



**ALFALFA COUNTY
EXTENSION**

Alfalfa County Cooperative Extension News

End-of-year giving can benefit Oklahoma 4-H'ers

The Oklahoma 4-H Youth Development program has made a difference in the lives of thousands of Oklahoma youth. Youth not only gain life skills through experiential learning opportunities, but they can earn scholarships for higher education thanks to generous donations to the Oklahoma 4-H Foundation.

Milford Jenkins, 4-H Foundation executive director, said donations of unrestricted gifts play a crucial role in the Foundation's annual operations budget.

"These dollars can be allocated by the organization's board of directors to support 4-H youth activities such as Citizenship Washington Focus, State 4-H Roundup, ATV Safety Training, Enhancement Grants for county 4-H clubs and other related programming priorities this year," Jenkins said. "One highlight of how \$25,000 in unrestricted charitable gifts made an indelible impact on our 4-H family was providing support to the 2023 Oklahoma 4-H Parent/Volunteer Conference that took place in June." This event brought together parents and volunteers for hands-on learning and sharing information and programming that is making a difference across the state.

"The donation of these unrestricted dollars has a ripple effect within the 4-H program," Jenkins said. "In this case, parents and volunteers came together and were able to glean new ideas that have proven to be successful in other counties and take them home to implement in their local programs, resulting in more and more 4-H youth being reached."

At the 102nd State 4-H Roundup that took place in July, more than \$146,000 in education scholarships were presented to club members in recognition of their excellence in

project work. This money all comes from the benevolent donors to the 4-H Foundation.

Abby Logan, a 4-H'er from Payne County, said she has been blessed to receive various scholarships from the Oklahoma 4-H Foundation.

"These scholarships have allowed me to begin my college education studying natural resource ecology and management," Logan said. "It has been a goal of mine to pay for my college education myself, either through work or scholarships. The scholarships I've received through 4-H are allowing me to do just that. I couldn't be more grateful for the countless individuals and donors who make these scholarships possible and allow youth like me to earn a successful start to higher education."

Donors also have the opportunity to restrict charitable gifts to support a particular county's 4-H program and activities through the Oklahoma 4-H Foundation. Jenkins indicated this is accomplished through the county's G-Account at the Foundation.

"G-Accounts were established in the early 2000s to provide donors a platform to restrict their support to 4-H programs and activities in their home county or county(ies) of interest," he said. "All 77 counties have a G-Account and donors can denote the county(ies) where they want their gift to go at the time they make the gift. Before making your gift, visit your County Extension Director (CED) and 4-H educator(s) to learn about your local and county 4-H clubs' current funding needs that can be met by your charitable gift to the Oklahoma 4-H Foundation. Sponsoring 4-H youth and activities in a particular county can be very meaningful to 4-H alumni, businesses and other stakeholders with close ties to that particular

county."

Donors can also provide major gifts to 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, including the Oklahoma 4-H Foundation, through their Individual Retirement Account (IRA). Jenkins said donors age 70½ may use a Qualified Charitable Deduction (QCD) to donate up to \$100,000 to qualified charities. For married couples, if both individuals are 70½ years of age, each spouse can exclude up to \$100,000 from their gross incomes for a total of \$200,000 to qualified charities. QCDs are paid directly from the IRA to the charity. Donors are encouraged to consult with their legal or tax advisors about this charitable giving strategy.

"For those planning their estates, the Oklahoma 4-H Foundation can be named as a charitable beneficiary as a testament to how much the 4-H program meant to them as a youth growing up," he said.

Jenkins is available to visit with people who are interested in contributing to 4-H. The establishment of permanent endowments, charitable provisions for 4-H in estate plans, and giving outright cash gifts or appreciated securities annually are just a few of the charitable giving strategies available to donors who want to support 4-H youth in Oklahoma.

Giving end-of-year charitable cash gifts to support 4-H youth is easy, simple and no different than any other time of the year. Simply write a check payable to the Oklahoma 4-H Foundation and mail to the Oklahoma 4-H Foundation, 505 Agricultural Hall, Stillwater, OK. 74078; visit the Foundation's website at oklahoma4hfoundation.com and click the Donate button; or call Jenkins on campus at 405-744-5390 or cellphone at 816-390-4357, or email at milford.jenkins@okstate.edu.

