

Division Rules

Panola County 4-H Project Fair 2026

all rules subject to change until time of the event

Changes for 2026 noted in gray highlight

Clover Kids

- Read General Rules.
- Must be currently enrolled in 4HOnline as a Clover Kid.
- Clover Kids may enter up to 5 entries for a flat fee of \$5 (1 entry or 5 entries is \$5).
- Entries include but are not limited to crafts, baked goods, photography, scrapbooks and more.
- Entry tag must be securely attached to the exhibit.
- Entries are for display only; no competitive judging of the exhibits shall occur. Every exhibit will receive a special Clover Kid ribbon.
- All Clover Kid exhibits will be displayed together.

Arts & Crafts

- Read General Rules.
- All exhibits must be clean and ready for display when entered. Any paint or glue must be completely dry before the item will be accepted.
- A specific entry name is required on all exhibit tags (ex. Sunflower in pastel, lead still life).
- Entry tags must be securely attached to the exhibit.
- Multi-piece exhibits should be marked accordingly (1 of 4, etc.) using an official entry tag on one piece and sticky notes on the remaining pieces.
- If craft is completely or partially from a kit, please specify on entry tag and indicate which part(s) is/is not from a kit.
- Exhibit at your own risk and take care when considering how your item will be displayed. Please be aware that exhibits will be moved during the judging and setup process. The show committee is not liable for any broken/damaged exhibits.
- Framed pieces give a more complete look and could be placed higher than unframed pieces.
- Any knives, arrowheads or other sharp objects must be placed in a clear plastic container for display. Attach Entry tag to the outside of the container.
- All functional woodworking/metalwork pieces should be no larger than 24 inches x 24 inches x 24 inches (2 cubic feet). Items larger than this should be entered into the Ag

Mechanics division of PCJLS. This class is intended for smaller items and/or repurposed items that would not fit into the Ag Mechanics show.

- CLASSES for 2026 include:
 - a. Colored drawings (colored pencil, pastels, crayons, etc.)
 - b. Monochromatic art (ONE color/variation such as pencil, charcoal, ink, etc.)
 - c. Paintings (any medium applied by brush such as watercolor, acrylic, etc.)
 - d. 3D art or sculpture (wood, clay, stone, metal, etc.)
 - e. Functional Woodworking or Metalwork (clocks, birdhouses, cutting boards, frames, etc.)
 - f. Upcycled art- turn trash into treasure! Take an old "trash" item that's already been used for its original purpose and remake it into something useful or beautiful.
 - g. Open (other arts and crafts not fitting into one of the above classes; may enter **two** exhibits in this class)

Legos

- Read General Rules.
- All exhibits must fit on a 12 by 12-inch base plate and be no more than 12 inches high (12 cubic inches maximum).
- Entry tag must be securely attached to the exhibit.
- If creation is completely or partially from a kit, please specify on entry tag and indicate which part(s) is/is not from a kit.
- Exhibit at your own risk and take care when considering how your item will be displayed. A sturdy base is highly recommended. Keep in mind that exhibits will need to be moved a few times during the event. The show committee is not liable for any broken/damaged exhibits.
- The "Lego" brand is highly recommended for their durability.
- CLASSES for 2026 include:
 - Theme: the theme for 2026 is **transportation**.
 - Kit creations: 50% or more of the final product is from a kit.
 - Freestyle: Other freestyle lego creations, 0-49% is from a kit (may enter **two** exhibits in this class).

Fabric & Fiber Arts

- Read General Rules.
- All exhibits must be clean and ready for display when entered. Any paint or glue must be completely dry before the item will be accepted.
- Multi-piece exhibits should be marked accordingly (1 of 4, etc) using an official entry tag on one piece and sticky notes on the remaining pieces.

