Extension Edition

Martin-Gatton
College of Agriculture,
Food and Environment

Cooperative Extension Service
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http://wolfe.ca.uky.edu/

Wolfe County Cooperative Extension Newsletter January 2026

"The secret of getting ahead is getting start-ed."

– Mark Twain

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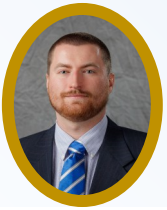

Andrew Warren
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This Issue:

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

University of Kentucky

Kentucky State University

BEGINNING BEEKEEPER SCHOOL

Join area expert Mr. Larry Young to learn the basics of beekeeping! Over the 4 part series you will learn beginning bee keeping necessities and have the opportunity to ask questions!

FEB 3	FEB 10	FEB 17	FEB 24
Bee Biology	Now What do I do?	Pest Management	Hive Management

Each Sessions will be from 6:00PM - 8:00PM

Must Call to Register
606-668-3712

20 N Washington Street
Campton, KY 41301

WOLFE COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE

January 19th 2026 at 5:30 PM

CALL US AT 606-668-3712 IF YOU PLAN ON JOINING US THAT EVENING!

Join us and travel to the

Martin-Gatton College of Agriculture, Food and Environment

National Farm Machinery Show

The National Farm Machinery Show offers the most complete selection of cutting-edge agricultural products, equipment and services available in the farming industry. Business professionals from around the world gain knowledge and hands-on access to various technological advancements needed for the upcoming farming season

February 13th, 2026

Breathitt and Wolfe County

Pre-register by calling

Breathitt
606-666-8812

Wolfe
606-668-3712

Deadline February 6th, 2025

We will be leaving from Breathitt County Extension Office at 8:00am and return at 7:00pm.

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Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

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Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating.

Lexington, KY 40506

Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

Weak Calf Syndrome-Not Just a Cold-Weather Concern

Written by Dr. Ray Smith and Dr. Michelle Arnold, with contributions from Beef and Forage Extension faculty (Teutsch, Lehmkuhler, Anderson, and VanValin.)

The difficulties associated with feeding and calving in cold, rainy and muddy conditions in the spring have caused many producers to shift their calving season to the fall of the year when temperatures are generally more comfortable, good forage is available to graze and dry conditions predominate. However, the last several fall seasons have proven to be difficult for many fall calving herds throughout KY with reports of small, weak calves and stillbirths born to dams with little to no milk despite overall body condition of the dams as good to excellent. The UKVDL received fall calves that died within the first weeks after birth due to scours or navel infections resulting from poor quality colostrum and/or inability to nurse leading to failure of passive transfer. The major reproductive issues observed were not limited to fall calving herds; conception rates in spring-calving herds have also been dramatically affected with some herds experiencing up to 40-50% of females open at fall pregnancy check with no signs of estrus noted and no evidence of infectious disease. These findings have resulted in lengthy discussions among UKVDL faculty and Extension specialists to expand the list of potential problems causing the effects observed this year and what measures may help prevent recurrence. Although summer heat and fescue toxicosis are expected in Kentucky, the unusually long drought and exceptional heat very likely affected both the forage and the cattle; but the question is, how?

"Weak Calf Syndrome" is a term applied to any calf born alive but is slow to stand and may or may not attempt to nurse. Previous studies have found that environmental, genetic, infectious and nutritional causes can lead to calves being born weak and contribute to the risk of perinatal mortality (death within the first 3 weeks of life). Most cases have several contributing factors that have come together to create the perfect storm. For example, weak calves may result from a combination of poor nutrition during pregnancy, difficulty calving, and hypothermia when born in cold and wet weather. Unfortunately, by the time a reproductive problem is recognized as a herd problem, it is usually too late to change the trajectory for those left to calve. Similarly, infectious agents associated with weak calves such as bovine viral diarrhea virus (BVDv) may inflict damage early in gestation, making it difficult to diagnose let alone prevent. Although investigations into the cause of reproductive failure are rarely easy, beginning with an appraisal of differences from "normal" over the last several years is a reasonable starting point.

The November 2025 edition of UK Forage News sheds new light on a potential contributor to the problem. Dr. Ray Smith wrote: "The last four late summers and falls have had extended dry periods, followed by late-fall rains. This has made fall forage establishment and fall stockpiling difficult since dependable rains have come very late. These long dry periods have also caused considerable stress on cool-season forages. In many parts of the region, Kentucky bluegrass was completely dormant, and many orchardgrass stands have thinned. On the other hand, KY-31 tall fescue plants have only shown reduced growth with leaf curling (a drought survival response), but the endophyte has allowed good survival of these plants. When the fall rains finally came, fescue-predominant pastures were the first ones to green up.

