



NEWSLETTER



September 2026 Focus

2026-2027 4-H Enrollment

The new 4-H Year starts soon! Please wait until **September 1st** to enroll or re-enroll. We will be using a new enrollment website this year, so we will be learning it together!

<https://tx4h.tamu.edu/>

4-H Open House

SAVE THE DATE! The Bell County 4-H Open House is set for Tuesday, September 8th at the Huntington Bank EXPO, Assembly Hall from 5:00-7:00 pm. Want to have a 4-H Club or Project booth?

Sign up for a booth here!

<https://forms.gle/nwd1y57bU3gPYrz46>

Hunter's Spectacular

SAVE THE DATE!

The Bell County 4-H fundraiser will take place **Saturday, October 17, 2026!** More information inside the newsletter!



| Quick Links



<https://agrilife.org/bell4h/>



<https://tx4h.tamu.edu/>



facebook.com/bell4h

| Bell County Staff

Sheryl Long - County Extension Agent
4-H & Youth Development

Meagan Cline - County Extension Agent
Natural Resources

Floyd Ingram - County Extension Agent
Agriculture

Beverly Hodges - County Extension Agent
Family & Community Health

Sheryl Austin - Cooperative Extension
Family & Community Health

Hailey Swanson - 4-H Program Assistant

The members of Texas A&M AgriLife will provide equal opportunities in programs and activities, education, and employment to all persons regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation or gender identity and will strive to achieve full and equal employment opportunity throughout Texas A&M AgriLife. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.



4-H Enrollment



4-H Enrollment starts soon! All enrollments are done via our new website <https://tx4h.tamu.edu/>. You can access Texas 4-H by going to our 4-H website at <http://agrilife.org/bell4h/>. Since this is a brand new enrollment website, we are requesting that EVERYONE wait until September 1st to enroll.

To maintain the level of programming and opportunities in the Texas 4-H and Youth Development Program, an annual participant fee is implemented for each 4-H member (excluding Clover Kids). The participant fee is \$25 if enrolled from August 15th to October 31st, November 1st the participant fee will increase to \$30.

Please do not worry if you are still pending at the county level once you have enrolled. The county office will try to keep up as best as we can by approving them at least once a week. As long as you complete your enrollment, you are in the system and good for enrollment and BCYF requirements. Enrollment dues must be paid by an electronic payment.

For instructions on how to enroll, please visit:
<http://agrilife.org/bell4h/4-h-enrollment-guidelines/4-h-enrollment-information/>

All volunteers who enroll will be charged a fee. This covers your screening for the year. All volunteers will have to re-enroll each year. Club Managers must enroll ASAP!
If you have further questions, please contact the County Extension Office at: 254-933-5305

4-H Age /Grade Requirements

Texas 4-H membership eligibility will be based on SCHOOL GRADE and not age. The eligibility rules and guidelines are:

Youth may participate in 4-H year from September 1st of grade three through August 31st following completion of grade twelve, with these age restrictions:

Minimum age - 8 (as of August 31, 2026 and in the 3rd grade)

Maximum age - 18 (as of August 31, 2026)

4-H Member Categories

Juniors: Grades 3, 4, and 5

Intermediates: Grades 6, 7, and 8

Seniors: Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12



Hunter's Spectacular



Event Details

Drawing for 20 Guns

- Winners will be drawn on Facebook Live on **Saturday, October 17th** starting at 11:00 am
- Once a ticket is drawn, it will not be put back into the drawing.
- 4-H members are expected to sell at least 5 tickets per member. \$20 tickets
- Ticket turn-in will be by Club appointment only on:
 - **Tuesday, October 13th through Friday, October 16th**
 - 8:00am – 11:00am or 1:00pm – 4:00pm
- *NEW This Year* Sign up times available via a Google Sheet emailed out by Hailey Swanson
- **Clubs MUST pay with their 4-H Club check**

Handgun Bonus Draw

These tickets will be \$50 per ticket and this drawing is limited to 100 tickets. The Bonus Draw will be sold only by Bell County 4-H Ambassadors.

