



ALFALFA COUNTY
EXTENSION

Alfalfa County Cooperative Extension News

The power is out – how long will food be safe?

Address

602 W. 5th St
Cherokee, OK
73728

Phone

(580)596.3131

Website

exten-
sion.okstate.edu/
alfalfa/

Social Media

Facebook: /Alfalfa
County Oklahoma
Cooperative Extension
Services



Severe weather is as much a part of Oklahoma's history as the Land Run of 1889. Residents are familiar with tornadoes, ice storms, wildfires, blizzards, floods and more. When Mother Nature unleashes her wrath, Oklahomans know to be prepared.

The first tornado of 2026 has already been recorded. Being in the middle of the winter season, there's still plenty of time for other weather calamities that cause power outages. Sometimes the outages are short-lived – other times there's no power for hours or days at a time. [Christi Evans, Oklahoma State University Extension](#) food safety specialist, has tips to help people know when to keep or toss the contents of the refrigerator and freezer.

"The first thing I recommend is to have an appliance thermometer in your refrigerator and freezer at all times to help ensure food safety," she said. "Proper refrigerator temperature is 40 degrees Fahrenheit or below, and 0 degrees Fahrenheit or below for freezers."

With advanced weather technology, consumers have ample warning of potential stormy weather that could result in power outages. If there are foods in the refrigerator that can

be frozen, move them to the freezer ahead of the storm.

Once the power goes out, Evans recommends keeping the refrigerator and freezer doors closed. Don't open them any more than necessary. The temperature in the refrigerator should hold at 40 F for about four hours. If the power is out for an extended period and the temperature stays above 40 F for more than two hours, most of the food in the refrigerator should be discarded to prevent foodborne illness.

Discard raw or leftover meat, salads, lunchmeat, soft cheeses, shredded cheese, milk, yogurt, eggs and most salad dressings. Keep hard cheeses, bread, tortillas, jelly and uncut fresh fruits and vegetables. More information about [what to keep or discard](#) is available online.

A full freezer should last about two days. If the power outage extends beyond that, as long as the food has ice crystals and feels cold, it can safely be refrozen. Food that thaws completely and over 40 F must be discarded.

"Fill plastic gallon jugs with water and keep them in the freezer to take up space," Evans said. "If the electricity goes off, the jugs of ice will help maintain freezer temperature. Also, if

you're on well water, the jugs can be used for drinking water since the well pump isn't working."

If it looks like the power outage will last a while, put food in an ice chest and add ice packs to help keep the temperature cold inside. Including an appliance thermometer in the ice chest can help monitor the temperature to ensure it stays below 40 F.

Evans said it's always a good idea to keep shelf-stable food on hand in the event of a power outage. Canned meats, vegetables and fruit are good to have in the pantry. Also, peanut butter and dried milk will keep the family fed while power is being restored.

"Groceries are expensive, but trying to salvage foods after an extended power outage isn't a good idea," she said. "When in doubt, throw it out."

OSU Extension offers more information online about [food safety during power outages](#).



One Dough Three Ways!



**Workshop #1: February 24th • 1:00-5:00pm
Dewey County Fairgrounds in Taloga**

**Workshop #2: February 26th • 1:00-5:00pm
Alfalfa County Fairgrounds in Cherokee**

**Learn to mix up a quick batch of basic yeast dough to make
Bread, Dinner Rolls & Cinnamon Rolls!**

Each participant takes home:

- A Fresh Baked Loaf
- An 8" x 8" Pan of Dinner Rolls
- An 8" x 8" Pan of Cinnamon Rolls

\$15 Registration Fee



EXTENSION

To register contact the workshop hosting the class by Feb. 20th:

**Alfalfa County OSU Extension Office:
(580) 596-3131**

**Dewey County OSU Extension Office:
(580) 328-5351**

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means, for communication or program information or reasonable accommodation need to contact Megan Ferrell at (580) 596-3131 at least two weeks prior to the event.

OSU is an Affirmative Action, Equal Employment Opportunity, E-Verify Employer.