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Unfortunately the new growth after these periods of drought stress has shown abnormally high levels of ergovaline, the toxic alkaloid in KY-31 tall fescue. Normally, the highest levels of ergovaline are in May and June when seedheads are present and lower in the fall when the plants are in a vegetative stage, but it seems that these higher ergovaline levels are some type of drought response in the plant. The high fall ergovaline levels have also extended into early winter since hard freezes (<25 degrees) seem to be coming later the last few years. You might ask, "Why should I care?" We normally aren't concerned about toxicity in tall fescue during the fall, and this is part of the reason that fall calving has been encouraged in the region. The lower ergovaline in the fall allows good milk production for fall calves and fewer rebreeding issues than with spring calving herds". To read the entire article entitled "Fescue Toxicity in the Fall: Is this an issue?", go to https://forages.mgcafe.uky.edu/sites/forages.ca.uky.edu/files/2025%20November%20Final.pdf In summary, the farms that manage grazing best usually have the most fescue, the best growing fescue, and the most vigorous fescue with the energy to produce more ergovaline. Good managers with thick fescue stands may also have less of other types of grasses and legumes that could dilute some of the fescue's toxicity. Ergovaline is known to negatively impact conception rates, disrupt normal hormone function, and reduce birth weights in cattle from decreased nutrient supply to the fetus. Cattle grazing toxic fescue experience suppression of prolactin hormone that is associated with a decline in milk production, and lower levels of progesterone necessary for establishment and maintenance of pregnancy.

If fescue is determined to be a contributing problem, there are options available. Cows can be moved from predominantly tall fescue pastures in the fall and wait until a couple of hard freeze periods before putting them back on these pastures. Testing for ergovaline levels in tall fescue samples from your pasture will help determine which fields are the safest for grazing during the fall, especially during breeding or during lactation. Legumes, particularly red clover, help alleviate fescue toxicity so offering hay containing red clover or, alternatively, feeding soybeans (2 lbs per head per day) or soyhulls (5 lbs per day) should be beneficial. The best long-term solution is to renovate the most toxic fields with novel endophyte tall fescue and have your cows on these fields before, during, and just after the breeding season. Check out the UK Forage Extension website for more information: https://forages.mgcafe.uky.edu/

In addition to the risk of increased ergovaline in fescue pastures, the lack of Vitamin A due to drought and excessive heat may also be a significant contributing factor. The consequences of Vitamin A deficiency during pregnancy to the fetus and its ability to survive the neonatal period have been documented in grazing beef cattle. Vitamin A is a fat-soluble molecule that plays an essential role in growth, development, reproduction, nervous system function and vision. The major source of vitamin A for cattle is beta-carotene, a precursor of vitamin A. Generally, fresh, immature green grass is abundant in beta-carotene although environmental conditions, season, stage of growth and nitrogen fertilization cause levels to vary in the plant. For example, heat and sunlight promote oxidation of carotenoids, greatly reducing beta-carotene concentrations in sun-dried pastures. After its ingestion, beta-carotene is converted to vitamin A in the small intestine, then absorbed and stored in the liver in the form of retinol. Blood vitamin A concentrations are maintained by utilizing the liver stores. Once liver stores are depleted, blood concentration rapidly decreases. In addition, a protein produced and released by the liver known as retinol binding protein (RBP), is required to transport Vitamin A to and from the liver

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and for its uptake by various cells. A diet deficient in protein affects the storage, transport and utilization of vitamin A. In summary, whether the cow is grazing dry grass or consuming hay made from drought stressed forages, her vitamin A intake will likely be low. Even when hay is made from good green forages, the carotene is not very stable and will decrease over time, even when the hay is stored inside. Although vitamins are in most trace mineral mixtures and feeds, Vitamin A can be degraded by exposure to light, heat, moisture, oxygen, and other compounds through oxidation.