- Each club is expected to donate \$100 to purchase the handgun for the Bonus Draw.
- Deadline for \$100 donation – **September 25, 2026**
- Bell County 4-H Ambassadors are expected to sell at least 5 tickets to the Bonus Draw before selling tickets for the main Hunter Spectacular drawing.

Each club needs to recruit at least one \$200 sponsor for this event. Feel free to get more!

4-H Club Incentives

We want to continue to incentivize member participation. In that effort, each Club that meets the 3 requirements listed below will earn a 10% kickback.

1. 100% ticket sales based on enrollment from last year based on each member selling 3 tickets.
2. Donate \$100 to the Bonus Draw side raffle.
3. Recruit at least one \$200 event sponsor—**Deadline September 25, 2026**

For example: if your club is given 100 tickets to sell based on last year's membership, you will receive the 10% kickback if you sell those 100 tickets, recruit at least one \$200 event sponsor, and donate \$100 to the Bonus Draw side raffle.

4-H Member Incentives

The 4-H member with the highest number of ticket sales, will get \$100 cash! This does not include tickets sales from the Bonus Draw (Ambassadors only). Make sure to complete the "sold by" portion on your tickets to get credit! Club Managers will have to keep track of this and share with the Extension Office on their club's highest seller and the number of tickets they sold.

County Council and Ambassadors



County Council Meeting Dates

Dates and programs have been set for 2026-2027 Bell County Council meetings. These meetings will take place at the Bell County Extension Office starting at 6:00 pm.

Date	Meeting Program	Community Service Projects
September 28	Council Delegates 101 & Dress Code Program	Military Appreciations Cards
November 9	Game Warden or Fire Department	Toy Drive
January 11	Bell County Youth Fair	Sock Collections
March 29	Health or Outdoor Safety	Animal Items Collection
May 10	Council Officer Elections	Crayon Initiative

Military Appreciation Cards

Please note that no donations will be collected this month. At the November County Council meeting, Piper Roland from the County Council Officer Team will provide thank-you cards for all attendees to sign. Following the meeting, Ms. Roland will deliver these cards to the local VA Hospital, where they will be distributed to veterans as a gesture of appreciation for their service. We encourage all members to participate in this meaningful initiative.

Bell County 4-H Ambassadors for Hunter's Spectacular

The Bell County 4-H Ambassadors will be selling the Bonus Draw tickets for a very nice handgun. These tickets will be \$50 per ticket and this drawing is limited to 100 tickets. **The Bonus Draw will be sold only by Bell County 4-H Ambassadors.** Bell County 4-H Ambassadors are expected to sell at least **5** tickets to the Bonus Draw before selling tickets for the main Hunter Spectacular drawing. You will pick up these tickets from the Bell County Extension Office AND turn in your ticket stubs with payment back into the Extension Office.

Any questions regarding photography events, contact Liz Schlak, liz.schlak@gmail.com, 254-718-1332.

FCH Project News

FCH Coalition Meeting

When: September 28th **Where:** CEO **Time:** 6:00 pm

Join us for the first meeting of the new 4-H year. Big items on the agenda are the Bell County 4-H Food Show & Food Challenge contest.

FCH Quiz Bowl

A quiz game that tests teams of 4 on their knowledge of basic nutrition, consumer information, food and kitchen safety, food preparation skills and storage, health and fashion and interior design skills. Up against the clock, the 4-H'ers buzz in to answer a question and earn points for correct answers. Teams advance in a tournament-system bracket to win the competition.

FCH Quiz Bowl practices will be 6-7 at the County Extension Office on the following dates:

- **September** 11, 18, 25
- **October** 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Contact Barbara Wood for more information, woodbtwice@gmail.com.

Leaders 4 Life

A competition that allows 4-H youth to demonstrate their knowledge of Parliamentary Procedure.

Leaders 4 Life practices will be 6-7 at the County Extension Office on the following dates:

- **September** 3, 10, 17
- **October** 1, 8, 15, 22, 29
- **November** 5, 12

Contact Barbara Wood for more information, woodbtwice@gmail.com.

