



2025 POULTRY PROJECT POLICIES & PROCEDURES



Species Chair:

Lynn Henning * 4hchickenqueen@gmail.com * 231-357-5132

Assistant Species Chair:

Gwyn Carter * gwyncarter420@yahoo.com * 231-649-0880

IMPORTANT DATES & INFO				
Registration Due	March 3, 2025		Show Bird Possession Date	April 15
Species	Possession	Age at Fair	Minimum Weight (per bird)	Maximum Weight (per bird)
Cornish Game Hens	June 30 -July 5	4 weeks	2 pounds	3 pounds
Ducks	May 26 - -31	9 weeks	4 pounds	None
Geese	April 7- 12	16 - weeks	8 pounds	None
Production Pullets	Oct 15 – Jan 31	6-10 months	N/A	N/A
Meat Chickens	June 2 -7	8 weeks	5 pounds	10 pounds
Turkeys	April 7- 12	16 weeks	15 pounds	None
Record Book (both market & show only)	Required Due: 9/8/25		Thank You Note	Required Due: 10/7/25

Participating 4-H youth must abide by all general rules and regulations listed in the Northwest Michigan 4-H Livestock Council's Policies & Procedures books and the Premium Book of the Northwestern Michigan Fair. This includes, but is not limited to, Code of Conducts, registration deadlines, showmanship and market requirements, record book and thank you letter requirements, etc.

Registration Requirements

- ❖ To participate in a 4-H market poultry project, youth must attain the age of eight (8) or older by January 1st of that calendar year and be registered with 4-H Online 2.0
- ❖ All Poultry Participants (Market, Show only and Cloverbuds) MUST complete the online registration via the Northwest Michigan 4-H Livestock Council's website NO LATER THAN midnight the first Monday of March.
- ❖ To participate in the 4-H livestock shows and auction at the fair, youth must follow all registration requirements listed in the Northwestern Michigan Fair's Premium Book.
- ❖ To participate in the 4-H livestock auction at the fair, youth must register and compete in the appropriate showmanship AND market classes.

Animal Requirements

- ❖ All birds (except pigeons and waterfowl) MUST come from a Pullorum-free hatchery or breeder
 - 4-H'er must have a "Pullorum-free Certificate" from that hatchery or breeder
 - Poultry with no certificate will be tested, free of charge, at the fair
- ❖ ILT vaccinated poultry will NOT be accepted for entry
- ❖ See table above for birth date and possession date requirements.
 - Be sure to keep your sales receipt showing the date of birth
 - *TIP:* When ordering birds, make sure the order is larger than needed in case birds need to be replaced (i.e. lameness, wrong sex, death, etc)
- ❖ Birds that are a mixed breed, or birds that are not a good representative of a pure breed, may be shown in showmanship class only (not in a breed or market class). Members are encouraged to consult the poultry American Standard Breed of Perfection or the American Bantam Standard Breed of Perfection to compare their bird against the standard.
- ❖ Due to DNR regulations and permit requirements the following birds are NOT allowed:
 - Hungarian Partridge
 - Ruffed Grouse
 - Sharp Tailed Grouse
 - Wild Turkey
 - Ducks (all North American species, except Mallards)
 - Geese (Canada subspecies and Blue-Snow Geese)
 - Pheasants (Ringneck, Sichuan and look-a-likes from the Genius Phasianus) o Quail (Bobwhite)
- ❖ See table above for weight requirements. Be sure to note minimum AND maximum weights.

Fair Week Requirements

❖ General Requirements:

- Weigh-in takes place the first Saturday of the fair.
 - Youth must be present or must have made prior arrangements with the species chair for someone else to weigh their animal.
- All poultry will be banded, at the time of entry, by the Northwestern Michigan Fair o Every entry will be examined for external parasites
 - Poultry showing any signs of diseases, parasites, or defects will be sent home
- No feed, feed bags, or supplies are to be left in the barn (everything must be stored at the campsite).
- Youth are responsible for keeping their pens/cages clean all week.
- Barn duty is REQUIRED
 - 2-3 shifts during the week of fair

❖ Participants may not remove their poultry project from the barn before 7AM on Sunday

❖ Animal Care Requirements:

- Animals shall be treated humanely at all times. Any reports of unethical, inhumane, and/or abusive treatment or actions that cause distress and/or suffering to an animal will be evaluated by the Species Chair, Fair Superintendent, Fair Veterinarian, and/or other appropriate individuals and may lead to disqualification and removal from all 4-H and Open Livestock Shows held at the Fair.
- Poultry should be dusted. Ask feed supplier for recommendations 2 weeks prior to fair
- Legs should be coated with oil to smother mites
- Youth are responsible for providing enough feed to care for their birds throughout the entire week.
- Youth are responsible for feeding, watering, and caring for their birds the **entire** week.
- Water shall remain full and fresh at all times.

