



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
EXTENSION

DeSoto County Extension Newsletter

DESOTO COUNTY

AUGUST 2026

August is here! Where oh where did the summer go? It's time for school to be back in session and Fall is just around the corner. However, the summer heat has "now" intensified" its presence per se, so please be safe if you intend to spend any time outdoors. Stay hydrated and drink plenty of water if you must spend time outside, and don't forget about your pets, young children and friends who might not can withstand the heat. Check on them!

Three pages of this newsletter recap 4-H events and contests that happened since our last newsletter and that's not including the practices and behind the scenes work preparing for the actual contests. This year we had (4) 4-H'ers submit 4-H Record Books for independent work they did in their projects! We've been busy! You've been busy too! If you grabbed an Adult Extension Brown Bag Grab and Go Kit last month don't forget to complete one of the activities in order to receive a FREE rain gauge.

This newsletter is LOADED with opportunities for you and your family for what's to come. As this season winds down, another one begins. Across our county we challenge you to reconnect with a volunteer, welcome new members into your group, strengthen your community partnerships, and begin planning for the months ahead. October starts a new programmatic year for us in Extension. This is one of our favorite times of the year because we are reminded that with every new season brings new possibilities and change. We hope you find a spark and ignite it to deepen your knowledge. If you have a programmatic suggestion or idea of something you would like to see this upcoming year, please reach out to an Extension Agent and let us know.

Thank you for everything you've done this summer in Extension. We hope you'll take a well-deserved break somewhere in the cool, during the lull of August and September and come back ready for another season of discovery and learning all that Extension has to offer.

Jessica G. Sibley

Matt S

Lara Ungel

Mary Chandler Helt

What Is Extension?

The Mississippi State University Extension Service is the educational outreach arm of MSU, delivering research-based information and practical education to individuals, families, businesses, and communities from offices in all 82 counties in Mississippi.

We have four program areas:

- Agriculture and Natural Resources
- 4-H Youth Development
- Community and Economic Development
- Family, Health, and Wellness

Who We Serve?

Extension serves everyone in Mississippi.

What We Offer:

Extension provides education and support in four core areas:

- Soil testing, crop and natural resource management, budget planning, and more.
- Leadership, STEM, civic engagement, and life skills.
- Strategic planning, tourism, and government training.
- Nutrition, health, financial literacy, and parenting support.

We also offer specialized certifications, volunteer opportunities, and emergency preparedness training.

*Education. Outreach. Service.
We are Extension!*

1170 STAR LANDING ROAD W. NESBIT, MS 38651

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Extension Service of Mississippi State University, cooperating with U.S. Department of Agriculture. Published in furtherance of Acts of Congress, May 8 and June 30, 1914. ANGUS L. CATCHOT JR., Director

4-H Omelet Contest

Janika and Fenix Schaafsma competed at the North Omelet Cook-Off on July 8th in Winona, MS. Janika won 1st place in the Omelet Cook-Off, and Fenix won 2nd in the Omelet Cook-Off. Congratulations to the Schaafsma's! They will be advancing on to the Mississippi State Fair Omelet Cook-Off Contest in October with their winning recipes!



4-H Steam Day

Our DeSoto County 4-H members had an awesome day at 4-H STEAM Day in Starkville. This year's theme took everyone on a journey down the rabbit hole into a world of creativity, innovation, and discovery!

Our Junior 4-Her(s): Charlotte Kouba placed 2nd place in the Makerspace Junior II (10-11 year olds). She also participated in the Junior II Steam Art Contest too. David Angel participated in the Junior I (8-9 year olds) Lego Build and Snack Contests and got blue awards.

Our 4-H Cloverbuds received participation awards! Dominick Kouba participated in the Cloverbud (5-7 year olds) Makerspace and Snack Contests and Leah Angel participated in the Cloverbud (5-7 year olds) Lego Build and Steam Art Contest.

Robert, Willow and Dusti Cox-Osborne were there as well representing DeSoto County as 4-H Ambassadors and as a State 4-H Officer. They helped make today's event a huge success. These 4-H'ers are great role models for younger members!



4-H Cook-Out

Robert, Willow, and Dusti Cox-Osborne competed at the North Mississippi Cookout on July 8th in Winona, MS. Robert and Dusti qualified to move onto the State Cookout at MSU on July 14th. Robert won 2nd in the Chicken category at the North Cook-Out Prelim and 3rd at the State Cook-Out. Dusti won 1st in the turkey category at the North Cook-Out Prelim and 2nd at State Cook-Out. Willow won 2nd in the beef category at the North Competition Cook-Out. Congratulations to the Cox-Osborne's!