Food Challenge

Teams of 3-4 students receive a list of ingredients and have 40 minutes to create a dish. The teams then present their dish to judges and are scored on preparation, serving size, food safety concerns, and nutritional value. Students qualify at the county and district level to compete at the state contest.

Food Challenge practices will be on Sunday afternoons from 2-4 at the First United Methodist Church in Belton on the following dates:

- **September** 6, 13, 20, 27
- **October** 11, 18, 25
- **November** 15, 22, 29

Contact Barbara Wood for more information, woodbtwice@gmail.com.



Livestock Project News



2026 Major Show & BCYF Heifer Validation

Physical validation will be held at the Huntington Bank Expo on the dates listed below:

Heifer Validation: October 19th from 4:00 – 6:00 pm

Bell County REQUIRES all FFA and 4-H members to pre-order and pay for Major Show tags prior to validation. Validation tags for only the county show will be purchased on-site during physical validation for \$5/each. Completing validation does NOT enter livestock in the shows.

Special Notes for Heifer Validations:

- Heifers already validated do NOT have to be re-validated or have a tag. Heifers ONLY need to be re-validated if they change breed or ownership.
- If you have leftover tags from June validation, you may use them this fall.
- Please send a PDF copy of the ORIGINAL registration papers for the heifers you plan to validate to meagan.cline@ag.tamu.edu PRIOR TO validation.

If you have any questions, please contact Meagan Cline at meagan.cline@ag.tamu.edu (254) 933-5305.

2027 Major Show & BCYF Lamb and Goat Validation

Physical validation will be held at the Huntington Bank Expo on the dates listed below:

Sheep and Goat Validation: October 20th and October 27th from 4:00 – 7:00 pm

Bell County REQUIRES all FFA and 4-H members to pre-order and pay for Major Show tags prior to validation. Validation tags for only the county show will be purchased on-site during physical validation for \$5/each. Completing validation does NOT enter livestock in the shows.

Special Notes for Sheep and Goat Validations:

- The deadline for ownership, transfer, and registration is October 1, 2026. A color copy of the original registration papers MUST be sent to meagan.cline@ag.tamu.edu PRIOR TO validation.
- All lambs and goats validated during the 2026 State Fair Validation period including market animals WILL BE ELIGIBLE for 2027 Spring Major Shows. Once validated, the project MUST stay in the care of the exhibitor that project is validated to; if the exhibitor chooses to sell the project to a new exhibitor, the new exhibitor MUST RE-VALIDATE the project within the next validation period.

If you have any questions, please contact Meagan Cline at (254)-933-5305.



Livestock Project News



Save the Date for Local Show Opportunities!

Central Texas State Fair: September 4-6, 2026

A flyer with more information is coming soon!

Holiday Classic Clinic and Jackpot Show: October 31, 2026

NEW THIS YEAR! It will be a one day event. This will be the 35th annual Holiday Classic! Remember, this show is completely FREE for exhibitors and their families. There will be high quality educational clinics, great food, and awesome giveaways as always! If you or your business would like to be a sponsor of this event to help keep it FREE for attendees, please let us know!

2026 Major Show Swine Validation Tag Orders:

Market Barrows, Registered Breeding Gilts, Crossbred Gilts

DEADLINE: September 18, 2026 **COST:** \$30/tag

There are two options for exhibitors to submit tag orders:

- To order online and pay by credit card, visit: <https://bell-livestock-coalition.square.site/>
- To order in person and pay with exact cash or check, come by the Extension Office with payment, payable to Bell Livestock Coalition.

Physical validation will be held at the Huntington Bank Expo on the dates listed below:

November 16th and November 23rd from 4:00 – 7:00 pm

• Registered Gilt papers must be owned on or before November 30, 2026 and they must also be registered (litter registration, bottom left hand corner) on or before November 30, 2026. There are NO EXCEPTIONS on this! Please send a PDF copy of the ORIGINAL registration papers for the registered gilts you plan to validate to meagan.cline@ag.tamu.edu PRIOR to validation.