❖ Show Day Policies:

- The 4-H'er and their support person may prepare the birds for show. When washing your bird for show an adult volunteer **MUST** be present. If an adult volunteer is not available, an older 4-H'er or alumni may assist with permission from the Species Chair or Barn Superintendent.

Breed Class Requirements:

- Breed birds must be of one breed, not a mixed breed
- Breed poultry must be a minimum of 1 year old for a breed class
 - Younger birds can be evaluated after the judging ends if you sign-up for the "Pullet" or "Cockerel" class
- Old birds should be part of breeding stock or a current year project.
- Participants may enter both 4-H breed and Open breed classes with **DIFFERENT** breed birds.

- Maximum of two entries in any class.

❖ **Market Class Requirements:**

- Possession dates are set by the species chair and based on the dates of the Northwestern Michigan Fair
 - A receipt must be presented from the hatchery or breeder to show age and Pullorum-free status.
 - Market pens that do not meet the required weight and age requirements will NOT be sold.
- Market Turkeys
 - Pen of two of the same sex, breed, and weight
 - Meat variety only (Broad Breasted White or Broad Breasted Bronze)
- Market Ducks
 - Pen of three of the same sex, breed, and weight
 - Meat variety only (Standard Pekin and Rouen)
- Market Geese
 - Pen of two of the same sex, breed, and weight
 - Meat variety only (Toulouse and White Embden)
- Market Meat Chickens
 - Pen of three of the same sex, breed and weight
 - Meat variety only (Cornish X, Vantress X Arbor, and Hubbard White Mountain)
 - A hybrid cross is required.
 - Meat Chickens cannot be used in showmanship or breed classes. add
- Market Cornish Game Hens (pullets only)
 - For 4-H members that are 8-11 years of age ONLY
 - Pen of six of same sex, breed and weight
- Market Production Pullets
 - Pen of five of the same breed pullets, in laying condition.
 - Must be a DUAL-PURPOSE chicken (egg and meat type)
 - Must be a recognized breed, NOT a mixed breed.
 - Acceptable breeds: Buff Orpingtons, White Orpingtons, Barred Rocks, Columbian Rocks, Partridge Rocks, Buff Rocks, White Rocks, Black Australorps, Rhode Island Reds, Silver-laced Wyandottes Columbian Wyandottes, White Wyandottes, Turkens, White Giants, Black Giants, Speckled Sussex, Light Brahmas, New Hampshire Reds
 - Unacceptable breeds: Araucana, Americana, Anconas, Blue Andalusian Sex-Link (Red and Black Star), Black Minorca, Buff Minorcas, Red Leghorns, Rose Comb Brown Leghorns, Silver Spangled Hamburgs, Single Comb Leghorns, White Leghorns, Rainbow Layers

❖ **Auction Requirements:**

- Auction: All market projects will be sold by total pen weight.
 - Market poultry must meet all the requirements, including weight requirements, for each bird in the pen.

❖ **Egg Class Requirements:**

- All eggs must be the same size and color
- Gently clean eggs to remove debris and spots

- Eggs should be displayed in an egg carton; pointed end down
- All projects must be labeled with the 4-H member's name, club name, and the project animal's sex, breed, and age

❖ **Showmanship Attire:**

- White, Long-Sleeved Shirt
- Long sleeves give a finished look and also protect your arms
- Black pants or black jeans
- Boots or Work Shoes
- No tennis shoes or sandals
- Simple black tie (optional)
- No excessive jewelry, hair must be tied back.

❖ Judging:

- All poultry will be judged according to American Standard of Perfection and the American Bantam Standard Breed of Perfection
- Judge's decision is final

Fair Responsibilities on Move Out Day (Sunday):

- ✓ Completely clean and scrape down pens/cages.
- ✓ 4-H'er must be checked out of the barn by the Species Chair or Barn Superintendent.