- Securely attach the entry tag to exhibits using a safety pin or tape.
- All garments entered should be displayed on hangers, with the option to also have a *clear plastic* garment bag protecting the exhibit. No other garment bags will be allowed on display.
- Articles, garments, outfits may have been used/worn but should be carefully cleaned/launched before being exhibited.
- Exhibits in this division can be constructed from a pattern or kit. Please indicate on entry card or supplemental exhibit card whether exhibit is from a kit or not.
- QUILTED ITEMS should be pieced primarily by the exhibitor with minimal assistance from others. Quilting and binding may be performed by others. All quilted items **MUST** contain an index card (or piece of paper) with information on how the item was constructed and who did the piecing, quilting, etc.
- Items purchased AND decorated (stencil, applique, tie dye, etc.) by the exhibitor are also permitted.
- The exhibitor is encouraged to attach a 3"x5" index card with the exhibit telling the judge anything that may be helpful to know about the item. Pictures of exhibitor wearing outfit are also encouraged.
- Examples of Fiber Arts exhibits include but are not limited to the following:
 - Embroidery
 - Afghan
 - Knitted item
 - Crocheted item
 - Rugs (punched, hooked, knitted or crocheted)
 - Pillow (embroidered, hooked, punched, needlepoint, etc)
 - Cross stitch or counted cross stitch
 - Wall hanging
 - Sewn Garment

CLASSES for 2026 include:

- Garments
- Accessories
- Home Décor
- Quilted items (quilts, wall hangings, pot holders, etc.)
- Other (exhibit not fitting into one of the above classes; may enter two exhibits in this class)

Foods

- Read General Rules.
- **All foods should not require refrigeration. Items requiring refrigeration will be disqualified.**

- Winners of this contest DO NOT ADVANCE to a district or state contest.
- Food entries not picked up by 4:00p.m. on Friday, March 6 will be discarded. Any remaining food entries (and their containers) will be disposed of at 4:00 p.m. on Friday, March 6.

Presentation

- Disposable containers/plates/pans are strongly preferred. However, exhibits in glass pans (etc) are accepted. Plain white disposable plates and aluminum pans are best. Plastic cake containers purchased from the dollar store are also acceptable but will not be spared if the exhibit is not picked up by designated time.
- Each exhibit should be in a CLEAR plastic food storage bag (not a grocery sack) or covered with CLEAR plastic wrap.
- Inside each bag (or attached to the exhibit), include the full recipe. Recipes will not be shared and are for judges' purposes only.
- Tape exhibit tag so that it is securely attached to the outside of the exhibit.
- Though items are not judged on presentation, items should be displayed neatly. A small amount of *edible* garnishes may be used on food entries.
- Most baked goods should be left whole and uncut. Small items, such as cookies and rolls, should be the same size, shape and from the same recipe. Brownies and bar cookies should be cut into servings and exhibited in groups of three. *Exhibit 3 cookies, 3 muffins, 1 loaf of bread, etc.*
- All unfrosted cakes should be exhibited in an upright position with crust showing, except for those cakes made with special designs such as bundt cakes. These cakes should have top crust side down.
- Any baked good that can be removed from the pan should be placed on a disposable plate, covered cardboard or other disposable container.
- **For food safety purposes, all food entries must be safe to store at room temperature (not needing refrigeration). Any food with dairy-based fillings or frostings (e.g. cream cheese), raw eggs, flavored oils, "canned" bread or bread cakes in a jar, cut fresh fruit/vegetables or any good requiring refrigeration (ex. bacon) will not be accepted. Judge(s) and extension agent will determine if any exhibit does not meet this criterion.**
- Alcohol (ex. Wine, beer and hard liquor) is not allowed as an ingredient in food entries. Entries with alcohol in the recipe will be disqualified and will not be judged.
- Exhibits should be in FOOD GRADE plastic bags, disposable plastic containers or boxes. Only the exhibit is judged; not the container.
- The exhibitor is encouraged to attach a 3" by 5" index card to give the judge any information which he thinks may be helpful for the judge to know.
- Food items are evaluated based on taste, texture, content and overall quality (not presentation).
- All food entries must be made from scratch. No dump cakes are allowed.

- All food items must be at room temperature prior to check-in.
- CLASSES for 2026:
 - Cookies
 - Bread
 - Candy
 - Food Preservation (vegetables, pickles, salsa, jam/jelly, etc.) exhibitors may enter up to **three** items in this class.
 - Annual Ingredient challenge: Any non-perishable food featuring **oatmeal**.