ALFALFA COUNTY OKLAHOMA HOME & COMMUNITY EDUCATION



OHCE Connection



February/March

Dates to Remember

February 9th-10th- Spring Livestock Show
February 11th- Alfalfa Co. Premium Auction
February 16th -President's Day- Office Closed
February 26th- One Dough- 3 Breads workshop
February 27th at 2:00 March Leader Lesson Training
-Cooking for 1 or 2 on a Budget

NEW March 9th - OHCE Spring County Meeting

March 19th - OHCE Blood Drive- 11:00-6:00
March 27th at 2:00 April Leader Lesson Training
-Control of Gophers & Moles around Home
March 28- District OHCE Meeting- Seiling, OK
April 24th at 2:00, May Leader Lesson Training
-Artificial Intelligence: The Truth about AI

NEW April 25th - Family Fun Fair 11:00-2:00

May 1- Turn in fall fair contest changes
May 3-9- OHCE Week
May 6th- Alfalfa County Flower Show
May 8th- Family & Consumer Sciences Skill-A-Thon
for 4-H & Non-4-H members open to public

Thanks for turning in awards!

I had several awards turned in for heart, rookie, member recruitment and Wilda Flaming Community Project applications. Thank you for helping shine a light on your member and group accomplishments.

Alfalfa County Fair Contest Changes

If your group wants to change anything about your county fair contests from 2025, please have those changes turned in to Paulette by **May 1**. This will help with getting the fair book printed sooner.

Spring/Fall Association Meeting

This year's spring meeting will be March 9th.
I apologize for not updating the spring/fall association meeting hostess and registration assignments in the yearbook. Registration will be at 6:15, meetings will start at 6:30 as always. Please see below and correct this on page 36 of your yearbook:

2026 Spring Meeting Group Assignments:

Hostess: Farmerettes
Registration: Domes-Ti-Kates

2026 Fall Meeting Group Assignments:

Hostess: WheatHearts
Registration: Jet Industrious

Baskets for District Meeting

March 20th of NEXT year (2027), we will be one of 4 counties hosting the OHCE District meeting that will be held at NWOSU in Alva. For this year's meeting, the hosting counties are doing a silent auction to raise money for this meeting. We are to provide 5 baskets for the silent auction. If each Alfalfa County group will please provide a basket of \$30 or higher value for the district meeting this year, the county executive committee will also provide a basket and that will make 5. Please bring these with you at this year's meeting or give to Megan by March 26th. I would truly love to see each group make an effort to attend this year's meeting in Seiling since we are one of the hosting counties next year!



Life is A Picnic with OHCE

Host Counties

Dewey, Ellis, and Woodward



2026 West District Meeting North Region

Saturday, March 28, 2026

Seiling High School, 100 N. Elm, Seiling, OK

Registration: \$30

"Oklahoma State University, as an equal opportunity employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding non-discrimination. Oklahoma State University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all individuals and does not discriminate based on race, religion, age, sex, color, national origin, marital status, disability or veteran status with regard to employment, educational programs and activities, and/or admissions."

"Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communications, program information or reasonable accommodations, need to contact Susan Routh, Family & Consumer Sciences DPS at 580.233.5295 or susan.routh@okstate.edu at least two weeks prior to the event."



Agriculture News



Calving Management to Reduce Disease Risk

Rosslyn Biggs, DVM; OSU Cooperative Extension State Beef Cattle Specialist

Calf scours remains one of the most common health challenges facing cow-calf producers and is rarely caused by a single factor. Instead, diarrhea results from the interaction between disease-causing organisms, the calf, and its environment. One management approach designed to address environmental exposure during calving is the Sandhills calving system. This system focuses on maintaining clean calving conditions throughout the entire calving season.

Early in the calving season, cows typically calve on clean ground with no older calves present. As calving progresses, disease risk increases as pathogens accumulate and younger calves are exposed to older calves shedding infectious organisms. The Sandhills system works to recreate early-season conditions week after week. All pregnant cows begin the season in one pasture. After one to two weeks, cows that have not yet calved are moved to a clean pasture, while cow-calf pairs remain behind. This process is repeated throughout the calving season.

By separating calves by age, younger calves have limited contact with older calves that may be shedding pathogens. This disrupts the cycle of exposure and reduces the buildup of disease-causing organisms in the calving area. Producers who adopt this system often report fewer cases of calf scours, reduced treatment rates, and improved calf survival. These benefits can also translate into lower labor demands and decreased treatment costs.

Additional advantages include improved observation and recordkeeping. Smaller groups of cow-calf pairs allow producers to monitor health more closely, identify problems earlier, and provide targeted care when needed. The system can also support broader biosecurity efforts, including isolation of sick calves and maintaining cleaner calving areas.

