2026 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 2,2026		**Show Bird Possession Date**	April 15
Species	**Possession**	**Age at Fair**	**Minimum Weight (per bird)**	**Maximum Weight (per bird)**
Cornish Game Hens	July 13 -July 18	4 weeks	2 pounds each x6	3 pounds
Ducks	June 1 - June 6	9 weeks	4 pounds each x3	None
Geese	April 20 - 25	16 - weeks	8 pounds each x2	None
Production Pullets	Oct 15 – Jan 31	6-10 months	5 pullets	N/A
Meat Chickens	June 8 - June 11	8 weeks	5 pounds each x3	10 pounds/bird
Turkeys	April 20 - 25	16 weeks	15 pounds x 2	None
Record Book (both market & show only)	Required Due September 14		**Thank You Note**	Required Due: October 5

To	Person Person Person
Cc	Person

Bcc	Person
Subject	

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 MSU 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.

Poultry/Waterfowl Requirements

*All birds (except pigeons and waterfowl) MUST come from a Pullorum-free hatchery or breeder or ordered from a local feed store that has poultry from a Pullorum-free hatchery.

*4-H'er must have a "Pullorum-free Certificate" from the hatchery, breeder or Sales Receipt from a reputable feed store. Certificates and receipts required for entry to the NWM Fair. Be sure to keep your sales receipt showing the date of birth/purchase.

*Poultry without a certificate/sales receipt from local feed store, hatchery or breeder will be tested, free of charge, at the NWM Fair.

*Poultry 4-H Health Form is required for entry to NWM Fair.

*ILT vaccinated poultry will NOT be accepted for entry

* See table above for birth date and possession date requirements.

* See table above for weight requirements for minimum and maximum weights

*Ordering birds for Market projects: make sure the order is 3 to 4 times the number of required birds in the market pen, this is to ensure you have a selection to choose from to when selecting your market pen and in the event birds need to be replaced (i.e. lameness, wrong sex, death, etc).

4-H 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.

*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)

* 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)

Fair Week Requirements

General Requirements:

* Read all rules for exhibiting at the NWM Fair.

*Weigh-in takes place the first Saturday of the fair.

*All proper paperwork, sales receipts, pullorum certificate and health forms are required at the time of check-in/weigh-in for all poultry.

*Youth must be present or must have made prior arrangements with the species chair for someone else to weigh-in/check-in their poultry.

* Identification/Bands: All poultry will be banded upon entry to the NWMF during check-in. *Bands are mandatory. *All entries must be banded before they are put in their cages

*Every entry will be examined for external parasites. Poultry/Waterfowl showing any signs of diseases, parasites, or defects will be sent home, including market projects.

*No feed, feed bags,or supplies are to be left in the barn, everything must be stored at your campsite.

*Barn duty is REQUIRED ▪ 2-3 shifts during the week of the fair.

*Maximum of two entries in any 4-H or Open Class.

*See the Livestock Council website for additional information, rules and requirements for poultry, under the poultry tab.

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 2 weeks prior to fair. Ask the feed supplier for recommendations on the proper dusting product.

*Legs should be coated with petroleum jelly to smother mites, 2 weeks prior.

*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.

- 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 week of the fair.

Show/Market 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.

*Market 4-H'ers must complete Showmanship to be able to market in the Auction.

Judging:

- All poultry will be judged according to the American Standard of Perfection and the American Bantam Standard Breed of Perfection. The judge's decisions are final.

Breed Class Requirements:

*Breed poultry must be a minimum of 1 year old for a breed class.

*Younger birds, *under 1 year*, can be evaluated only, after the judging ends

* Participants may NOT show the same bird in both 4-H breed and Open breed classes.

*Breed birds must be of one breed, not a mixed breed and should meet Standard of Perfection guidelines.

- Meat Chickens cannot be used in showmanship or breed classes.

*Poultry Terms: (Chickens)

- Cockerel: Male bird younger than 1 year, cannot be judged
- Pullet: Female bird younger than 1 year, cannot be judged
- Cock: Male bird 1 year of age or older, can be judged in breed
- Hen: Female bird 1 year of age or older, can be judged in breed

*Other types of Poultry and Waterfowl: The judging rules are applied, by the age of the bird.

* Old birds should be part of breeding stock or a current year project.

Show Birds:

*Birds (chickens, ducks/geese,turkeys,pigeons) used for showmanship can be any bird that the 4-H'er can handle properly and safely based on the age and size of the child AND the temperament of the bird.

*Birds can be pets, and they may be of mixed breed.

*Show birds cannot be judged unless they qualify and meet the requirements of the Breed class.

*Birds should be a minimum of 4 months of age at the time of Fair.

* Meat Chickens cannot be used in showmanship or breed classes.

Market Class Requirements:

*Possession dates are set by the species chair and based on the dates of the Northwestern Michigan Fair

* See table above for birth date and possession date requirements.

* See table above for weight requirements for minimum and maximum weights.