4-H Project Achievement Day



We had (7) 4-H'ers participate in the Northwest 4-H Project Achievement Day Contest on July 9th at Holmes Community College in Grenada! It was a fun-filled day of learning, leadership, and friendly competition as our 4-H'ers continued to "Make the Best Better!" Everyone placed 1st in their contest(s)! We had the following youth participate in the following contests:

- Charlotte Kouba- AG Visual Presentation
- Amelie Trudell- Food and Nutrition Contest
- Lily Bemis- AG Visual Presentation & Photography Judging
- Hazel Bemis- Cloverleaf Exhibits (8-9-year old members)
- Evie Bemis- Cloverleaf Exhibits (8-9-year old members)
- Addilyn Gomes- Interior Design Contest
- Zandrew Gomes- Dairy Products Judging

Last but not least, we are proud of all our 4-H Project Achievement Day participants who got out of their comfort zones to compete in new contests, participated in a funshop, and made new friends! We had our DeSoto County "Mississippi 4-H Ambassadors" present too at 4-H Project Achievement Day to help assist with the event(s) of the day. We are also very THANKFUL for our volunteers!

National 4-H Shooting Sports Championships



We're proud to celebrate Cameron "Cam" Kelley for representing DeSoto County and Mississippi 4-H at the 4-H Shooting Sports National Championship in Grand Island, Nebraska!

4-H Shooting Sports Jr. State Event

Photos from the 4-H Jr. State Invitation Competition. We had 45 DeSoto County 4-H'ers qualify to compete at this event on June 27, 2026. Our 4-H'ers competed in archery, shotgun, .22 rifle, air rifle, and air pistol.

A special thanks goes to all the coaches, parents and volunteers who have helped make the 2026 Shooting Sports season possible!



4-H Shooting Sports State Championship

Photos from the 4-H Shooting Sports State Championship, held on July 17-18 in Pearl, MS, where we had 19 4-H'ers qualify to compete. We had 1 compete in Air Pistol, 2 in .22 Pistol, 1 in archery, 3 in shotgun, and 12 in .22 Rifle.



Congratulations to all our shooters!



MISSISSIPPI'S NEW ATTENDANCE LAW

MISSISSIPPI IS STRENGTHENING STUDENT SUCCESS BY MAKING SURE EVERY DAY COUNTS!

Excused Absences for 4-H Events

An absence is excused when it results from the attendance of a compulsory age child participating in official organized events sponsored by 4-H. (The excuse for the 4-H event must be provided to the appropriate school superintendent, or his or her designee, by the Extension Agent). FYI: a 4-H Event counts toward your 5 excused absences per semester!

Use time wisely

A student must be present 66% of the day to not be counted absent.



Limited Excuses

No compulsory school age child shall be granted more than FIVE (5) excused absences per semester under the allowed reasons.



Beyond the Limit

Any additional excused absences beyond this limit must be specifically approved by the school district superintendent, or his or her designee, upon a showing of extenuating circumstances.

Extenuating Circumstances

- Prolonged illness or injury supported by medical documentation
- Extended religious observations
- Participation in educational opportunities of substantial merit, including out of state travel.

Learn your schools/district approval process! Use days wisely.

County 4-H Poultry Judging

This summer we had 4-Hers engage and learn different aspects of the poultry industry. 4-H Poultry Judging is an agricultural and STEM-based competition where youth learn to evaluate live birds, ready-to-cook carcasses, and eggs according to USDA standards. Participants develop logical decision-making, public speaking, and evaluation skills through classes like past-production hen ranking, egg candling, and parts identification. We are so proud of these 4-Hers and all they learned!



A Simple Message to
TEACHERS!

How Can 4-H Support Your Classroom?

- 1 **Bring** hands-on STEM, Robotics, and Coding lessons to your students.
- 2 **Connect** learning to agriculture and the environment through programs like FARMtastic and the Poultry Hatch-Out program.
- 3 **Provide** guest speakers and local experts.
- 4 **Inspire** students to shine through educational contests in art, public speaking, and more.
- 5 **Create** meaningful service-learning projects.
- 6 **Explore** careers and real-world applications.
- 7 **Develop** school gardens and outdoor classrooms.
- 8 **Access** Mississippi standards-aligned curriculum and resources.
- 9 **Plan** to visit us! We offer hands on Agri-Venture Field Trips to our facility!
- 10 **Support** Social-Emotional learning.

Together, We Can Inspire
MISSISSIPPI'S FUTURE!

Contact your local 4-H Agent today to get started!





DESOTO COUNTY 4-H HORSE CLUB

August 17, 2026

Join us for our first official meeting! We will be meeting every 3rd Monday at 4pm. We will begin discussing all things horse management!



