

3/18/2020

TO:  4-H Volunteers, Member and Families,

All UCCE San Luis Obispo employees have begun to work remotely in response to COVID-19. While all staff will be working during this period, there may be delays in response time. Thank you in advance for your patience.

At the SLO County press conference today it was announced that shelter at home will begin tomorrow at 5 pm. This is in effort to limit transmission; it is set to last for 30 days and they will review after 2 weeks.  All in person 4-H events, general and project meetings are to be canceled/postponed until further notice. It is allowable to hold meetings virtually, by phone or by video conferencing like ZOOM, Facetime or Skype. If you don’t have a video conferencing platform and would like help setting up a ZOOM meeting, please contact Denise and Ana.

Animal Project Leaders, members and families, we are aware that many of you have or will be getting your fair animals soon. We can help any leaders that need assistance with conference calls, ZOOM meetings and creative ways to provide instruction. **Please read the *Information Regarding 4-H Families and Animal Husbandry (March 18, 2020)*at the bottom of this email.**

We have been asked to share the linked information for those who may need help navigating salary gaps during the COVID-19 crisis. We will update as new information becomes available: <https://ucanr.edu/sites/SLO/files/321854.pdf>

To not inundate your email inbox, we are doing our best to limit 4-H emails to once a day, please check for updates. Currently all 4-H in person events and meetings have been canceled until further notice, for us locally that means Area Presentation Day, Cerro Alto Rabbit Show, the Food and Arts Celebration and Fashion Revue. If time allows, these events can be rescheduled.  4-H Field Day is contingent on future developments.

This is a fluid and unprecedented situation, we appreciate your cooperation and understanding. Attached to this email is a message from Lynn Schmitt-McQuitty, the Statewide 4-H Director. Our goal is to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 and keep our 4-H families and community healthy.  Due to working remotely, the most reliable way to contact us is via email.  Know that we are here to assist and please don’t hesitate to reach out to us at any time.

Thank you,

Janelle Hansen  jmmhansen@ucanr.edu

Ana Torres amltorres@ucanr.edu

Denise Harris dharris@co.slo.ca.us

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**Information Regarding 4-H Families and Animal Husbandry**

**(March 18, 2020)**

 **Re-posted from 4-H Advisor, Dorina Espinosa.**

Raising your 4-H animal can help you keep a bit of normal in your life during these times of Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). The bond you share with your animal can help you feel happy, relaxed, less stressed and less anxious and is good for your health and wellness. ([National Institute of Health](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/19185195); [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov/healthypets/health-benefits/index.html)).

In response to questions we are receiving, here is some pertinent information regarding caring for and raising your animals within the context of COVID-19.

* Regarding the Coronavirus and animals:
	+ In the United States, there is no evidence to suggest that any animals, including pets, livestock, or wildlife, might be a source of COVID-19 infection at this time. However, because all animals can carry germs that can make people sick, it’s always a good idea to practice healthy habits around pets and other animals. [[from CDC Animals and Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prepare/animals.html)]
	+ The World Health Organization, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, and Center for Disease Control and Prevention indicate that pets and other domestic animals are not considered at risk for contracting COVID-19 or transmitting the virus that causes COVID-19 (also known as 2019-nCoV). ([from American Veterinary Medical Association FAQ document](https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/animal-health-and-welfare/covid-19))
	+ The same guidance to reduce COVID-19 spread also is good practice for raising and caring for your animal, including washing your hands on a regular basis.
* Best Practices for 4-H Animal Projects
	+ When 4-H Clubs have multiple families picking up their project animals from one location, please consider staggering each family’s pick-up by 15 to 20 minutes.
	+ In the case that all the 4-H Project animals are housed in one facility, a schedule should be created so families may sign up for a specific time slot to tend to their animals and facilitate social distancing.
	+ Please remember not to financially overextend yourself for purchasing animals and feed. We do not know if Fairs will go forward this year.
	+ As soon as we receive information from the Fairs, we will pass on that information to the 4-H Community.