* Market poultry must meet all the requirements established in the poultry guidelines, including weight requirements, for each bird in the pen. * Any market project that does not meet the requirements will Not be Sold.

* A receipt must be presented from the hatchery or the feed store where the birds were ordered from showing the date of purchase to show AGE and Pullorum-free status.

* Auction: All market projects will be sold by pen

*NO medicated feed 30 days prior to fair

***Market Turkeys:** • Pen of 2 of the same sex, breed, and weight
• Meat variety only (Broad Breasted White or Broad Breasted Bronze)

***Market Ducks** • Pen of 3 of the same sex, breed, and weight
• Meat variety only (Standard Pekin and Rouen)

***Market Geese** • Pen of 2 of the same sex, breed, and weight
• Meat variety only (Toulouse and White Embden)

***Market Meat Chickens** • Pen of 3 of the same sex, breed and weight
• Meat variety, HYBRID CROSS only (Cornish X, Vantress X Arbor, and Hubbard White Mountain)
• Meat Chickens cannot be used in showmanship or breed classes.

***Market Cornish Game Hens** (pullets only)
* Pen of 6 of same sex, breed and weight
* For 4-H members that are 8-11 years of age ONLY
• Meat variety, HYBRID CROSS, only (Cornish X, Vantress X Arbor, and Hubbard White Mountain)

***Market Production Pullets-Standards only**
• Must be a DUAL-PURPOSE chicken (egg and meat type), HYBRID breeds are NOT acceptable, see below.
• Pen of 5 of the same breed of pullets, in laying condition.

ACCEPTABLE DUAL PURPOSE BREEDS:

All color varieties of: Orpingtons, Brahmas. Wyandottes
All color varieties of: Rocks: Barred,Columbian, Partridge, Buff, White, Plymouth, Barred. All color varieties of: Cuckoo Marans, excluding hybrid varieties, All color varieties of: Sussex,
Black Australorps, Dominiques, Delawares, Turkens, Naked Necks, Chantecler, White or Black Jersey Giants, Salmon Faverolles, New Hampshire Reds, Rhode Island Reds, Buckeye.
Contact Species Chair with concerns or questions regarding breeds.

Unacceptable breeds: Any type of Hybrid, poor meat producers, strictly egg layers.

Araucana, Americana, Anconas, Blue Andalusian, Sex-Link (Red, Blue or Black Star), Black Minorca, Buff Minorcas, Easter Eggers, Olive Eggers, Sapphire Gems, Any of the "Queen" or "Princess" varieties. Any type of Frizzle poultry. All color varieties of Leghorns., Silver Spangled Hamburgs, Rainbow Layers, Isa Browns, Golden Comets, Austra White or any other mixed breed bird that is not classified for dual purposes. Or

any other breed that is a cross and/or not recognized as Dual Purpose or by the APA or by the Standard of Perfection. Contact Specie Chair with questions.

- ❖ Egg Class Requirements:
  - ▪ All eggs must be the same size and color. *Eggs, preferably, should all be from the same pullet or hen.
  - ▪ 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, breed of pullet/hen.

Showmanship Attire: All clothing must be free from holes and stains.

- ▪ White, Long-Sleeved Shirt. To give a "finished look" and also protect your arms
- ▪ Black pants or black jeans. A lab coat or simple black tie is optional.
- ▪ Boots or Work Shoes are preferred. Sturdy tennis shoes are acceptable. No sandals or clogs.
- ▪ No hats. No excessive jewelry, nail polish or make up. Hair must be tied back.

Fair Responsibilities on Move Out Day (Sunday):

*Participants may not remove their poultry project from the barn before 7AM on the last 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

*Record Books: Market poultry 4-H'ers are required to turn in a Poultry record book that can be found on the Livestock Council website under the Poultry tab.

* Market books are required for underweight poultry projects,also, using the Showmanship pages.

* Youth are required to turn in one completed record book (showmanship or market). If youth are exhibiting in the 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 card/note 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.

*A copy of your Thank you to the buyer may be put into your poultry record book and then will be recorded with the Council by the Specie Chair.

*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 be allowed to 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 for purchasing poultry could range from $40 to $100+

* Housing and equipment for startup project, depending on need, could run $50 to $200+

*Feed cost could range from $50 to $200+. Remember you are feeding all the birds purchased to be able to select the best birds for the market pen.

Items needed for fair:

* Appropriate feed for your project.

*Water and feed dishes for each cage to be used. This includes waterfowl which function as a "Community" feeding project

* Shovel and/or Small Rake (child's garden set works well)

* Wheelbarrow

* Scrub Brushes.

* You may supply your own wood chips/flakes for your pens

* Grooming supplies, soaps, brushes, towels, bucket,

*Transportation cage, NEEDED throughout the week. Show day, picture day, auction day and processing day. Keep at your campsite.

* All supplies must be kept at your campsite. No feed or equipment is to be stored in or around the barn. Put your name on all supplies.

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