1170 Starlanding Rd West Suite B
Nesbit, MS 38651



mck329@msstate.edu



662-469-8480



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY-
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Mississippi Volunteer Leaders Association

FALL FORUMS



August 8 • North Forum • Starkville

August 22 • South Forum • Raymond

9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY-
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\$20 for current and prospective adult 4-H volunteers. Contact your county Extension agent for registration info.

DESOTO COUNTY 4-H

4-H POULTRY & RABBIT County Show

SAVE THE DATE
09.19.2026

Join us to support our 4-Hers
as they exhibit their poultry and
rabbit projects at our county
show!

DeSoto County Agri-Education Center
1170 Star Landing Rd. W
Nesbit, MS



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY-
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4-H COUNTY AWARDS NIGHT

Save this night for an evening in celebrating our
4-Hers and all their achievements this
programmatic year! More details and
registration info will be coming soon!



NOV.
17

6-8 PM

1170 Star Landing RD W.
Nesbit, MS 38651



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY-
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4-H AMERICA
250
EST. 1775-2025

250 YEARS OF
GROWING LEADERS
★ ★ ★ THROUGH 4-H ★ ★ ★



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

SHOW YOUR SKILLS. SHARE YOUR STORY. CELEBRATE AMERICA.

START AT COUNTY EXHIBIT DAYS
AND YOU COULD BE HEADED TO THE MISSISSIPPI STATE FAIR!

1 AGRI-BUSINESS



- Feed Sample Display
- Halter
- Corn
- Hay
- Seed Collection
- Soil Texture Display

ROOTED IN HISTORY. GROWING AMERICA'S FUTURE.

2 CULINARY ARTS



- Cookies
- Bread
- Recipe Collection
- Canned Pickles

PRESERVING TRADITIONS. CREATING NEW FAVORITES.

3 BUG SHOP



- Insect Collection

DISCOVERING THE TINY CREATURES THAT HELP AMERICA GROW.

4 SAFETY & HEALTH



- First Aid Kit
- Safety Poster
- Bicycle Repair Kit
- Electric Lamp
- "Beyond Ready" T-Shirt Designs

PREPARED YESTERDAY. READY FOR TOMORROW.

5 ENVIRONMENTAL SHOP



- Recycled Items
- Leaf Collection
- Birdhouse
- Animal Tracks
- Animal Decoys
- Tackle Box

PRESERVING AMERICA'S OUTDOORS FOR THE NEXT 250 YEARS.

6 FASHION SHOP



- Apron
- Jacket
- Sewing Box
- Fabric Samples

STITCHING TOGETHER AMERICA'S PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

7 CREATIVE ARTS & YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP



- Table Arrangement
- Tree Ornament
- Crocheted Item
- Drawing
- Jewelry
- Interior Design Board

CREATE TODAY. INSPIRE TOMORROW.

8 HORTICULTURE



- Apples
- Pecans
- Lettuce
- Okra
- Onions
- Cucumbers
- Tomatoes
- Herbs

PLANTING SEEDS OF SUCCESS FOR THE NEXT 250 YEARS.

YOUR PROJECT. YOUR PASSION. YOUR FUTURE.



BEGIN AT
COUNTY EXHIBIT DAYS!



COMPETE.
QUALIFY.
ADVANCE.



MISSISSIPPI STATE FAIR!

★ **CELEBRATE** ★
250
YEARS OF AMERICA
THROUGH 4-H!

★ **LEARN BY DOING. LEAD BY EXAMPLE. MAKE A DIFFERENCE.** ★  **FOR MY CLUB. FOR MY COMMUNITY. FOR MY COUNTRY.** ★

DESOTO COUNTY 4-H EXHIBIT DAY

SEPT 10TH 9 A.M. TO 12 P.M.

Enter our County 4-H Exhibit Day. Enter items September 10 at the Extension Office from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. NOW is a great time to work on these! Exhibits will be judged and will be on exhibit September 14-19 at the DeSoto County Agri-Education Center. Winners will advance on to the State Fair!



Scan the QR code to read more about each division and other contests at the Fair.

DESOTO COUNTY 4-H LIVESTOCK NOMINATIONS

Due by September 1, 2026 @ 5 pm to the
DeSoto County Extension Office

All cattle, swine, goats, dairy goats and sheep that are going to show at the MS State Fair must be nominated. IF you have a commercial or market animal, it must be tagged before nomination forms are completed.

LIVESTOCK VALIDATION DATES AND LOCATIONS

Classification/DNA Collection Week
Monday, September 14:
Hattiesburg – 8:00 A.M. to 1:30 P.M.