Implementing the Sandhills calving system does require advance planning. Pasture availability, water access, shelter, forage use, and weather conditions must be considered. Timing and good stockmanship are especially important when moving pregnant cows. While not a replacement for sound nutrition, vaccination, or overall herd health programs, this system is a valuable management tool. For producers facing recurring calf scours or seeking to improve calving-season efficiency, the Sandhills calving system is worth consideration as a proactive investment in calf health and herd productivity.



GETTING STARTED WITH **SMALL RUMINANTS** SERIES

JANUARY 22ND, 2026 6PM

Alfalpa County Fairgrounds

APRIL 30TH, 2026 6PM

Major County Fairgrounds

JULY 16TH, 2026 6PM

Woods County-NW Tech Center

OCTOBER 2026 TBD

QUESTIONS? CONTACT THE ALFALFA COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE AT (580)596-3131.
PLEASE RSVP 1 WEEK BEFORE EACH MEETING. MEAL WILL BE PROVIDED.



ALFALFA COUNTY
EXTENSION



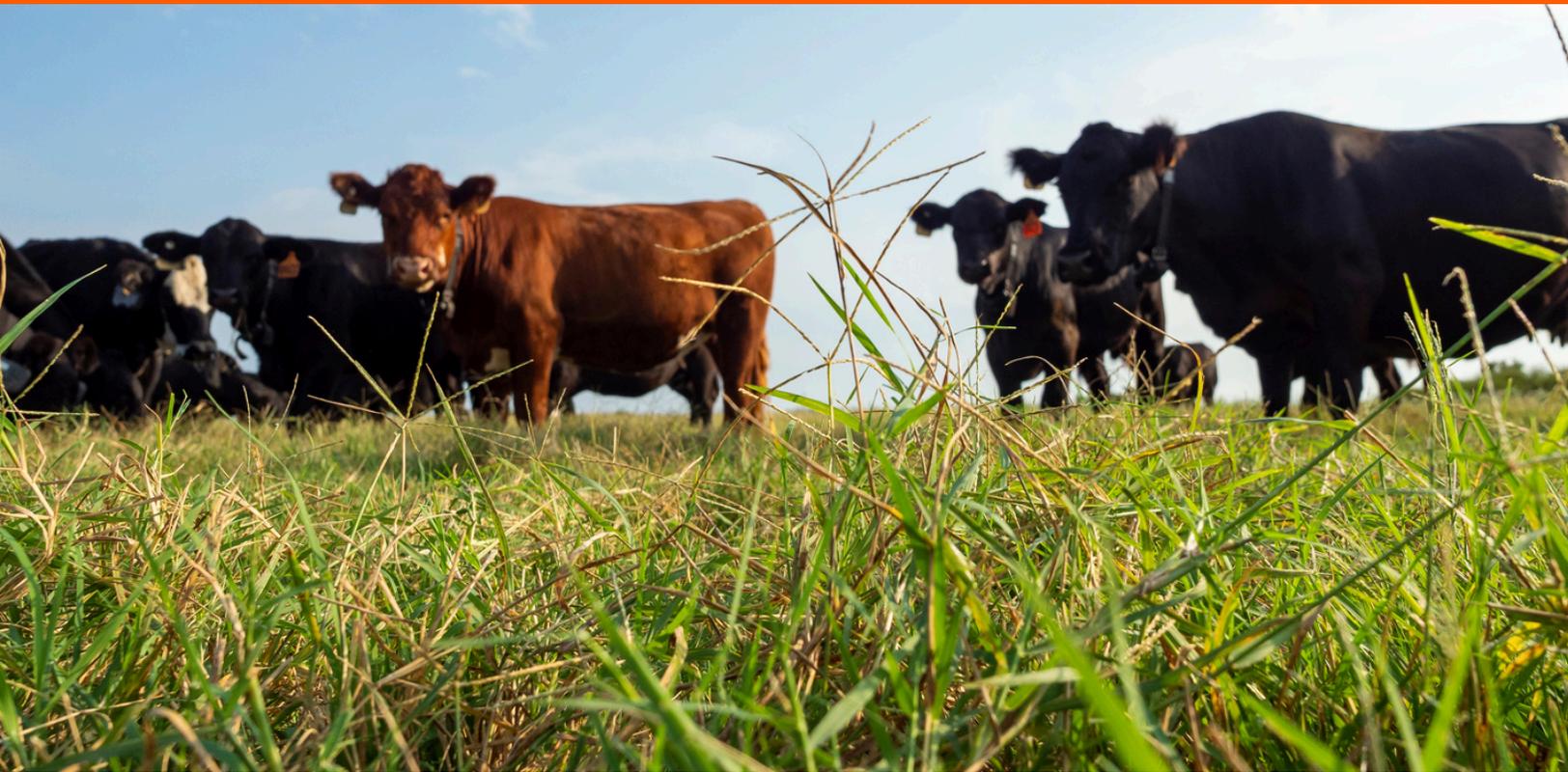
MAJOR COUNTY
EXTENSION



WOODS COUNTY
EXTENSION



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Cow Herd Health Management

Meal Sponsored by:

zoetis

FOR ANIMALS. FOR HEALTH. FOR YOU.