Address

602 W. 5th St
Cherokee, OK
73728

Phone

580-596-3131

Website

[https://
extension.
okstate.edu/
county/
alfalfa/](https://extension.okstate.edu/county/alfalfa/)

Social Media

Facebook: /
Alfalfa County
Oklahoma
Cooperative
Extension
Services

NOV
29



ALFALFA COUNTY 4-H DAIRY DAY
"SHOWING DAIRY HEIFERS"
THE BASICS

Come to our beginner workshop and learn about:

- Nutrition
- Care & Maintenance
- Tack Necessities
- Hands-On Showmanship Demo

*WHEN: Wednesday November 29th, 4:00-5:30

*WHERE: Alfalfa County Fairgrounds

*Pizza & Ice Cream Provided

*RSVP Alfalfa County Extension Office 580-596-3131

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Are you currently in the 8th grade or older?
You are eligible to do a State 4-H Record Book. These books are due in April and can earn you scholarship money! If you are interested in completing a book, please let us know so we can start now.

Attention Seniors and College Students:
Pickens Legacy Scholarships will be due February 1st.
You MUST attend OSU to receive Pickens scholarships.

Level III and Level IV scholarship will be due in April and many can be used at any accredited college or trade school.

More information is available at
4h.okstate.edu/members/record-book-and-scholarship-information/record-book-and-scholarship-info.html



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:

4-H Shooting Sports Level 1
Instructor Training

March 23-24, 2024
at Oklahoma City Gun Club

Volunteers must have completed the volunteer certification for 4-H BEFORE registering for the class.

Registration due March 11.

CONTACT THE ALFALFA COUNTY
EXTENSION OFFICE FOR
DETAILS & TO REGISTER.

Dates To Remember



December

- 2 Share The Fun @ Burlington 9AM
- 7 Companion Animal Series 6PM
- 18 Alf Co Officer Training 4PM
- 19 Alf Co Horse Club Mtg 6PM
- 20 Cloverbud Workshops 10AM-12PM
- 21 4-H Workshops



January

- TBD Preparing Your Speech Workshop
- 22 NW District Livestock Judging @ Enid
- 27 West District Share The Fun Contest
- 30 Communications Contest 6PM



February

- 3 State Horse Communications Contest
- 10 West District Speech Contest
- 19-20 Alfalfa Co Spring Livestock Show
- 21 Alfalfa Co Spring Livestock Banquet
- 27-4 NW District Livestock Show

December 2nd, 2023

Burlington High School Auditorium 9AM



Entries due to the
Alfalfa County
Extension Office by
November 27th

Entry forms available at the Alfalfa Co
Extension office, on ZSuites,
the Alf Co Ext FB page
or can be emailed.



SHARE THE FUN

(4-H Has Talent)



Interested in dogs, cats, snakes,
birds, cavies or rabbits?

4-H COMPANION ANIMAL SERIES

Join us for the 2nd meeting!
December 7th, 2023 at 6 pm
Alfalfa County Extension Office

QUESTIONS? CALL THE ALFALFA CO EXTENSION OFFICE (580)596-3131



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Interested in Horses?

Alfalfa County 4-H Horse Club

Meeting

December 19th, 2023
6PM

Alfalfa County Fairgrounds





Santa's Little Helpers
CLOVERBUD
 4-H Workshop

December 20th, 2023
 10am-12pm
 at the Alfalfa County
 Fairgrounds

RSVP by Dec 15th &
 remit \$5 to Alfalfa
 Co Extension Office
 (580)596.3131



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**CHRISTMAS BREAK
 WORKSHOPS**

December 21st, 2023
 10AM-2PM

Alfalfa County Fairgrounds

Cards- STEM-
 Crafts-Cooking-
 Baking-Friends-
 Community
 Service-FUN!



RSVP & remit \$10 to the Alfalfa County Extension
 office by December 15th (580)596.3131

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Alfalfa County 4-H 

Communications Contest

January 30th, 2024 at 6 PM

- PowerPoint
- Speech
- Illustrated Presentation
- Job Readiness

**Entries due to the Alfalfa County
 Extension Office by January 23rd**

Entry forms available at the Alfalfa Co
 Extension office, on ZSuites,
 the Alf Co Ext FB page
 or can be emailed.





Strengthening Oklahoma Families

Food safety is a must for holiday baking

The holiday season is just around the corner, and it won't be long until the sweet smells of scrumptious treats waft through the air.

Holiday treats are just as much fun to make as they are to eat, but it's important to take precautionary measures to avoid foodborne illness, said Christi Evans, Oklahoma State University Extension assistant food safety specialist.

"While those time-honored recipes you may use each year hold a special place in every family, following safe food-handling practices is vital," Evans said. "There are four safety practices to follow, including clean, separate, cook and chill."

