Happy New Year!!!

Happy New Year Suwannee County!!! The end of 2008 was full of events for our 4-H’ers. There were 23 youth that attended the Meat Science Workshop and over 120 people showed up for the Holiday Bake-off! The McAlpin 4-H Club also used the money from winning the County Council Change Wars to have a pizza party.

2009 is going to be an exciting time for 4-H. The Robodogs 4-H Club will be hosting a Robotics Tournament on January 17.

Anyone who is interested in livestock and meat judging can come to the first practice for livestock on January 20 and the first practice for meats on January 22, at 3:30pm. Also, the Suwannee County Fair (March 25-April 4) and 4-H County Events (April 25) will be here before we know it. The Hog Ownership date is January 10, so make sure that you have your hogs by then.

Please help us make Suwannee County 4-H even better this year!!! If you ever have any questions about activities planned or things going on in 4-H, please don’t hesitate to ask a club leader or call the Extension office at 386-362-2771.

Sincerely,

Brian Estevez
4-H/Youth Development
Suwannee County

Florida 4-H Centennial Celebration

In 2009, Florida 4-H Youth Development will celebrate *A Century of Youth Success*! The year-long celebration begins with a kick-off event at the Florida State Fairgrounds, in Tampa on February 5 – 16, 2009. The Florida 4-H Centennial exhibit will be in the Agricultural Hall of Fame building on the fairgrounds. Other planned events include: the Florida 4-H Centennial Gala, to be held November 14, 2009, in Jacksonville and the TailGATOR Event, in the fall of 2009 in Gainesville. Suwannee county will be planning other centennial events, so please stay tuned for more details or visit the centennial website at [http://www.florida4h.org/events/centennial.shtml](http://www.florida4h.org/events/centennial.shtml).
Hog and Ham

The Florida 4-H Hog and Ham Program is a statewide 4-H program that takes the participant through the total process of pork production from beginning to end. Youth select a feeder pig and grow it to harvesting weight, all the while keeping records on feed amounts and costs, health care, expenses, weights, etc. After harvesting the hog and processing it into wholesale or retail cuts, 4-H’ers cure the hams and prepare bacon and sausage for smoking. The project concludes by participating in a retail comparison project, completing a record book, and presenting a demo or illustrated talk to the other participants.

Enrollment in Hog and Ham is limited to a maximum of 30 4-H members each year. The number of counties participating will determine the number of youth per county. The 4-H agent will select the 4-H members who would like to participate. For those interested in participating there will be a MANDATORY Hog and Ham Workshop on January 19 at the University of Florida. For more details call the Extension Office at 386-362-2771 or go to http://www.animal.ufl.edu/youth/livestock/HogHam.shtml for more information.

Meat Science Workshop

On December 3, 23 youth from Suwannee County participated in the first 4-H Meat Science Workshop. While attending the workshop, youth learned about meat judging and identification, knife safety and sharpening, and food safety and cookery. The three hour program was very hands on as youth were able to sharpen knives, cut their own pork chops, and take part in a taste test of a variety of beef cuts.

Mr. Tommy Estevéz from the University of Florida’s Meat Processing Center was the guest speaker at the event. He shared his 30 years of meat knowledge with the group. Mr. Tommy taught the youth how to hold a knife at a 45º angle to get it sharp. He also told the youth that his hands had over 100 stitches in them from his time in the meat industry.

Members from both Suwannee County 4-H and Suwannee High School FFA were present. Both organizations will start meat judging teams in January and compete in the state contest on April 19, 2009. More meat science workshops are planned for 2009.
Holiday Bake-off a Delicious Success

On Monday December 8, Suwannee County 4-H hosted its annual Holiday Bake-off. The Holiday Bake-off was a success as 48 4-H’ers submitted 68 delicious entries that were all judged on their own merit. Later that evening, over 120 people showed up at Exhibition II to enjoy the awards ceremony and all of the goodies.

All Holiday Bake-off entries were dropped off at Exhibition II between the hours of 8:30am and 11:30am. The entries were placed in different divisions and then judged in the early afternoon. The awards ceremony started at 6:00pm. All of the 4-H’ers were treated to a standing-room only crowd as they got their pictures taken.

All entries were placed in one of 11 divisions: cakes, decorated cakes, pies, candies, cookies, brownies/bar cookies, breads, specialty items, gift baskets, appetizers, and light recipes. Division winners were given a prize of a set of cookie cutters and a golden spoon to signify their hard work.

Cloverbuds, 4-H’ers ages 5-7, also were able to have entries, though their items were not judged. All Cloverbuds received a participation ribbon for all of their hard work.

Entries for SVYLSS

On Saturday December 13, 43 youth from Suwannee, Hamilton, and Lafayette counties braved the cold weather to weigh and register their steers for the Suwannee Valley Youth Livestock Show and Sale. This is a requirement to enter and show at the fair.

Please note that the hog ownership deadline is January 10, 2009 as hogs must be tagged and identified by this date. Also, entry forms are due to the Extension Office by 5:00 on January 10.

County Events set for April 25, 2009

County Events have been set for April 25, 2009. Now is a good time to start thinking about speeches and demonstrations that you would like to do. Maybe you could form a team for share the fun or create a poster to share. Mark April 25 on your calendar as it will be a great time for all of Suwannee County 4-H to come together and compete.
Extension programs are open to all people regardless of race, color, sex, religion, disability or national origin. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, any person needing a special accommodation to participate in any activity should contact the Suwannee County Cooperative Extension Service at 1302 Eleventh Street, SW, Live Oak, Florida 32060 or telephone (386) 362 - 2771 at least five working days prior to the event. Hearing impaired can access the foregoing telephone by contacting the Florida Relay Service at 1 - 800 - 955 - 8770 or 800 - 955 - 8772 (TDD).