**vaccinations-deworming-common diseases
with Dr. Rosslyn Biggs, DVM**

February 26, 2026 12PM

at the Alfalfa County Fairgrounds
602 W 5th St Cherokee, OK 73728

Learn about keeping your cow herd healthy to increase your profitability!
Call Erin at the Alfalfa County Extension office to sign up & for more information (580)596-3131



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CATTLE REPRODUCTION SHORT COURSE

WITH DR. DAN STEIN

MARCH 5TH
MARCH 26TH
APRIL 2ND
APRIL 9TH
APRIL 16TH
6PM

5 WEEK COURSE

LEARN THE BASICS OF CATTLE
REPRODUCTION INCLUDING HOW TO
ARTIFICIALLY INSEMINATE AND
PREGNANCY CHECK.

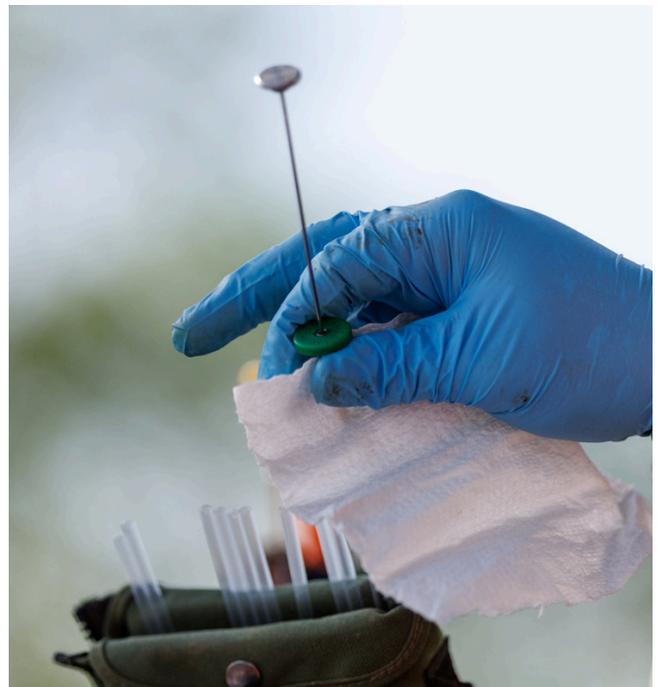
15 PARTICIPANTS MAX

RESERVE YOUR SPOT TODAY BY CALLING
THE ALFALFA COUNTY OSU EXTENSION
OFFICE (580)596-3131.

\$100 REGISTRATION FEE TO COVER MATERIALS



**ALFALFA COUNTY
EXTENSION**





Clover Connection



Youth leadership thrives in 4-H Ambassador program

Since 1994, the Oklahoma 4-H Ambassador program has provided youth with opportunities to grow as leaders while promoting 4-H across the state. For many members, becoming a State 4-H Ambassador is more than a title — it is a chance to make a lasting impact.

“Being a State 4-H Ambassador is an honor, but it’s also one of the best ways a teen can stretch their leadership skills,” said Cathy Allen, 4-H curriculum coordinator at the state 4-H office at Oklahoma State University. “This program takes what’s already inside them, their potential, their passion, their story, and turns it into something bigger than them.”

Applications for the State 4-H Ambassador program are due March 15. Hard copies must be postmarked by that date, and electronic applications must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. Applicants must be at least 13 years old and have one year of high school remaining.

State 4-H Ambassadors work with club members and adult partners to make their local 4-H program more visible in their county and across the state. They also play an important role in communicating with 4-H alumni and supporters. Ambassadors may remain in the program for the duration of their 4-H careers, provided they remain in good standing.

Applicants who score the highest will advance to the interview selection day, which includes an extemporaneous speech, a face-to-face interview and a writing assignment.

For Taryn Gathers of Custer County, the decision to apply came after observing ambassadors at state events.