2027 Major Show Broiler Order

Deadline for Bell County 4-H: **Friday, September 4, 2026.**

- Broiler chicks cost \$1.50 each and must be ordered in increments of 25 with a maximum of 75 chicks per exhibitor or family
- San Antonio birds are ordered separately from Houston/Austin birds.
- Estimated pick up for San Antonio birds is December.
- Estimated pick up for Houston/Austin birds is January.

Order form is available at the Bell County Extension Office or online.

If you have any questions, contact Meagan Cline at Meagan.Cline@ag.tamu.edu or (254) 933-5305.



Livestock Project News



Major Show Entry Forms Deadline

The Bell County 4-H Major Show Entry Deadline is **November 9th**! We will be open from 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM to accept entry forms. All required paperwork must be filled out completely and turned in with original signatures before the deadline. Emailed forms will not be accepted. Entries without payment will not be accepted. Exact cash or checks can be made payable to the Bell Livestock Coalition. If you would like to pay by credit card, a 3% fee will be added to cover service charges. As entry forms are released from the shows, a PDF version will be posted at <https://agrilife.org/bell4h/projects/4-h-livestock/>. You may fill and print the PDF versions at home. Also, paper copies of the entry forms will also be available at the Bell County Extension Office. To ensure that all entries from Bell County 4-H are processed and checked thoroughly,

No entries will be accepted after the November 10th deadline!

Call or email Meagan Cline if you have any questions.

Livestock Judging Meeting

Interested in participating in livestock judging? We will be having the first meeting for the new year on Tuesday, September 22nd at the Bell County Extension Office starting at 6:00 pm.

Contact Meagan Cline if you have any questions.

Meagan.Cline@ag.tamu.edu or 254-933-5305.

Bell County Youth Fair

February 6-13, 2027

Bell County Youth Fair Eligibility

Club Managers, please make sure you have a sign in sheet at each meeting and announce to all members to sign in before, during, and after the meeting.

- BCYF has a website in which everything will be posted including the new fair book, entry forms, superintendent's names and phone numbers, score sheets, and other information:

<http://agrilife.org/bellctyyouthfair/>

- Must be 8 yrs old and in 3rd grade and not older than 19 yrs.

- Live in Bell County and/or attend school in Bell County and belong to a Bell County club (homeschoolers must live in Bell County)

- You MUST attend 2 meetings to participate in the BCYF. Your name MUST be on the sign in sheets for it to count.

- 2 meetings will be allowed from August 1, 2025 to December 31, 2026. No meetings will be allowed in January to use for the 2 meeting rule.

- All 4-H members MUST be enrolled by December 10, 2026 to participate in the BCYF. However, the fee will go up after October 31st so do it quickly.

- Must be passing all classes!

Other Important Information

The 2027 Fair Book will be posted soon. Visit the BCYF website at <https://agrilife.org/bellctyyouthfair/> for more information on entries, rules, judges, and more.

Make sure you are giving your Club Manager a good phone number and email to reach you. You will miss important information and deadlines if you don't check your emails!

Bell County Youth Fair

February 6-13, 2027

Commercial Steer Weigh In	September 5, 2026	8:00 am
Roaster Orders Due	October 9, 2026	5:00 pm
Validate Heifers	October 19, 2026	4:00 - 6:00 pm
Validate Lambs & Goats	October 20 & 27, 2026	4:00 - 7:00 pm
Broiler Orders Due	November 6, 2026	5:00 pm
Turkey Pick Up (Tentatively)	November 9-13, 2026	3:30 - 5:30 pm
Commercial Heifer Palpate & Judge	November 14, 2026	TBD
Validate Swine	November 16 & 23, 2026	4:00 - 7:00 pm
Online Entry Deadline	December 1, 2026	5:00 pm
Pick Up Roasters	December 4, 2026	3:30 - 5:30 pm
Commercial Heifer Sale	December 18, 2026	Milam County Auction
Pick Up Broilers	December TBD	3:30 - 5:30 pm
Commercial Heifer Record Book Due	January 8, 2027	5:00 pm
Rabbit Validation	January 10, 2027	3:00 - 5:00 pm
Weigh Out Commercial Steers	January 30, 2027	8:00 am
Commercial Steer Record Books Due	February 5, 2027	5:00 pm

Bell County Youth Fair

February 6-13, 2027

BCYF Commercial Steer Weigh In

September 5, 2026, 8:00 AM

Evan's Ranch, Little-River Academy

Steers will be tagged. It is recommended (not required) that steers weigh at least 650 to 700 pounds at the initial weigh-in. Steers weighing below 1000 pounds at the final weigh-in will have points discounted.