Tuesday, September 15:
Raymond – 8:00 A.M. to 1:30 P.M.

Wednesday, September 16
Greenwood – 8:00 to 10:30 A.M.
**Pontotoc – 2:00 to 6:00 P.M. NEW location! It's
at the Pontotoc AgriCenter 430 CJ Hardin Jr Dr,
Pontotoc, MS**

All market steers, commercial beef heifers, market lambs, market hair sheep, commercial meat goat does, wether dams, breeding hair sheep, market hogs, poultry and market goats MUST BE validated to show at the 2026 MS State Fair.

DATES TO KNOW & SAVE:

Mississippi State Fair, Jackson
October 8-18, 2026

Showing at Dixie Nationals?

Classification/DNA Collection Week –
December 14-17, 2026

NW District Show, Batesville –
January 14-16, 2027

Dixie National Junior Round-Up-
February 1-11, 2027

MS STATE FAIR PRINCESS/ AMBASSADOR CONTESTS

Categories: Junior and Senior Dairy Cattle Sweetheart, Junior and Senior Dairy Goat Sweetheart, Junior and Senior Meat Goat Princess, and Junior and Senior Lamb Ambassador will be announced during the Mississippi State Fair.

Email desoto.ext@msstate.edu
for an application.

Office Deadline to apply is
August 25, 2026



2026 / 2027



Livestock Nomination Meeting

AUGUST 13, 2026 @ 6P.M.

DESOTO COUNTY AGRI-EDUCATIONAL CENTER
1170 STARLANDING ROAD WEST, NESBIT, MS 38651

LIVESTOCK NOMINATION FORMS WILL BE HANDED
OUT FOR THE 2026 MISSISSIPPI STATE FAIR
LIVESTOCK SHOW AND THE 2027 DIXIE NATIONAL
JUNIOR ROUND-UP.

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4-H TRIVIA

NATIONAL 4-H

Founded 1902
First club in Clark County, Ohio
1st emblem only had 3 H's (Head, Heart, Hand)
1911 – Added "Health"
1927 – Adopted the current 4-H Pledge

MISSISSIPPI 4-H

Founded 1907
First club Holmes County, MS
4-H Museum at Ag Museum in Jackson, MS
W.H "Corn Club" Smith created the first partnership with the USDA for \$1 per year, 90,000 youth involved

SUMMER OKRA



Okra is a hot weather loving plant. While the heat we have had the last few days has put a dampener on many garden vegetables, it only seems to encourage okra plants. While cool weather can delay planting of okra to later than many other vegetables, it is sure to produce during the hot summer until the first frost. The key to this, however, is to properly maintain the plants throughout the season. Here are some tips:

1. Make sure and harvest, or at least check your okra plants daily. This time of year, okra seems to produce a bloom every day and a few days later the fruit from that bloom is ready to pick. If you accidentally forget to pick them when the pods are 2-5 inches long, they will continue to grow and become large, stringy, and full of hard seeds.
2. Checking them daily is also important for insect pest. Stink bugs and ants are two of the most common, though others occur. Stink bugs will pierce the fruit causing it to misshapen and ants can cause damage directly to the blooms and fruit. While many of the insecticides that control stink bugs will help with the ants, the best control is to keep them in check in your yard. Here is a link with great pest control information. <https://bit.ly/3B4jf3p>
3. Keep their size in check. Okra plants will continue to grow as tall as you let them. This makes it difficult to harvest the pods, but also susceptible to lodging in high winds. To help with this you can prune them back to 3-4ft in height. This will trigger the plants to branch out and make harvesting a lot easier. There will be a delay in harvest after this is done so you want to stagger the pruning in your plants so that you don't pause all production.
4. Lastly, enjoy! There are many great recipes for okra. Some like them pickled, some fried, and some in gumbo. My favorite way to enjoy fresh okra is grilled. You can take the whole pod and marinate in Italian dressing for a few hours. Then toss them on the grill until they become soft.

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FALL GARDENING WORKSHOP

6PM September 8, 2026

1170 Starlanding Rd. W
Nesbit, MS, 38651

TOPICS COVERED:

- Raised bed gardening
- Seed Saving
- Cool-Season Crops
- Garden Tour/DEMO

RSVP by Calling:
662-469-8480

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SUSTAINABLE HOME LAWN WORKSHOP

6PM August 18, 2026

1170 Starlanding Rd. W
Nesbit, MS, 38651

TOPICS COVERED:

- Fall Herbicide Options
- Mowing
- Lawn Fertility

RSVP by Calling:
662-469-8480

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Produce Safety Alliance Grower Training

Best practices for SAFE handling of produce on the farm and in packing houses, conducted entirely "online".



