

SENECA COUNTY CCE 4-H ANIMAL SCIENCE PROGRAMMING

4-H youth participate in animal science projects because they love animals. The animals become their friends and the spark that helps youth see their inner potential. This fueled the development of life skills including self-responsibility, self-motivation, personal safety, problem solving, and concern for others. Seneca County 4-H has experienced a growth in animal science projects members over the last few years. Youth are developing life skills, experiencing science in a hands-on way, and having fun!

Thirty youth exhibited eight-eight animals at the Seneca County Fair in July. This included animals as small as a frog to as large as a horse. There were vibrant costume contests that were an excellent demonstration of creativity and imagination. There was also an informative demonstration of working steer teams being trained by 4-H members.

Ten youth from the Seneca County Fair moved on to participate in animal knowledge contests and shows at The Great New York State Fair in Syracuse. They represented the county in dog, dairy, poultry, horse, rabbit and cavy areas.

At the New York State Fair 4-H Dog Show, Abigail Wheeler tried new things. After participating last year with her dog Sophie, she returned in 2018 with a new partner. Abbey and Henry entered the Beginner B Obedience Class. In addition, Abigail took part in the 4-H Dog Skillathon which is a knowledge contest about all things canine related.



Four first time participants prepared for the Dairy Challenge Contest. They were tested at various stations. The topics included dairy judging, feed identification, identifying cuts of meat, animal health, and farm safety. Novice contestants Josiah Freier and Zackary Hooker received rosettes for placing fourth in the team category and Josiah placed second individually. In the junior age group, Mark Freier placed tenth individually. Dale Freier III received twentieth place in the challenging senior division.

Three youth took part in Poultry Science events at the fair. They participated in Poultry Production Judging. This included judging a class of live hens, judging carcasses, identifying cuts of meat, candling eggs, and grading eggs. Mark Freier placed third in the contest and Mary Lou Sheckler earned eighth place. Avian Bowl is a quiz bowl contest where questions are asked and youth try to be the first to buzz in to answer. Mary Lou Sheckler placed fourth and following a tie breaker, Mark Freier was awarded fifth place.



At the 4-H Poultry Show at the State Fair, Mary Lou Sheckler participated with five of her prize winning birds. Danny, a d'Anvers cock, was chosen as the Reserve Champion Bantam. She also was the fourth place junior showman.

At the horse arena, Megan Keery represented Seneca County 4-H with her equine partner, Whiskey. Megan rode in five classes and pinned in two of them during her first experience at State Fair. Megan received two beautiful rosettes, one for eighth place and one for tenth place. She also entered the costume class and rode to a third place finish. The beautiful costume was dedicated to adolescent mental health awareness. Her costume was the pair dressed as black and white angels to represent the light and dark inside of everyone. She shared in her description that once both sides are acknowledge, it empowers the individual and allows the individual to seek help.

Two youth participated in the New York State Fair Youth Rabbit Show. Abigail Wheeler entered her animals in the Pet Class. Caleb Parsons' Red New Zealand rabbit was chosen as the Best Opposite of Breed animal for the New Zealand category.

Three youth participated in the New York State Fair 4-H Cavy Show. Cavies are also commonly known as guinea pigs. Alex Peryea, Jamie Fisher, and Abigail Wheeler exhibited their animals. Fisher's American cavy was awarded Best Opposite of Breed for the American category.

4-H Animal Science programs in Seneca County include a horse club, dairy team, cavy club, poultry group, a dog program, and a goat club. To join an existing group or start a group, contact the Seneca County Cornell Cooperative Extension Office. Please call 315-539-9251 or email seneca@cornell.edu.

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