This will be the only day for entering steers. Steers being fed for the Commercial Steer Show must be weaned. Nurse cows are not permitted.

BCYF Unregistered Heifer Paperwork Available

COST: \$5 per Heifer due at time of validation

VALIDATION: Monday, October 19, 4:00-7:00 PM, Bell County EXPO

To validate heifers for the BCYF Unregistered division, please request forms from Cheri.OBraden@ag.tamu.edu prior to validation and return completed paperwork at validation. County only tags for unregistered heifers will be purchased on-site for \$5.00 the night of validation.

BCYF Poultry Orders

Roaster orders due October 9, 2026

Broiler Orders are due November 6, 2026

Order forms are posted on the BCYF website <https://agrilife.org/bellcttyouthfair/>. Forms and payment are due to the Bell County Extension Office by 5:00 PM on the respective due dates.

BCYF Entries

Entries will open on October 13, 2026 at 8:00 AM. All exhibitors must submit their entries online by December 1st, 2026 at 5:00 PM. For more information and to access the entry link, please visit the BCYF website <https://agrilife.org/bellcttyouthfair/>.

Save the Date: BCYF Validation Dates

County only tags for sheep, goats, and swine will be purchased on-site for \$5.00 the night of validation.

BCYF/Major Show Heifer Validation: October 19

BCYF/Major Show Sheep and Goat Validation: October 20 & 27

BCYF/Major Show Swine Validation: November 16 & 23

Important Dates

September

September 1: 4-H Enrollment Starts
September 3: L4L Practice
September 4: Major Show Broiler Orders Due
September 5: BCYF Commercial Steer Weigh In
September 6: Food Challenge Practice
September 8: 4-H Open House
September 10: L4L Practice
September 11: FCH Quiz Bowl Practice
September 13: Food Challenge Practice
September 17: L4L Practice
September 18: FCH Quiz Bowl Practice
September 18: Swine Validation Tag Orders Due
September 20: Food Challenge Practice
September 22: Livestock Judging Meeting
September 25: FCH Quiz Bowl Practice
September 27: Food Challenge Practice
September 28: 4-H FCH Coalition Meeting
September 28: County Council Meeting

October

October 1: L4L Practice
October 2: FCH Quiz Bowl Practice
October 6: BC Food Show/Challenge Contest
October 8: L4L Practice
October 9: FCH Quiz Bowl Practice
October 9: BCYF Roaster Orders Due
October 11: Food Challenge Practice
October 15: L4L Practice
October 16: FCH Quiz Bowl Practice
October 17: Hunter's Spectacular
October 18: Food Challenge Practice
October 19: Heifer Validation
October 20: Lamb & Goat Validation
October 22: L4L Practice
October 23: FCH Quiz Bowl Practice
October 25: Food Challenge Practice
October 27: Lamb & Goat Validation
October 29: L4L Practice
October 30: FCH Quiz Bowl Practice
October 31: Holiday Classic, Belton

November

November 5: L4L Practice
November 6: BCYF Broiler Orders Due
November 9: Major Show Entry Deadline
November 9: County Council Meeting
November 12: L4L Practice
November 14: BCYF Commercial Heifer Judging
November 15: Food Challenge Practice
November 16: Swine Validation
November 22: Food Challenge Practice
November 23: Swine Validation
November 29: Food Challenge Practice

December

December 1: BCYF Entry Deadline

NEWSLETTER



TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

Bell County Extension
1605 N. Main, Room 102
Belton, TX 76513
Phone: (254)-933-5305
Fax: (254)-933-5312

If you need any type of accommodation to participate in these programs or have questions about the physical access provided, please contact the Bell County Extension Office at 254-933-5305 by the listed RSVP dates.
