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It's Fair Game!



ALISSA WOOCKMAN/P&D

Randy Woehl from Menno judges the rabbit show as a part of this year's Yankton County Achievement Days. Woehl inspects Yankton Get Up and Go 4-H Club members Owen, Garrett and Daniel Dangel's black Mini Rex rabbit for many of the indicators of a good breed like teeth placement, width of body and plush fur coat.

It's State Fair Season In South Dakota And Nebraska, And Area 4-Hers Are Ready To Compete On The Big Stage

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Jackie Steffen intended to offer a learning experience to 4-Hers when she judged entries at the Yankton County 4-H Achievement Days.

In the process, the Cedar County (Neb.) Extension agent received her own learning experience, viewing the way her northern

neighbors operate 4-H.

"South Dakota and Nebraska are very different in the way they run their 4-H programs," she said. "They have different projects in their fair book, and they look for different things when they judge. But we still both emphasize learning by doing."

And in that regard, both South Dakota and Nebraska 4-Hers are finding or anticipating exciting new changes and facilities as they head to their respective state fairs. Nebraska starts today (Friday) in Grand Island, while South Dakota starts Sept. 3 in Huron. Both fairs run through Labor Day.

For Stephanie Siebrandt, getting the exhibits to the South Dakota State Fair marks only half the battle.

The Yankton County 4-H Youth Development leader will find creative ways to display

her 4-Hers' static (non-livestock) exhibits in an assigned 8-foot by 10-foot booth for exhibit space.

"We have to display everything (in that space) and figure how we incorporate the theme," she said. "It's one of the big things we are working on: How do we do the booth display? We're getting ready for that."

At Achievement Days, Yankton County 4-Hers received 221 purple ribbons – which qualify for the State Fair – out of 480 static exhibits. In the animal division, 72 of the 141 exhibits earned purple ribbons.

Siebrandt and administrative assistant Danielle McFarland will take exhibits to Huron for judging prior to the start of the fair.

"We get to take the exhibits up on Wednesday of that week," Siebrandt said. "Danielle and I will take the exhibits to the right judge and then make sure we get the placings recorded and taken back to the booth."

NEW FACILITIES

This year marks the final year for cramped quarters at the South Dakota State Fair. A three-year capital campaign is raising \$4.7 million to construct the Nordby Exhibit Hall for 4-H, Youth and Community. The versatile, open-layout building replaces Clover Hall, which has been utilized since the 1950s for 4-H exhibits and competitions.

The new 48,000-square-foot exhibit hall will feature:

- more than 30,000 square feet of exhibit space;
- multiple classrooms;
- a versatile conference room/work room,



COURTESY PHOTO

Sarah Lammers of Cedar County 4-H displays some of the produce that won her purple ribbons at the recent Cedar County Fair in Hartington, Nebraska.

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JACKIE STEFFEN

available for activities during the fair and in the off-season;

- a large kitchen for 4-H Special Foods competitions and year-round concessions;
- a performance stage;
- year-round office space for the State Fair staff.

"Nordby Hall will be ready for next year's State Fair. They had a groundbreaking ceremony in May, but it's not anything that will be ready for us this year," Siebrandt said. "When it's open, it will have all of our static exhibits, the fashion review contest and the special foods contest rather than the high school. It will be a lot easier for the 4-Hers."

Meanwhile, Nebraska 4-Hers already enjoy a new location and facilities at their state fair.

Steffen traveled to Grand Island this week to take entries to the Nebraska State Fair. The fair, formerly located in Lincoln, moved to Grand Island a few years ago.

The move to Grand Island took place before Steffen started with Cedar County, so she didn't experience the Lincoln fairgrounds. However, fellow Extension educators have praised the move, she said.

"It's been a great transition and has gone

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