In adult cattle, hypovitaminosis A is associated with low conception rates, abortion, stillbirths and the birth of weak calves. These weak newborns may show neurologic signs including mild to severe ataxia (wobbly gait), difficulty finding a teat and sucking, blindness (partial or complete), head tremors and depression. In some cases, neurologic damage is present at birth, preventing the normal intake of colostrum that results in failure of passive transfer. These calves will typically die within 1-2 weeks from navel infections, scours, and/or septicemia. In other cases where calves receive adequate colostrum from the dam, low Vitamin A may still be a concern if it was inadequate in colostrum. In several cases submitted to the UKVDL, analysis of serum and liver samples from calves did demonstrate deficient levels of vitamin A. However, assessment of liver or serum from the dams, especially while pregnant, is a much better way to detect deficiency. In the face of prolonged drought, prevention of vitamin A deficiency can be addressed with additional supplementation in the diet or injectable vitamin preparations, assuming there is adequate protein provided in the diet.

Infectious causes must always be considered when investigating reproductive loss. Both the BVD virus and the spirochete *Leptospira interrogans* serovar *Hardjo* infections have been implicated in weak calves. To test for BVD virus, an ear notch of skin should be collected from all calves born (whether born alive or dead) and submitted to a veterinary diagnostic lab for a BVD ELISA. Leptospirosis is much more difficult to diagnose; serum and urine samples from the dams are required for testing. Fortunately, a good annual vaccination program can significantly reduce the risk from these pathogens.

If calves are born weak, institute special care; normal calves should stand within 30 minutes of delivery and nurse within 30 minutes of standing. If the calf is slow to stand and nurse, dry the calf off, dip or spray the navel with disinfectant, and feed colostrum within 2 hours of birth. Fly control is important to keep blow flies away from the navel and other moist areas of skin. Have a good quality commercial colostrum replacement (NOT supplement) on hand and ready to mix and feed if you cannot milk the dam. Do not delay because the longer the interval from birth to feeding, the fewer antibodies absorbed by the calf. Predation from buzzards and other wildlife is likely if weak calves are left outside. Discuss these problems with your veterinarian and come up with an action plan before the next round of heat, dry weather and fescue toxicosis arrives.

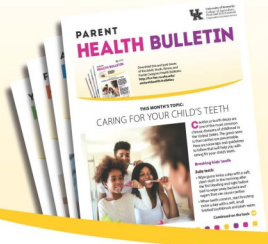
**** Other Ways to Connect ****

Kentucky Beef Extension specialist Jeff Lehmkuhler and his guests share general information on beef cattle production, research and other related information. https://afs.mgcafe.uky.edu/extension/beef/beef-bits-podcast

University of Kentucky Beef Extension: https://www.facebook.com/KyBeefIRM

Cooperative Extension Service

PARENT HEALTH BULLETIN



Download this and past issues of the Adult, Youth, Parent, and Family Caregiver Health Bulletins:
http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/health-bulletins

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO TO HELP BUILD RESILIENCE

Resilience is the ability to bounce back when things are hard—when kids face difficulties, disappointments, or stress. It is not something children are born with, but instead it is built over time. Parents and caregivers play a big role in helping kids develop resilience. Love, support, and good habits help children learn to cope better with troubles and grow stronger.

One key thing parents can do is give children caring relationships. This means spending quality time, showing warm support, and being there to listen and offer comfort. When kids feel loved and understood, they are more likely to believe they can manage stress and recover from it.

Resilience helps to build problem-solving and coping skills. Parents can help by teaching children

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Lexington, KY 40506

When kids feel loved and understood, they are more likely to believe they can manage stress and recover from it.

Continued from the previous page

how to break down problems into smaller steps, come up with possible solutions, and try them out. Role-playing in different situations can give kids practice. Also, helping children manage stress through simple things, like breathing exercises, talking about feelings, spending time in nature, or doing something creative, can make a big difference.

Another part of resilience is self-efficacy or believing in their own abilities. This grows when kids succeed in small tasks. Parents should praise effort, celebrate small wins, and let children try new things even if they might fail. Allowing them to make safe mistakes helps them learn and fosters confidence.

Structure is important too. Kids need consistent guidance, routines, and clear expectations. When a household has reliable schedules (for meals, schoolwork, bedtime) and fair rules, children feel safer. They have a stable base from which to take risks and try new things. Parents knowing where their children are, what they are doing, and giving support also helps build resilience.

Talking about past challenges is helpful. When parents share experiences they've had—how they managed a tough situation, what they felt, and how they moved forward—it teaches kids that challenges are normal and manageable. It gives children a sense that they are not alone.

Finally, strong connections with family, friends, school, and the community give children a sense of belonging. Having adults they can trust and people to turn to helps children feel supported. These social relationships serve as "buffers" when times are tough.