- Clean: Bacteria can be spread throughout the kitchen and get onto hands, cutting boards, utensils, countertops and food. Wash hands and surfaces often.
- Separate: Keep all raw foods, including flour and eggs, separate from cooked foods to prevent cross-contamination of bacteria.
- Cook: As tempting as it can be to taste raw dough or batter, avoid doing so. Raw flour and eggs can contain harmful bacteria such as Salmonella and Escherichia coli (e. coli), so eating just a small amount of uncooked dough can be harmful. Cooking is the only way ensure baked foods containing flour and eggs are safe to consume.

- Chill: Refrigerate perishable foods quickly to slow the growth of harmful bacteria.

Evans said most baked goods like breads, rolls and cookies have a low moisture and high sugar content that makes them safe for counter or pantry storage. Some baked products with higher moisture content need to be stored in the refrigerator.

"Holiday treats such as pumpkin, cream or custard-based pies made with eggs, cream, sour cream, cream cheese and milk must be stored in the refrigerator," she said. "Don't forget about cakes and pastries with cream cheese fillings and icings, whipped cream frostings and those with cut fresh fruit toppings. These foods cannot be left out on the counter at room temperature for more than two hours."

Pies without dairy products, such as baked fruit pies, can be stored at room temperature, covered, for up to two days, but will keep longer if stored in the refrigerator. Homemade breads and rolls may be stored in the refrigerator, but it isn't necessary. Evans said homemade baked goods lack the preservatives found in store-bought products, so they're more susceptible to spoilage than commercial products. Products that won't be consumed within a day or two will last longer if stored in the refrigerator.

"As you open your recipe box to gather the recipes for those long-

time family favorites, keep food safety on the front burner to ensure everyone has a safe and happy holiday," Evans.

OSU Extension uses research-based information to help all Oklahomans solve local issues and concerns, promote leadership and manage resources wisely throughout the state's 77 counties. Most information is available at little to no cost.



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ALFALFA COUNTY OHCE NEWS

Christmas Housing Tour –Sunday Dec. 3rd from 1:00-4:00p.m.

See the full flyer on the next page for ticket info and homes on tour!

Blood Drive –Dec. 7th

10:00a.m.—6:00p.m. at the Alfalfa County Fairgrounds -Exhibit Building
Canteen: Domes-Ti-Kates -10:00-1:00
Farmerettes-1:00-3:30 and 3:30-6:00

Thank you for your help with this!

Farmerettes Food Fundraiser

Farmerettes are making seasonal favorites to sell the first week of December. Please see Facebook for details and to pre order. Pickup will be Friday, December 8th and December 9th in the hall outside the Extension Office.

The Power of Positive Attitudes

Leader Lesson Training on Dec. 15th @ 2:00p.m at the OSU Extension Office for January 2024 lesson

OHCE Yearbooks

The 2024 OHCE Yearbooks & the Leader Lesson sign-up forms will be ready to pick-up by December 19th. Please return the leader lesson forms back to the Extension office by January 26th.

The Wilda Flaming Community Project Award

The Wilda Flaming Community Project Award is sponsored annually by ACB Bank. Applications are **due January 15th, 2024** to the Extension Office. Did you know that each submission receives \$25 from ACB Bank? That's not mentioning the award money if you win 1st-3rd place. We know that you all are doing outstanding work in your communities within your groups around the county and you deserve to be recognized so be sure to fill out your reports.

Award and Report Forms

Annual OHCE Member Awards, (Young Member, Rookie of the Year, Member of the Year and Heart of OHCE) nominations are **due January the 15th** to the Alfalfa County Extension Office. These forms can be found on the **OHCE website: <https://extension.okstate.edu/programs/oklahoma-home-and-community-education/>**

You may also pick these forms up from the Extension Office. It is important that you use the current forms to complete your applications so they can be judged for District Awards.

OHCE FALL ASSOCIATION MEETING



Outgoing and Incoming OHCE County Officers, Sarah Bellamy, Suzie Salinas, Bayli Hyde, Tammi Miller & Cheryl Poe posed for a picture along with Megan Ferrell at the conclusion of the Fall County OHCE Association meeting. Tammi Miller is your newly elected County President (2024-2025) and Bayli Hyde will be your Secretary/Treasurer (2024-2025).

Thank you to Cheryl Poe for your service as County OHCE President from 2020-2023 & Sarah Bellamy for serving as County Secretary/ Treasurer for 2022-2023.



Cheryl Jantzen with Gateway First Bank and club representatives from winning clubs of the 2023 County Fair Educational booths.



Tammi Miller is your newly elected County President (2024-2025) and Bayli Hyde will be your Secretary/Treasurer (2024-2025).



