


 February 2, 2026


Welcome to the 2026 4-H Rabbit Project. We are excited about the upcoming year and want your family to have a great experience learning about rabbits. Questions this year can be directed to committee members, Purdue Extension office or our Facebook page at LaPorte County 4-H rabbit project. Please read the information in this letter and keep it in a safe place as it contains information for the entire 2026 4-H Program year.

March 9th | *Workshop 2 from 6:30 to 8 PM small projects, Tattooing at 6 PM*

April 3rd | *Breeding date for meat pens, single fryers, and carcass*

March 30th | *Rabbit Committee Meeting at 6:30 PM at the Extension Office*

April 14th | *Workshop 3 from 6:30 to 8 PM small projects, Tattooing at 6 PM*

April 22nd | *Breeding date for doe & litter*

April 29th | *Rabbit Committee Meeting at 6:30 PM at the Extension Office*

May 13th | *Workshop 4 from 6:30 to 8 PM small projects, Tattooing at 6 PM*

May 15th | *4-H Online ID Deadline (they do NOT transfer from previous years)*

June 13th | *Workshop 5 from 8 to 10 AM at the rabbit barn, pen reservations are due*

July 10th | *Rabbit Check In from 3 to 6 PM at the rabbit barn*

July 11th to 18th | *LAPORTE COUNTY FAIR*

July 11th | *4-H Rabbit Judging Contest – after the open rabbit show*

July 12th | *4-H Rabbit Showmanship at 1 PM, Rabbit Ambassador at 3 PM, Mini 4-H Rabbit Show at 6 PM*

July 13th | *4-H Rabbit Ambassadors announced at 10:30 AM, 4-H Rabbit Show | Rabbit Fun Photo Contest, All meat classes and Doe & Litter, Rabbit Education Posters at 11 AM*

July 14th | *4-H Rabbit Show – 4 Class at 9 AM*

July 15th | *4-H Rabbit Show – 6 Class at 9 AM*

July 16th | *4-H Rabbit Races at 4 PM (Show at 5 PM)*

July 17th | *ALL DAY 4-H LIVESTOCK AUCTION*

July 17th | *Release of Auctioned Rabbits at 3:15 PM in the rabbit barn*

July 18th | *4-H Rabbit & Rabbit Education Release from 9 AM to Noon*

July 25th | *Rabbit Barn & Cage Cleaning*

July 26th | *Rabbit Achievement Dinner & Banquet at 4 PM in the Community Building*

August 7th to 23rd | *Indiana State Fair (closed Mondays)*

2026 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Kim Saylor – Superintendent (574) 952-1104

Matt Mueller – Assistant Super (219) 380-4672

Angie Rose – Treasurer & Fair Entry (219) 608-4373

Debbie Sajdera – Sec. & Fair Entry (219) 545-2693

Mindy Heidel – Ambassador & Judging (337) 842-3882

Tammy LaGard – Member (219) 898-5365

Jenni Litza – Fair Entry (219) 851-2401

Sally Dipert – Food Stand (219) 393-0465

Lane Thomas – Food Stand

Jenna Beecher – Member (219) 510-7559

Lauren Schoff – Member (219) 380-9278

Winifred Schoff – Youth Committee Member

Adelyn Heidel – Youth Committee Member

Kaylynn McKeague – Youth Committee Member

Josie Whitfield – Youth Committee Member

2026 COMMITTEE VOLUNTEERS

Jody Rose – Food Stand (219) 608-4372

Nancy Williamson – Open Show (219) 369-9314

Lindsay Whitfield – Member (219) 608-6372

Kami Saylor – Fun Activities (574) 279-1384

ENTRY DETAILS:

- **4-HOnline:** Rabbits must be owned and cared for by 4-H members by May 15th through to fair. You must ID your animals in 4-HOnline by May 15th, there are no exceptions. Animals will co-enroll for youth in the same family profile so you do not need to enter the animals under each kid you can simply but one rabbit under one kid and the rest under another or separate what they may be taking then change it later. For example, Jack takes R1, R2, R3 and Jill has R4, R5, R6 in 4-H Online. Later in Fair Entry Jack can take R5 and Jill can take R1. The entire list will show up under both kids. Rabbits do not roll over year to year so you will need to enter ALL your rabbits even if you showed them last year.
- **Tattooing Sessions:** All rabbits exhibited must have a tattoo in the rabbit's left ear. There is a \$1.00 charge per rabbit at select workshops. Tattooing will not take place during fair. *Note: The Committee cannot be held responsible for injury or death of rabbit as a result of tattooing.*
- **Indiana 4-H Quality Livestock Care (QLC) Requirements:** Each 4-H member who is participating in Beef or Dairy Feeder, Sheep, Goat, Swine, Poultry and Rabbits projects will need to complete the Indiana 4-H Quality Livestock Care Program. These trainings will all be held in-person for the upcoming year. Register for a session through 4HOnline, under events. The cost is \$3.00. You may still complete YQCA online (<https://yqcaprogram.org/>) however, you must send a copy of your completion certificate to 4-H staff at mart2843@purdue.edu.
- **FairEntry:** After May 15th the rabbits that you entered in 4-H Online will sync to FairEntry. All rabbits that are to be shown at fair will need to be entered into the appropriate classes in FairEntry by the annual June deadline. We will also use FairEntry as your pen reservation.