“I love to lead, but I don’t always feel the need to be front and center,” Gathers said. “I consider myself a

‘silent leader,’ someone who leads from behind the scenes. Seeing that leadership style reflected in the ambassador program is what encouraged me to apply.”

As an ambassador, Gathers has helped with major events such as the Clover Classic Golf Tournament and the Clover Bowl contest at State 4-H Roundup, and she met U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Brooke Rollins during a visit to Express Ranch.

“Being an ambassador has strengthened my confidence, leadership and perseverance,” she said. “I’ve learned how to manage my time and set boundaries, which has helped me grow not only as a leader, but as a person.”

Rebecca Whiteley of McCurtain County became interested in the program after interacting with some of the ambassadors at State 4-H Roundup and said it was a major turning point for her.

“I met a few of the state ambassadors, and learning what they do and how the program helped them really inspired me,” she said. “That was what ultimately led me to apply.”

Whiteley’s favorite experience as an ambassador came during the 2025 State 4-H Roundup.

“I was able to meet and have lunch with Jill Bramble, president and CEO of the National 4-H Council,” she said. “She was extremely kind and supportive of our 4-H ventures, and this was an event I’ll never forget.”

For more information about the State 4-H Ambassador program or the application process, contact Allen at 405-744-8892 or cathy.allen@okstate.edu.

UPCOMING EVENTS



FEB
9TH-11TH

ALFALFA CO SPRING LIVESTOCK SHOW

FEB 15TH

4-H & FFA DANCE

FEB 16TH

ALF CO COMMUNICATIONS CONTEST

MAR 23-24

4-H SEWING WORKSHOPS

MAR 31ST

WEST DISTRICT CONTEST DAY

APRIL 3RD

YOUTH BEEF INDUSTRY TOUR

APRIL 6TH

FASHION REVUE-IMPRESSIVE DRESS

APRIL 23RD

4-H PARENT VOLUNTEER MEETING

APRIL 28TH
& 30TH

KIDS IN THE KITCHEN

MAY 8TH

ALFALFA CO CULINARY DAY

2026 Alfalfa County Spring Livestock Show

Monday, February 9th

9-10 am Weigh All Livestock
Sign Up For Showmanship
Check Papers
Enter Horses
Sign up for Skillathon
Turn in Pen of Calves Record Books

11am- 3pm Skillathon

12:30 pm Goat Showmanship
Goat Show
2:00 pm Sheep Showmanship
Sheep Show

1-4 pm Pen Of Calves Interviews

5 pm Beginning Beef Show
Cattle Showmanship
Dairy Show
Beef Cattle Show

Tuesday, February 10th

9 am Swine Showmanship
Swine Show
11am Horse Showmanship
Horse Show

****Livestock Judging Contest begins at the conclusion of the Horse Show.

****ALL Livestock will be released following the Judging Contest. ANY animal leaving before will forfeit all premiums and awards!

****ALL stalls must be cleaned and all equipment must be removed before the banquet.

Wednesday, February 11th

5:30 pm Banquet and Awards Program
Banquet meal will be served by the Cherokee Junior Class.
6:30 pm Premium Sale



Alfalfa County Livestock Skillathon Practices



Open to all 4-H & FFA members
January 20th, 2026
January 27th, 2026
February 3rd, 2026
February 5th, 2026

Come & Go

3:30pm-5:30pm

at the Alfalfa County Extension Office



**Alfalfa County
Livestock
Skillathon Contest
February 9th, 2025**

Call the Alfalfa County Extension office for more information (580)596-3131.



**ALFALFA COUNTY
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Leadership Conference for 3rd-7th grade 4-H members



Date: Saturday, March 7, 2026

Location: AG Hall, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater

Cost: \$20

Register: online via 4h.zsuites.org by Feb 6th



OSU EXTENSION
**ALFALFA COUNTY
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

ALFALFA COUNTY 4-H CULINARY CONTEST & FCS SKILL-A-THON

Food Showdown & Cupcake Wars

MAY 8, 2026

Location: Alfalfa County Fairgrounds

MORE DETAILS TO COME

**THERE WILL BE KIDS IN THE KITCHEN COOKING WORKSHOPS
APRIL 28TH AND APRIL 30TH FROM 4:00-7:00PM**

Youth compete in teams of 2 or 3. For Food Showdown, we provide the food, youth provide a kit of supplies to cook. They have 40 minutes to prepare and plate their dish. They are judged on food preparation, food safety and taste.