ALFALFA COUNTY
EXTENSION

Agricultural News



Pregnancy Testing – A Valuable Technology

Dana Zook, West Area Extension Livestock Specialist

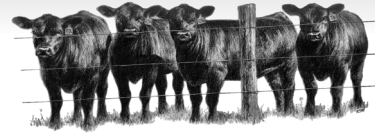
Fall is an especially busy time for beef producers. Tasks abound and there doesn't seem to be an end to the checklist of things to do before cold temperatures creep in. In my last article, I focused on prep for weaning calves but this week I want to focus on our cows. Fall is typically a time I dive into nutrition (be assured, that will come) but I wanted to preemptively discuss pregnancy checking. These two conversations go hand in hand. Knowing which cows are pregnant is hugely valuable in gauging supplementation needs for the winter. Managing open cows isn't something any producer wants to do and by utilizing at least one "preg-check" option, you will be ahead in the long run. In this article, we will briefly discuss palpation, ultrasound, and blood testing. While writing this article, I was interested in the actual number of producers that pregnancy check. A great survey of actual producer practices is conducted periodically by the National Animal Health Monitoring System (NAHMS). In their 2017 report of small cow-calf producers (less than 50 cows), 14.2% palpate, 2.8% blood test, and 4.7% ultrasound for pregnancy diagnosis. Producers who own 50-199 cows have slightly higher incidence to do these practices; 29.3% palpate, 5.6% blood test, and 16% ultrasound for pregnancy diagnosis. Unsurprisingly, adoption and use of these methods increases as herd size increases. But, if we are just looking at adoption within these two groups, no practice is done more than 30 percent of the time! Now that we have a baseline of actual use across the industry, let's discuss the options. Historically, rectal palpation has been the industry standard. In this practice, the reproductive tract and/or the fetal calf is manually palpated to determine pregnancy status, approximate age of the calf, and any physical issues that may exist in the reproductive tract. The 1980's brought the advent of technology to ultrasound, giving veterinarians another window of opportunity to identify pregnancy and the ultimate age of the calf. Ultrasound also gave vets the ability to determine sex and potential physical abnormalities. It's important to note that with both palpation and ultrasound, the veterinarian or individual performing the test has highly specialized training. Blood sampling is the final option for pregnancy testing that first became available to the beef industry in the 2000's. Interestingly, it took a number of years to determine what indicator in the blood would be used to indicate pregnancy. Unlike humans, cows do not excrete a pregnancy

identifier in urine and so instead we look to several different molecules in the blood. A blood pregnancy test can be done chute side with a result within 20 minutes, or the blood sample can be sent to a lab with a result within a couple days. A skilled producer can obtain blood samples for cows, but besides the pregnancy diagnosis, it does not give the insight like palpation or ultrasound. It's very important to note that many of these tests can be conducted very early on to evaluate pregnancy (30-45 days). Early pregnancy determination is valuable; however, OSU Extension would encourage producers to wait 60 days post breeding before getting cattle up to evaluate pregnancy with any method. Working cattle earlier than this can disrupt an embryo, potentially causing the loss of the pregnancy. If you are considering pregnancy testing this year to determine those cows who are worthy of feeding this winter, consult your local veterinarian. He or she may have local options that make it easy and simple to pregnancy test your herd. My fellow Extension Specialist and OSU Veterinarian, Dr. Rosslyn Biggs says that pregnancy checking is a gateway for conversations between producers and veterinarians. Consider pregnancy checking this fall to start or continue that conversation.



Beef Cow Herd Calendar

December



Fall Calving

1. Continue winter feeding program. Vaccinate cows 30 days before breeding season with Leptospira/Campylobacter bacterins, IBR, BVD, PI3, BRSV vaccine depending on the local veterinarian's recommendations.
2. Castrate, dehorn, implant, and vaccinate new calves with 7-way Clostridial bacterin and Intranasal IBR, PI3 vaccine. Don't implant replacement heifers.
3. Treat cows for internal parasites and lice, if needed.
4. For wheat or other small grain pasture:
 - A. Limit-graze cows for protein needs. .B. Provide a special area for calves to creep graze.
5. Watch the herd continuously for health problems. Pay particular attention to cattle grazing fescue for signs of fescue foot.
6. Provide OSU Silver creep for calves.

Spring Calving

1. Continue feeding program which was begun in October and November.
2. Limit-graze dry cows on fescue three to four days per week.
3. Watch the herd continuously for health problems. Pay particular attention to those grazing fescue for signs of fescue foot.
4. Continue to monitor herd for lice infestation. Implement control program as needed.
5. Identify the purebred herds and test stations at which you want to look for herd sires. Check sale dates and review performance criteria to use.