REGISTER NOW!



25 & 27
August
2026

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY
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Produce Safety
ALLIANCE



Online
12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Registration required
by August 12

TAKING THE LAB TO THE FARM

This workshop will provide practical instruction on collecting samples and performing fecal egg counts to monitor internal parasite levels and evaluate herd health.



Monday, September 14th
4:00 PM



Dr. Leyla Rios
MSU - Extension
Sheep & Goat
Specialist



1170 Starlanding Road W
Nesbit, MS



Call 662-469-8480
to RSVP by 5 PM on
September 1st.



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please contact Delta County Office at 662-469-8480.

Library Programs

Healthy Meal Prep Made Simple

August 10, 2026, 11:00am - 12:00pm

Join Mississippi State Extension Agent Lara Angel for a practical guide to stress-free simple, delicious, and nutritious meals. Skip the cooking chaos! Location Southaven Library.

Catch the Hatch

Week of August 17

Drop by the Olive Branch Library. They're hosting an incubator to watch chicken eggs hatch during the week of August 17th! Location Olive Branch Library.

Chickenology

August 17, 2026 10:30 a.m.

The History of Our Feathered Friends. Join our 4-Her Hunter Rule as he dives into the fascinating 10,000 year history of the world's most popular bird! Location: Olive Branch Library.

Get It Together (National Preparedness Month)

September 2, 2026, 10:00am - 11:00am

Are you ready & prepared for emergencies at home & at work ??? Please join us as Lara Angel walks us through the steps to being prepared for Natural Disasters & Emergencies. You will learn how to make a family emergency plan, how to build an emergency supply & medical kit and more! Please register for this program. Registration begins 8/5/2026. Call Jennifer with any questions. 662-895-5900.

Master Garden Series - Plant Propagation

September 5, 2026, 10:00am - 11:00am

Join Master Gardener, Kathleen Losapio as she discusses the methods for soft tissue propagation. She will teach how it is done by taking cutting of the parent plant to form a new plant called a clone. Please register for this program - registration will begin 8/15/26. Location Olive Branch Library.

Master Gardener Series: Starting a Garden

September 12, 2026, 10:00am - 11:00am

Join Master Gardener, Jill DiStepano as she teaches how to identify your garden style & how to create your own garden from scratch. Topics covered: when to plant, how to create, in ground gardens vs. raised beds & formal gardens vs. cottage style. Please register for this program - **registration will begin 8/15/26**. Please call LaySee with any questions 662-895-5900. Location Olive Branch Library.



MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY™
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Master Urban Homesteader Workshop

Explore, learn, and grow!

Start your journey homesteading with confidence, support, and trusted researched based information!



Featured Activities:

Home Canning

Small Livestock

Gardening

Cast Iron Cooking

Floral Design

Seed Starting

Sourdough

Backyard Poultry

Micro-greens

Chainsaw Safety



Register here

Program will run
October 13, 15, 20, 22, & 27
8:30 AM to 12:30 p.m.
October 29 @ 2 p.m.
Cost \$100

1170 Star Landing RD West
Nesbit, MS 38651
662-469-8480

Sign up to enrich your life!

For disability accommodation, please contact Matt Thornton at 662-469-8480 or email mtt52@msstate.edu

Child Care Training: DESOTO COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE

Register Now!



Building Positive Connections

Social and Emotional Development of Infant & Toddlers

Thursday, September 17, 2026
6:15 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Contact Lara Angel at 662.469.8480

What?

- Child Care Training with 2 Contact Hours!
- Cost \$20 (includes training & dinner)
- Register using QR Code above.
- Deadline to register is September 10th.

Location: DeSoto County Agri-Education Center 1170 Star Landing Road W. Nesbit, MS 38651



For disability accommodation, please contact Lara Angel at 662-469-8480 or email lara.angel@msstate.edu



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August

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
2	3	4	5	6 Home Canning Workshop *Class is FULL Lunch & Learn	7	8 MVLA
9	10 Healthy Meal Prep Made Simple	11	12 MG Board Meeting	13 4-H Livestock Meeting	14	15
16	17 4-H Horse Club Chickenology Catch the Hatch Week at Library	18 Home Lawn Workshop	19 MG Monthly Meeting	20	21 Lucky Leaders 4-H Club	22
23	24	25 PSA Pick-Up 4-H Cooking Kit	26	27 PSA	28	29
30	31	1 September 4-H Nominations Due	2 Get It Together	3	4	5 Master Garden Series - Plant Propagation