Cupcake Wars is judged on creativity, neatness and decoration only. Youth provide all supplies for cupcake decoration. Cupcakes are baked ahead of time and they are decorated for the competition.



Age Divisions:

Junior: Grades 3-5

Intermediate: Grades 6-8

Senior: Grades 9-12

2025-26 grade in school



FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES SKILL-A-THON

FCS Skill-a-thon consists of identifying items in Interior Design, Cooking & Sewing. This will be a separate competition. Cash prizes given.

YOUTH BEEF INDUSTRY TOUR

OPEN TO ALL 4-H & FFA Members

April 3rd, 2026

STARTS AT THE ALFALFA COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE AT 8:00AM

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE BEEF CATTLE INDUSTRY
BY TOURING DIFFERENT OPERATIONS AND
SEGMENTS OF THE INDUSTRY!

To participate in the tour call the Alfalfa County Extension Office at (580)596-3131 or email erin.metcalfe@okstate.edu by March 25th, 2026



OSU EXTENSION
**ALFALFA COUNTY
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**



Alfalfa County 4-H/FFA Valentine's Dance

*Please join us for a fun night filled
with dancing and refreshments!*

6th-12th Grade

Come dressed to impress!

**FEB
15TH**

**Alfalfa County
Fairgrounds
602 W. 5th St.
Cherokee, Ok**

**7PM-
9PM**

***Admission cost is any non-
perishable food item.***

***RSVP to the Alfalfa County
Extension Office 580-596-3131***

West District 4-H

CONTEST DAY

**WESTERN TECHNOLOGY CENTER
BURNS FLAT, OK**

MARCH 31ST, 2026

- **SPEECH CONTEST**
- **LIVESTOCK SKILATHON**
- **LIVESTOCK QUIZBOWL**
- **EDUCATIONAL BOOTHS**
- **CLOVER QUIZBOWL**
- **CONSUMER JUDGING**



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OSU EXTENSION
ALFALFA COUNTY
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

* Sewing WORKSHOPS



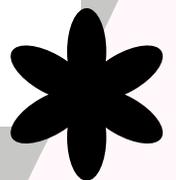
**NO
COST**

4-H MEMBERS, COME LEARN TO SEW A TOTE BAG
WITH DONATED DENIM & 4-H FABRIC.
YOUTH SIGN UP FOR ONE NIGHT.
WE WILL TAKE 6 YOUTH EACH NIGHT.
SIGN UP BY MARCH 16TH 580-596-3131

MARCH 23RD & 24TH - 4:00-7:00PM
ALFALFA COUNTY OSU EXTENSION OFFICE

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Alfalfa Co 4-H

FASHION REVUE- IMPRESSIVE DRESS

**6th APRIL 2026
at 6PM**

Alfalfa Co Fairgrounds Exhibit Building

Entries due by March 31st, 2026

Guidelines & Entry Forms available at
the Alfalfa County Extension Office or
on 4h.zsuite.org



OSU EXTENSION
**ALFALFA COUNTY
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

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Want to do a speech, digital presentation or illustrated presentation but not sure where to start? Join us for a contest preparation workshop on January 2nd!

ALFALFA COUNTY 4-H COMMUNICATION CONTEST



FEBRUARY 16TH, 2026 AT 5:30PM

ALFALFA COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

Power Point
Speech
Illustrated Presentation
Job Readiness
Graphic Design
Photography



Entries due by Feb 11th to the
Alfalfa Co Extension Office

Entry forms available at
the Alf Co Extension
office, on Zsutes, Alf Co
FB page or can be
emailed

PARENT VOLUNTEER Meeting



APRIL 23RD, 2026

4 PM

AT THE ALFALFA COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE

All adults involved in or wanting to be involved in Alfalfa County 4-H are welcome to attend!



OSU EXTENSION
**ALFALFA COUNTY
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communications, program information or reasonable accommodations, need to contact Erin Metcalf at (580)596-3131 at least two weeks prior to the event.

OSU is an Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity, E-Verify Employer.

State 4-H RECORD BOOKS DUE APRIL 24TH

State record books are open to any
4-Her in 8th grade or older.

State record books are how you earn scholarships in 4-H!

Need help? Give us a call to set up an appointment to get
help completing your state 4-H record book.

(580)596-3131



OSU EXTENSION
**ALFALFA COUNTY
4-H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT**

save the dates

MULTI COUNTY 4-H
2026
CAMP

06/24 - 06/26

VICI, OK