What parents can try this week

- Ask your child what problem they are worried about and work together to make a small plan.
- Try a short family routine (for example, after dinner) where everyone shares one good thing and one hard thing from the day.
- Give praise for effort not just success. ("You really kept trying.")

- Teach a calming strategy such as taking deep breaths, counting to 10, or walking away for a moment when upset.
- Connect with people in your community—maybe a neighbor, teacher, mentor—and help your child see they have support beyond just home.

By doing these things, you help your child not only survive challenges but also learn and grow stronger from them. Resilience isn't built in one day—it happens over time through many small steps.

REFERENCES:

- https://www.stopbullying.gov/prevention/help-children-build-resilience
- https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resource-guides/guide-resilience

Written by: Katherine Jury, Extension Specialist for Family Health

Edited by: Alyssa Simms

Designed by: Rusty Manseau

Stock images: Adobe Stock

January 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
4	5	6	7
11	12 4-H Art Club	13	14
18	19	20 Commodities-Residents over age 60 & pre–approved	21 Cooking through the Calendar 11:00 AM
25	26 4-H Chess Club	27 4-H Cooking Club	28

Reminder: in case of inclement weather, please check ahead, classes may be cancelled or rescheduled.

Activities are at the Wolfe Co Extension unless otherwise notes by **

Thu	Fri	Sat
1 	2	3
8 Sit & Sew 2:00 to 5:00 PM	9 Come & Walk With Us 11:00 AM	10
15 4-H Drama Club	16 Clover Patch Pals	17
22 Cloverbuds Sit n Sew 2 pm to 5 pm	23	24
29	30	31

Cooperative Extension Service

MONEYWISE

VALUING PEOPLE. VALUING MONEY.

VOLUME 17 • ISSUE 1

Wolfe County Extension Office | 20 Washington St | Campton, KY | (606) 668-3712

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:
SAVING MONEY WHILE ORGANIZING

A new year can bring inspiration, encourage goal setting, and motivate you to "get organized." Being organized and in control of our "stuff" can promote productivity and reduce anxiety. Although getting and staying organized takes effort, it does not need to take much money to achieve. There are many ways to create order on a budget.

Declutter BEFORE "organizing." We can't – *and shouldn't try* to – organize clutter. Clutter is the "stuff" that does not belong anywhere. It is the stuff we don't really like or use, so we never end up giving it a proper place in our space. Therefore, before you buy those cute containers you see online, make sure you're "containing" things you actually use or want to keep. You'll need fewer organizing products when you have less stuff.

Sort swiftly and graciously give away. Decluttering is easier when you sort like items – this way you can see how many of each thing you have. (Do you really need *three* can openers?) You may choose to go drawer by drawer, room by room, or gather all like items in one spot. Toss broken and worn-out items and donate the rest to a local charity. If you are set on selling your unwanted items, keep in mind that something is only worth what another person will pay for it.

Work with your space. Deciding *where* to keep your things does not cost anything. Establish "zones" for things in places where you would naturally look for them. Keep the phrase **"visible and accessible"** in mind. This does not mean all your things need to be kept out on the counter. Rather, when you are searching in your closets, cabinets, or drawers, will you be able to see and find things? And will you be able to easily reach things? Will special containers or organizing products help or hinder?

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Lexington, KY 40506

ITEMS LOOK LESS LIKE CLUTTER WHEN THEY ARE ON A TRAY OR IN A BASKET

Think "inside the box." Before you invest in color-coordinated crates or space-specific storage to organize your belongings, try repurposing bins and other containers you may already have. Cereal or tissue boxes and jars are great for sorting and storing. Or use a favorite plate or bowl to hold frequently used items. *(Hint: Items look less like clutter when they are on a tray or in a basket.)* Try to use your "homemade" containers first to see if you like the way a space functions.

Choose the same kind of container or label. If you decide to purchase special organizing products, try to select multi-purpose containers that can be used in various spaces. Having containers that match and come in different sizes creates a cohesive look. Your storage needs may change over time, so containers that offer flexibility will maintain their usefulness. To make containers of all styles, colors, and sizes look neat and uniform, mark them with matching labels. This is an easy, low-cost way to coordinate the containers you already have.

Invite a friend to help. Sure, hiring a "professional organizer" can get the job done for a price, but a close friend can also give you honest advice about what to keep and what to part with. Swap roles and help your friend when they are ready to declutter.

