

**Date: February 24, 2025**

**To: 4-H Poultry Project Members and Leaders**

**From: Kayla Mitchell, Program Coordinator, 4-H Youth Development**

**Re: 2025 Poultry Project Important Information and Updates**

This is a quick update on the events that will take place for the 2025 fair season within the poultry department. Should you have questions, feel free to contact the MSU Extension office at 269-467-5511. Please note that the information contained in this letter is subject to change.

**NEW for 2025:**

- Skill-a-thon and interview will be combined into one evaluation class.
- We encourage all breeding stock poultry to be **loaded out** on Saturday, September 20, from 11:00 p.m. - 12 midnight to get the barn cleaned. If necessary, they may also be loaded out on Sunday, September 21 at 5:30 a.m. but must be gone by 6:00 a.m.

**Reminders:**

- The 4-H Poultry Show will be on **Sunday, September 14, 2025, Time TBD, we are working with Rabbits to offset the shows a little more than last year.** All livestock superintendents/assistants and the 4-H Horse Council will work together and with the 4-H Program Coordinator to ensure a smooth show day for all.
- Hatch dates: Turkey = Saturday, May 17, 2025; Chickens = Saturday, July 19, 2025
- **Turkey Vaccination/Tagging** dates have been set for Sunday, July 13, 2025, 5:00-7:00 p.m. and Monday, July 14, 2025, 5:00-7:00 p.m. at the St. Joseph County Fairgrounds. As in the past, all turkeys on the premises are required to be vaccinated. Please remember to bring **ALL** turkeys on the property where turkeys are housed to be vaccinated for Fowl Pox. All Turkeys that will be exhibited at the St. Joseph County Fair, **MUST** attend one of the above dates. There will NOT be any other available dates or times. **Proof of Purchase and Pullorum papers are required AND due at the time of vaccination. NO EXCEPTIONS! Wing banding will take place at the same time and place as the vaccinations for 2025.**
- **Chickens - Breeding Stock, Market and Waterfowl Countywide Banding/Tagging & Registration** is Sunday, August 17, 2025, 4:00-7:00 p.m. and Monday, August 18, 2025, 5:00-7:00 p.m. at the St. Joseph County Fairgrounds, 5:00-7:00 p.m. Pigeons will be registered then but not tagged.
- Breeding stock chickens may, but are not required to, get the Fowl Pox vaccine at the same time as the turkeys on Sunday, July 13, 2025, or Monday, July 14, 2025, 5:00-7:00 p.m. If you choose to vaccinate your breeding stock chickens at that time, please be sure to bring ALL of your breeding stock at the same time. Cost is free to 4-H members.
- All exhibitors of **pigeons** will be required to leave their pigeons on exhibit throughout the entire fair week. Each exhibitor will be responsible for providing feed, watering, and care of their pigeons.
- Breeding stock turkeys: exhibitors may tag up to four (4) breeding stock turkeys but may only exhibit up to two (2); one male and one female. Turkeys must go through all vaccination procedures according to the market turkey project and be at least 8 weeks old



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at time of vaccination. Turkeys shown in the Breeding Stock class **MUST** be taken home and are **NOT** eligible for auction. Turkeys shown in the Breeding Stock class may include Heritage Turkeys or Production Turkeys. See the St. Joseph County 4-H, FFA, and Other Youth Fair Book for additional rules and regulations under Department 12.

- Breeding stock turkey and chicken exhibitors will be required to pay \$2.00 per pen for feed and bedding costs at the time of check-in.
- **All 4-H livestock members/clubs** will be held responsible for setting up their project pen/stall and decorations before fair, as well as cleaning and tearing down their project pen/stall at the end of fair. Individuals or clubs may be assessed a \$50.00 fine for failure to do so.
- If you do not have a Poultry Leader in your 4-H club, please contact another club and enroll in that club for the Poultry Project.

**Important dates, deadlines, and events:**

Event or Deadline	Date(s)	Comments
Turkey Hatch Date	Saturday, May 17	Recommend ordering birds right away
Vaccination/Tagging for Turkeys	Sunday, July 13, 5:00-7:00 p.m. or Monday, July 14, 5:00-7:00 p.m.	<b>* Will be held at the fairgrounds in the poultry barns.</b> Note: Breeding stock chickens may also be vaccinated but are <i>not</i> required.
Chicken Hatch Date	Saturday, July 19	Recommend ordering birds right away
Poultry Clinic	TBD	Times TBD
Chickens - Breeding Stock and Market along with Waterfowl Countywide Banding/Tagging & Registration	Sunday, August 17, 4:00-7:00 p.m. or Monday, August 18, 5:00-7:00 p.m.	<b>* Will be held at the fairgrounds at the poultry barns.</b> All poultry animals except turkeys and pigeons.
Fair weigh-in/check-in	Friday, September 12, 4:00-7:00 p.m.	Animals <b>MUST</b> be clean and dry! No cardboard boxes allowed.
4-H Poultry Project Evaluation	<u>Saturday</u> , September 13, 2:00-6:00 p.m. Poultry Barns	Sign up for times at Friday check-in <b>Required</b> for ALL exhibitors!
4-H Poultry Show	Sunday, September 14, Time, TBD	Show schedule TBD
4-H Small Animal Sale	Thursday, September 18, 10:00 a.m. in the Livestock Show Arena	Order of sale: goats, chickens, turkeys, rabbits
Market Animal Load-out	Saturday, September 20, 10:00 p.m.	All members <b>must be present!</b>
Breeding Stock Load-out	Sunday, September 21, 5:30 a.m.	<b>Breeding stock must be removed by 6:00 a.m.</b>
Barn Clean-up	Saturday, September 20, after market loadout AND check back Sunday, September 21 at 6:00 a.m.	All members must clean and help put away the pens. All livestock must be off the grounds by 11:00 a.m. per the SJCG Fair Board.
Power Washing - Chicken and Turkey Barns and Cages	Sunday, September 21, 6:00 a.m.	<b>All Clubs and Members</b>