After Fair Requirements

- ◆ Youth are required to turn in one completed record book (showmanship or market). If youth are exhibiting in market or in multiple species, you are required to complete the record book for your market project.

Examples: Jane shows beef cattle in showmanship and market; Jane completes a record book in beef cattle. John shows swine, horses, and goats, and markets his hog; John completes a record book for hogs. Sally shows chickens, rabbits, and dogs all showmanship only, and decides to complete the record book for rabbits.
- ❖ A Thank you and 5 x 7 Auction photo must be given to your buyer and a copy of the thank you note is due at the October Livestock council meeting.
- ❖ Failure to submit a completed record book at the September meeting and a Thank you at the October Meeting of the 4-H Livestock Council WILL result in suspension from the 4-H Livestock classes and auction held during the NWMI Fair the following year. Suspended youth who complete their record book and submit it to the 4-H Livestock Council by the November meeting that same year will again be eligible to register for 4-H Livestock classes and auction held during the NWMI Fair the following year.

Important Information & Tips for a Successful Poultry Project

- ❖ Be sure to reference all information posted on the Poultry page of the NWMI 4-H Livestock Council's website.
 - Cost: could range from \$40 to \$100+
 - Housing and equipment for startup project, depending on need, could run \$50 to \$200+
 - Nutrition/Feed: Consult your feed supplier for the proper feed for your project.
 - Market projects must be fed poultry feed; NO scratch mix, no corn only diet or table scraps
 - This includes during the fair
 - NO medicated feed 30 days prior to fair
- ❖ Identification:
 - All poultry must have a leg band
 - Bands are mandatory
 - All poultry will be banded upon entry to the NWMF during check-in
 - All entries must be banded before they are put in their cages

Tips

- ❖ Items needed for fair:
 - Water and feed dishes for each cage to be used
 - This includes waterfowl which function as a "Community" feeding project
 - Cleaning Tools:
 - Shovel and/or Small Rake (child's garden set works well)
 - Wheelbarrow
 - Scrub Brush
 - Bucket
 - You may supply your own wood chips/flakes for your pens
 - Grooming supplies, soaps, brushes, towels
 - Transportation cages
 - Need especially for auction day
- ❖ All supplies must be kept at your campsite
 - No feed or equipment is to be stored in the barn
- ❖ Poultry Terms:
 - Cockerel: Male bird younger than 1 year
 - Pullet: Female bird younger than 1 year
 - Cock: Male bird 1 year of age or older
 - Hen: Female bird 1 year of age or older

Cloverbuds

- ❖ 4-H members who are 5-7 years of age (as of January 1st of the current year)
- ❖ Cloverbuds have their own showmanship class. It will be held on Friday of fair week.
- ❖ Cloverbuds may bring their own bird to the fair OR they may choose to make arrangements to show someone else's bird
- ❖ Cloverbuds are not allowed to market their birds

Resources

- ❖ *4-H Poultry Fitting and Showmanship Member's Guide: Michigan State University Extension*, Publication #4-H 1520
- ❖ *4-H Poultry Fitting and Showmanship Leader's Guide: Michigan State University Extension*, Publication #4-H 1521
- ❖ *American Standard of Perfection*, published by the American Poultry Assn. 2001 or more current edition
- ❖ *Storey's Guide to Raising Ducks – Breeds, Care, Health* by Dave Holdebread ISBN: 1- 58017-258-X
- ❖ *Storey's Guide to Raising Poultry – Breeds, Care, Health* by Paula Simons and Carol Ekarius: ISBN: 1-58017-262-8
- ❖ *Storey's Guide to Raising Turkeys – Breeds, Care, Health* by Leonard Mercia ISBN: 1- 58017-261-X
- ❖ *Your Chickens: A Kid's Guide to Raising and Showing Chickens* by Gail Damerow ISBN: 0-88266-823-4
- ❖ MSU County Extension Offices
- ❖ Northwest Michigan 4-H Livestock Council Meetings, Minutes, & Website
- ❖ Books for small flock owners – check the library or purchase at local feed suppliers or bookstores
- ❖ Poultry Learning Lab Kit – Ohio State University; borrow from MSU County Extension Office