Photography

- Read General Rules.
- Photos must be printed; size 5 inches by 7 inches. Landscape or portrait orientation are acceptable.
- All photos MUST be mounted on a piece of white 8.5x11 cardstock for stability. Photos should be centered and mounted squarely. **Any photos not mounted on cardstock will NOT be accepted.**
- The exhibitor may place each mounted photo in a clear 8 ½ x 11 inch protective sleeve or page protector for display (optional).
- All exhibits must have a corresponding entry tag attached to the exhibit. Please add a brief description to the entry card (i.e. sunflower field, black and white portrait, etc.) on the "Entry" line. Entry tags should be taped to the card stock in the lower right hand corner, with the entry card "hanging" below the card stock, facing forward.
- Photos must be taken by the exhibitor him/herself. Plagiarized works will be disqualified.
- Exhibitor should not be in the photo since they are taking the photo. NO SELFIES.
- By submitting an entry to this contest, the exhibitor grants permission to Panola County 4-H Youth Development Program the use and rights associated to the use of the photograph in promotional publications and other media without compensation.
- Photos should not be framed or have any embellishments.
- No alcohol or inappropriate content in photographs.
- This contest will serve as the county contest for 4-H members. Senior 4-H winners will qualify for state (Texas 4-H Photography contest in April). One senior photo per class will advance to state, regardless of ribbon placing (if there is no senior champion, the highest ranking senior photo will advance regardless of ribbon color). All photos, including non-4-H, will still be judged together and against one another to determine Project Fair Champions.
- **All entry tags must be filled out and attached to exhibits prior to arrival at check in. It is not the responsibility of the committee to attach tags.**
- Classes for Photography correspond to the annual Texas 4-H Photography Contest classes each year. Exhibitors may enter **one photo per class**. Detailed descriptions of the classes can be found on <https://panola.agrilife.org/4-h-project-fair/>

- Photos should be exhibited in the correct category. Please review category descriptions carefully. **Any exhibit not meeting criteria for that category will be docked one ribbon placing. Any exhibitor seeking assistance placing his photos in an appropriate class should contact the extension office at least one week prior to Project Fair. Time does not allow for us to help exhibitors with this during check in.**
- CLASSES for 2026:
 - Animals-Domestic
 - Animals-Wildlife
 - Catch-All (photos that do not fit into one of the other categories listed)
 - Details & Macro
 - Dominant Color
 - Elements of Design
 - Enhanced
 - Food
 - Landscape & Nature (non-animal)
 - Leading Line
 - Long Exposure
 - Motion/Action
 - People
 - Plant/Flora
 - Reflections
 - Shadow/Silhouette
 - Transportation
 - Theme (will rotate each year)- the 2026 theme is Volunteers in Action

Floral Design

Floral Arrangements

- No refrigeration will be provided. Exhibitors are welcome and encouraged to water their exhibits during visiting hours.
- Entry should be designed to be viewed from all sides.
- Accessories may be used in the floral arrangement; however, emphasis should be on the creative use of natural, fresh cut materials.
- No additional accessories may be added to the display area, around the arrangement, etc.
- Commercially grown materials are allowed (wholesale, florist ordered materials).
- No leaf polishes may be used.
- No painting of fresh materials is permitted.
- Flowers and foliages should be free of blemishes, insects and disease.
- On contest day, exhibitors must arrive with a fully completed arrangement to set on display.
 - Exhibitors cannot alter their arrangements once placed on display.

- Exhibitors must make any prior alterations and place their arrangement on display without assistance.

CLASSES for 2026:

- Fresh flower arrangements
- Silk (artificial) flower arrangements
- Floral Arrangement annual container challenge- the container for 2026 is **a watering can** (limit one gallon capacity). Fresh flowers or silk may be used.

Educational Exhibits

Exhibits may include notebooks, posters, tri-fold or other displays not exceeding 3' (width) x 4' (height) in size. Exhibits will be judged on content, organization, appearance/craftsmanship, spelling/grammar, and creativity. Points to emphasize in the exhibit: learning goals and objectives, why the project was relevant to the student, and pictures or other means of documenting the experience.

Exhibitors may only enter ONE exhibit in this *division* (not one per class).

No firearms allowed on premises. Pictures of firearms are acceptable. Bows and tipless arrows are acceptable. Any knives, arrowheads, or other sharp objects must be placed in a clear plastic container.

CLASSES for 2026:

- Promote 4-H or FFA- A promotional exhibit for 4-H and FFA that highlights the value of the program **or a project within the program**. Can be any format (poster, flyer, written piece, etc.)
- Innovations (any educational display/interactive element such as science projects or circuit boards)
- Open Posters and Storyboards **(any content not fitting into one of the other classes)**