FAIR DETAILS:

- **Pen reservations:** \$10.00 reservation payment due per member are to be turned into the Rabbit Committee Treasurer no later than the last rabbit workshop. Substitutions at entry time can only be for rabbits in same class.
 - Reservations will be completed in FairEntry & are due by the annual June deadline.
 - Confirm your rabbit is sexed correctly. If it is entered into the wrong class, it will not be shown.
 - You can scratch a rabbit due to illness, death, molt, etc. or if you chose to not bring it for whatever reason. You can substitute rabbits if they are in the same class (breed, sex, age, and color) as the original rabbit. The substitute rabbit must be in 4-H Online.
 - If rabbits are tattooed just before fair, the ink must be removed in order for the numbers to be read.
- **Fair Check In:** Upon arrival to fair you will be given an envelope with your entry list with a barcode, entry list of your rabbits to be shown, & the rabbits listed in 4-H Online.
 - The check In person will keep the barcode list with changes and the 4-H Online list. You will get your entry list back.
 - Once you are checked in you will take your barcode list to the designated table to make any substitutions. You MAY put your rabbits in their cages first but please be prompt in turning in your cards.
 - Nails should always be trimmed before check in to avoid excess scratches to the volunteers.
- **Fair Check Out:** Before leaving the barn you must find a committee member to check out with. The barn will not be open to the public on Saturday morning. Clean your pens and find a committee member to check your pen. Once the committee member checks your pens, you will get a popsicle stick that indicates that you have had your rabbit's tattoos checked and your cages are clean. You are welcome to leave!
- **Fair Set-Up & Tear-Down:** Families that volunteer to help with the set-up and tear-down of the rabbit barn, help support the Rabbit Anyone and the youth involved in the project.
- **Fair Concession/Food Stand:** The Rabbit Committee operates the food stand that is connected to our Barn at Fair and that money helps us financially support the LaPorte County 4-H Rabbit project. Members working shifts in the food stand financially supports the 4-H Rabbit program.

- Each year, the food stand buys rabbits from members, creating a market for our members to sell their rabbits. We will buy all breeds at \$1.25 per pound live weight.
- We need help deboning the rabbits. These steps are very easy to learn and if everyone would pitched in, it would lighten the load for all. Our theory is, “come when you can and leave when you have to.”
- Processing dates will be announced at the workshops.
- Anyone that helps with deboning will be compensated with “Bunny Bucks” that can be redeemed at the food stand during fair. The more that you work the more you earn in bunny bucks. The more you work also contributes to your auction amount, if you are selling in auction.
- If you wish to sell rabbits, contact Jody Rose (219) 608-4372 or Nancy Williamson at (219) 369-9314.
- **Food Stand Managers & Workers:** The more food stand shifts that a 4-H member works, the more opportunity they will have to earn bunny bucks and auction price. **Brief description of duties:**
 - **Cashier** - Must be an approved volunteer.
 - **Fryer & Fryer Helper** - Anyone 18 years old & over can cook burritos, French fries and nuggets.
 - **Sandwich Maker** - Anyone 16 years & older can make BBQ, Italian Beef, Hot Dogs, Brats, Nachos & Pretzels.
 - **Dishwasher & Dining Room Cleaners** - Anyone 16 years & older can clean tables and dishes; kids can clean tables off and pick up trash.
 - **Counter #1 & Counter #2** - Any age; help customers, get drinks and call back orders.
 - **Oil Changer** - A parent who is responsible for cleaning the fryer each day before 10 AM.
- **Barn Watchers:** This helps keep our barn and rabbits safe. You can sign up to watch the barn during workshops or at fair by the show table. These are 2-hour shifts. Your duties as a barn watcher include:
 - Answering questions, if you are not an expert, it is okay to say you do not know but can write the question down to find out if they want to check back later.
 - Walk around to make sure the rabbits are safe, and the public is not opening cages, putting their fingers in the cages, or doing anything that can harm the rabbits.
 - Sweep the aisles if they are dirty and if there is not much foot traffic.
 - Remind people there should be no dogs in the barn unless they are service dogs.
 - Preferably there are no balloons in the barn but if they do have time just remind them to keep ahold of them so they do not pop.

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:

The Rabbit Committee offers two (2) \$500 scholarships to graduating senior Rabbit Project participants.

Application may be found here: bit.ly/20214HRabbitScholarship

What are the requirements?

- Must have completed 6 years in the Rabbit Project
- Must complete an essay
- Must fill out application and turn in at Rabbit Check-in
- Must be continuing their education in a technical school, trade school, college, or university
- If awarded, must be used during the first year of post high school education

How are winners selected?

- 50% participation in Rabbit program
- 25% Leadership abilities/citizenship
- 25% Essay (used to break a tie)

Once selected, how will I receive the scholarship?

A check will be awarded after fair at the awards banquet once proof of acceptance to technical school, trade school, college or university has been shown to the rabbit treasurer.

Sincerely, the rabbit committee.