Clutter has a "cost." Going forward, remember to consider the "cost" of bringing an item into your home or keeping something "just in case." Most everything we own takes time to clean or maintain. Too many items taking up limited space creates physical and mental obstacles that prevent us from having or doing more meaningful things. Additionally, having clutter makes it hard to find things when we need them. Sometimes we might buy more of an item because we can't locate what we already own. That is why being organized can save you time and money.

Written by Jeanne Badgett, Senior Extension Associate
Edited by: Kerri Ashurst, Ph.D. and Nichole Huff, Ph.D. | Designed by: Kelli Thompson, M.A. | Images by: Adobe Stock

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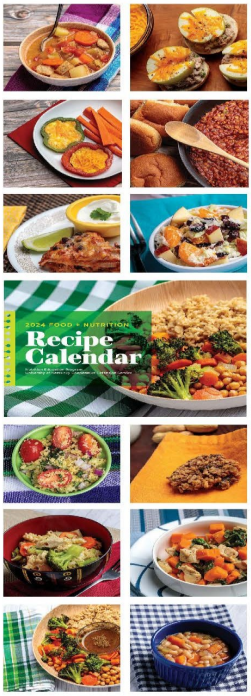

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COOKING THROUGH THE

Calendar

January 21, 2026

11:00 AM

Wolfe County Extension Office

For more information on how you can attend these FREE cooking classes, please contact your local Cooperative Extension office:

Wolfe County Extension Office
20 N Washington St.
Campton, KY 41301
(606) 668-3712

EFNEP

SNAP USDA Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Putting Healthy Food Within Reach

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. This project was partially funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP.

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Lexington, KY 40506

Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

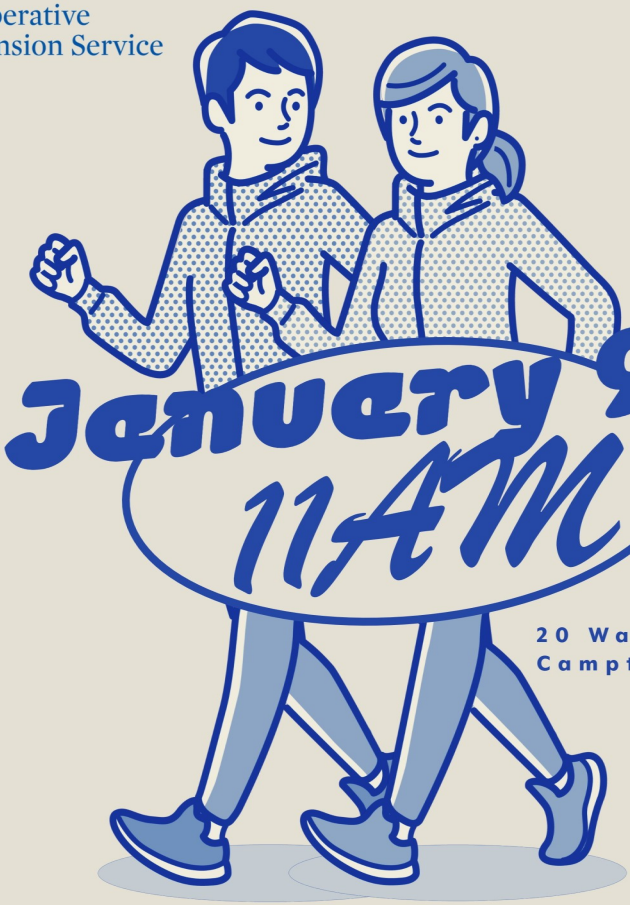
SIT & SEW

January 8th & 22nd 2026

2:00 to 5:00 PM

Come and Walk With Us

Cooperative Extension Service



January 9th
11AM

20 Washington Street
Campton, KY 41301

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Lexington, KY 40506

Disabilities accommodated with prior notification.