January

Fall Calving

1. If a high percentage of cows return to heat after 40 days of breeding, have bulls rechecked for fertility and cows and bulls examined for reproductive diseases by a veterinarian. Change bulls if necessary, and re-evaluate the nutrition program.
2. Assign yearling bulls 15 to 20 cows, two- and three-year-olds 20 to 25, and aged bulls 25 to 40.
3. Continue supplemental feeding of bulls, cows, and calves. If small grain pasture is available, adjust supplemental feeding to requirements of cows.
4. If a creep feeding program is desired, limit-feed a high protein (30-40%) supplement, such as recommended in the Oklahoma Silver program. See your local Extension Agricultural Educator for further details.

Spring Calving

1. Continue supplemental feeding of pregnant females, so that they will be in good condition at calving.
2. Check first calf heifers (due to calve) several times daily for possible calving difficulties.
3. Feed in evening to encourage daytime calving.
4. Weigh yearling heifers, adjust weights, and calculate ratios. Base selection on both weaning and yearling information. Also select for good disposition and temperament, sound feet and legs, and dam's udder structure.
5. Purebred breeders should send performance data to the national breed association office.
6. Review details listed under March for herd sire selection.
7. Check body condition score on heifers and cows.

December

Lawn & Turf

Remove leaves from cool-season grasses or mow with a mulching mower. ([HLA-6420](#))

Continue mowing cool-season lawns on a regular basis. ([HLA-6420](#))

Continue to control broadleaf weeds in well-established warm- or cool-season lawns with a post-emergent broadleaf weed killer. ([HLA-6421](#))

Tree & Shrubs

- Select a freshly cut Christmas tree. Make a new cut prior to placing in tree stand. Add water daily.

- Live Christmas trees are a wise investment, as they become permanent additions to the landscape after the holidays.

Light prunings of evergreens can be used for holiday decorations. Be careful with sap that can mar surfaces.

Flowers

- Apply winter mulch to protect rose bush bud unions and other perennials. Wait until after several early freezes or you will give insects a good place to winter.

Poinsettias must have at least six hours of bright, indirect light daily.

Keep plants away from drafts. ([HLA-6413](#))

Watch for and control pests on indoor houseplants. ([HLA-6411](#))

Make sure indoor plants are receiving enough light or set up an indoor fluorescent plant light. ([HLA-6411](#))

Fruits & Nuts

Cover strawberry plants with a mulch about 3-4 inches thick if plants are prone to winter injury. ([HLA-6214](#))

Wait to prune fruit trees until late February or March. ([HLA-6228](#))

General

Keep all plants watered during dry conditions even though some may be dormant. Irrigate all plantings at least 24 hours before hard-freezing weather if soil is dry. ([HLA-6404](#))

- Order gardening supplies for next season.

Now is a great time to design and make structural improvements in your garden and landscape. ([HLA-6425](#), [HLA-6440](#), [HLA-6441](#))

- Send for mail-order catalogs if you are not already on their mailing lists. Christmas gift ideas for the gardener might include tools, garden books, magazine subscriptions or membership to The Botanic Garden at OSU. (<http://botanicgarden.okstate.edu>).

- Clean and fill bird feeders.

- Till garden plots without a cover crop to further expose garden pests to harsh winter conditions.

- Visit your county extension office to obtain gardening fact sheets for the new gardening season.

- Join a horticulture, plant or urban forestry society and support community “greening” or “beautification” projects.

Review your garden records so you can correct past mistakes. Purchase a new gardening journal or calendar to keep the New Year’s gardening records.



Garden Tips for January!

- If precipitation has been deficient (1" of snow = ~ 1/10" of water), water lawns, trees, and shrubs, especially broadleaf and narrowleaf evergreens. Double check moisture in protected or raised planters.

- Check on supplies of pesticides. Secure a copy of current recommendations and post them in a convenient place. Dilution and quantity tables are also useful.

- Check that gardening tools and equipment are in good repair—sharpen, paint, and repair mowers, edgers, sprayers, and dusters.

Inspect your irrigation system and replace worn or broken parts. ([HLA-6615](#))

Control overwintering insects on deciduous trees or shrubs with dormant oil sprays applied when the temperature is above 40°F in late fall and winter. Do not use “dormant” oils on evergreens. ([EPP-7306](#))

A product containing glyphosate plus a postemergent broadleaf herbicide can be used on dormant bermudagrass in January or February when temperatures are above 50°F for winter weed control. ([HLA-6421](#))