This session will help get your county committees off to a great start! Together, we'll explore how PDCs work and share ideas from across the state. Learn more and register.

Join us for the 4-H Horseless Horse Round Up virtual series

Interested in learning more about horses? Back by popular demand, we're excited to offer this online series for horse enthusiasts in grades 3+ to learn more about horses. Join us each week in a virtual setting to learn about new topics like horse basics, horse care, nutrition, health, and more! Hands-on activities will be provided for youth to further explore each topic at home. The program offers a Level 1 series for any participants, with a Level 2 series available for participants continuing their learning from last year! Sessions will run **Feb. 3 - March 10**. **Registration deadline: Jan. 30**. Learn more and register.

Winter 4-H Science Sprouts: From sprout to seed

It's time to dig in, get curious, and grow something amazing—4-H Science Sprouts is back this winter! Join 150+ other 4-H'ers who participate in the series as we explore microgreens, pinecones, and bulbs through fun, hands-on plant science during three short and engaging online sessions. Designed with grades 3 - 5 in mind (but all youth are welcome!), this STEM-packed series proves you don't need a backyard to grow big ideas. Register by **Jan. 19** to receive a special science sprouts kit and grow right along with us! Learn more and register.

4-H plant science: Ready, set, grow for 2026!

It's time to start planning your next big plant science project for 2026! Bringing a sample for your exhibit next year? Plan ahead! Some projects need to be chosen in the fall or spring at harvest time. Don't live on a farm? No worries! You can still dive into plant science by partnering with a local farmer. Build a connection, ask questions, and learn about how crops are grown straight from the source. Need inspiration? Check out the Minnesota 4-H plant science handbook and the plant science project resource guide to help your project take root and grow into something amazing for next year's fair. Don't forget to check the 4-H plant science web page for more ideas and opportunities. Start your 2026 Minnesota 4-H plant science project journey today!

HAWKS (High Adventure Wilderness Kids) experience!

Youth will travel to Minnesota's beautiful Voyageurs National Park for a canoe and camping experience! Participants will be expected to join monthly Zoom meetings **February through July** for trip preparation. This trip is limited to 12 youth (grades 8+ or those who have completed the 4-H OWLS program) and will cost $1000 (includes outfitter guides, equipment, food, lodging, and transportation). Trip dates are **Aug. 2-8**. The registration deadline is **Jan. 5** and requires a $350 deposit. Register through 4-H Online.