4-H Cooking Club

Learn how to make food from all around the world

Doors open after school. club lasts until **5:00 PM**

Next meeting : **January 27th**

Register by calling 606-668-3712

Wolfe County Youth Drama Club

January 15th 2026 after-school until 4:30 PM

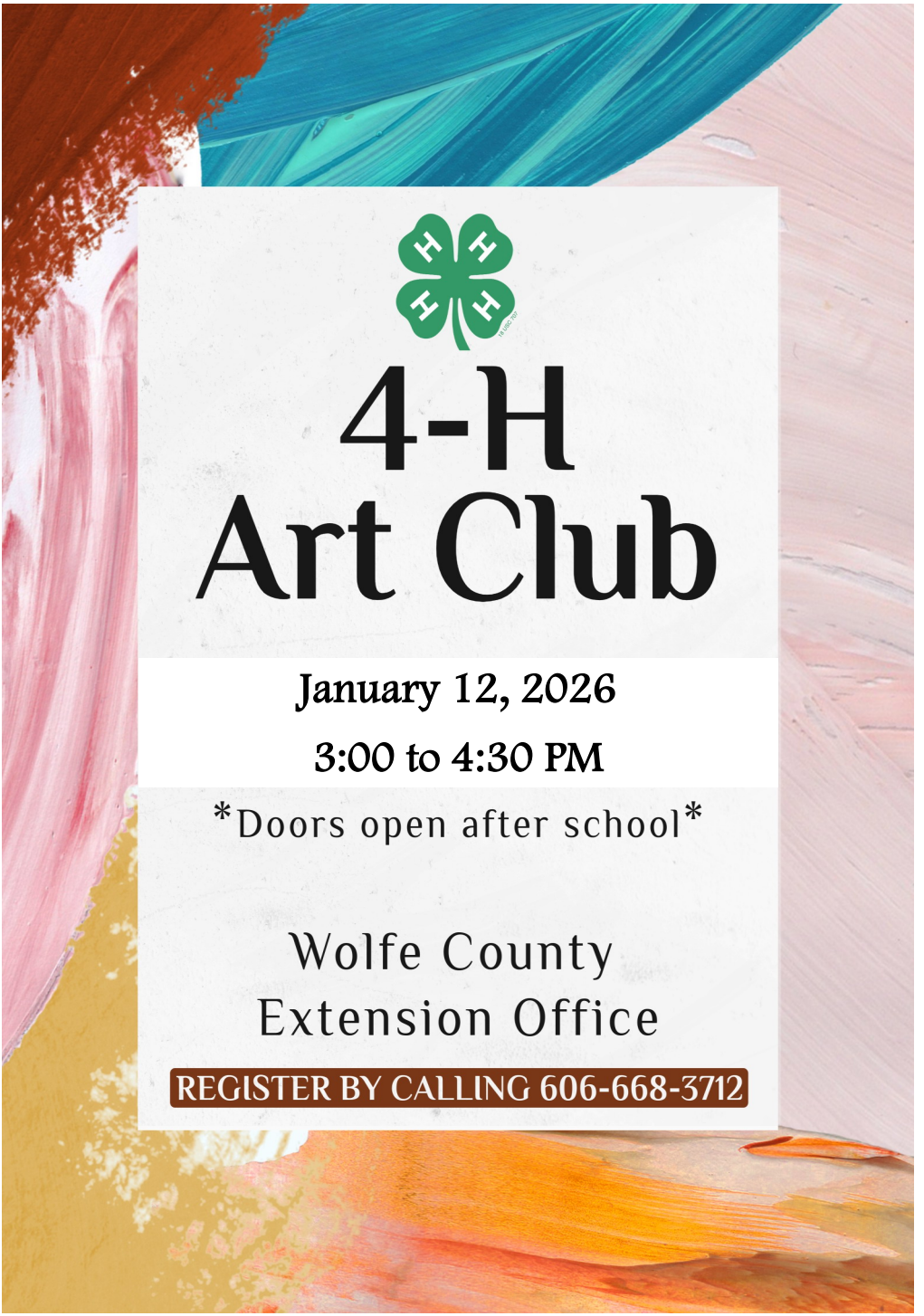
Register with Bethany Kirby
bethany.kirby@uky.edu or 606-560-4480

For school age children

Clover Patch Pals

January 16, 2026

Meeting times change for activity. Call 606-560-4480 to register and for meeting time.


4-H
Art Club
January 12, 2026
3:00 to 4:30 PM
Doors open after school
Wolfe County
Extension Office
REGISTER BY CALLING 606-668-3712

4-H CHESS CLUB

For all skill levels! Ages 9+

January, 26, 2026 after school til 4:30
Wolfe County Extension Office
Call 606-668-3712 to Register

Cooperative Extension Service

Wolfe County 4-H Cloverbud Club

For Wolfe County kids ages 3-8 to socialize and explore the world through play and interactive lessons. Guardians must attend with children under 6.

January 22, 2026 After school til 4:30

Completely FREE!
Please text 6065604480 or email bethany.kirby@uky.edu to register your child.

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