

2025 Rutgers Junior Animal Science Symposium sessions

Register at <https://tinyurl.com/2025AnimalSymposium>

Registration Opens at 8:30am

Light Refreshments 8:30am - 8:50am

Opening Ceremonies 9:00 am

Session #1 (9:30 - 10:30am)

1A - EQUINE: Barn/Farm Scavenger Hunt

By: Bryce Bitsie and Lexie Birch, Rutgers University, Doctoral Students.
(Red Barn – left side, stall side & outside)

- Come have fun while testing your knowledge and learning more about barn safety. We will play a scavenger hunt game and hear about tips to keep your barn safe.
- *This session is appropriate for all grade levels.*

1B – RUMINANT: The Udder Facts of Milk Production in Cows, Goats and Sheep

PLUS a hands-on dissection of udders

By: Dr. Tess Stahl, Rutgers Extension Livestock and Dairy Specialist and Assistant Professor.

- This is a DOUBLE SESSION, meaning it will take up the entire Session 1 and Session 2 timeslots.
- We all recognize the importance of udders in cows, goats, and sheep, but how much do you truly understand about milk and its production? In this interactive session, you'll have the opportunity to dissect a real udder and explore its anatomy and mammary gland tissues. You'll discover how mammary glands develop, including what develops and when. Additionally, you'll learn about the variations in milk composition across different ruminant species.
- *This session is an excellent choice for members who have cows, goats or sheep.*

1C - POULTRY: Wheel of Poultry and Poultry Question Jar

By: Lisa de Lambert, Animal Health Technician, New Jersey Department of Agriculture; Sasha Lisowski, Veterinarian, New Jersey Department of Agriculture; Kristofer Smith, Veterinarian, New Jersey Department of Agriculture.

- Spin the wheel and test your poultry knowledge! In this interactive game, teams will choose from exciting poultry categories, answer fun trivia questions about poultry breeds, anatomy, disease, eggs and more! This session can also be practice for the 4-H Avian Bowl. Whether you're a poultry pro or just getting started, there's something for everyone!
- Have a poultry-related question of your own? Drop it in the Question Jar! After Wheel of Poultry, as time allows, we'll answer your questions and share helpful insights. Whether you're curious about raising backyard chickens, poultry health, or fascinating poultry facts, our experts are here to help. No question is too big or small – let's talk poultry!
- *This session is appropriate for all grade levels.*

1D - BEEKEEPING: Introduction to Honey Bees and Beekeeping

By Mike Haberland, Associate Professor/County Agent II. Rutgers Cooperative Extension.

- Have you ever wanted to know more about honey bees? Have you ever wondered if beekeeping is for you? Would you like to learn about honey bee biology and discover what it takes to become a beekeeper? Join us for a presentation that will provide you with an introduction to the unique biology of the honey bee, how they organize their hive, make their honey, and what beekeepers do to maintain a healthy colony.
- *This session is appropriate for all grade levels.*

1E - CANINE: Canine Careers

By: Kelly Dziak, Morris County 4-H Agent

- Are you considering a career working with dogs? Check out some of the career paths where you could work with, study, and be inspired by dogs. This workshop will also explore some of the many jobs dogs have done historically and currently. Youth will learn about how dogs have worked to support humans throughout history and today. Youth will also learn about careers that use dogs as tools (i.e. search and rescue), for research purposes (i.e. medical, psychological), as clients (i.e. veterinary, grooming), and as inspiration (i.e. art, film, write). Participants will test their knowledge of famous dogs and their significant role/job.
- *This session is appropriate for 4th grade and up.*

1F – ANTHROPOLOGY: Bone Voyage: Exploring Domestication Through Bones

By: Sharon Toth, Hunterdon County 4-H Agent

- In this workshop, participants will uncover the story of how humans and animals shaped each other through domestication. You'll learn how anthropology – the study of humans and their interactions with the world – helps us understand the role of livestock in shaping societies. Then put your knowledge into practice by assembling animal skeletons to explore anatomy, history, and human connections!
- *This session is appropriate for ages 8 and up.*

Session #2 (10:45 - 11:45am)

2A - EQUINE: Pasture is Important for your Horse

By: Dr. Carey Williams, Rutgers University, Equine Extension Specialist. (Red Barn – left side, stall side & outside)

- In this presentation you will learn about the important role that pasture plays in your horse's nutrition and how to evaluate a pasture.
- *This session is appropriate for all grade levels.*

2B – RUMINANT: The Udder Facts of Milk Production in Cows, Goats and Sheep *CONTINUED*

- This is a DOUBLE SESSION, meaning it will take up the entire Session 1 and Session 2 timeslots. You must be registered for this in Session 1 to participate.

2C - POULTRY: Wheel of Poultry and Poultry Question Jar

By: Lisa de Lambert, Animal Health Technician, New Jersey Department of Agriculture; Sasha Lisowski, Veterinarian, New Jersey Department of Agriculture; Kristofer Smith, Veterinarian, New Jersey Department of Agriculture.

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chickens, poultry health, or fascinating poultry facts, our experts are here to help. No question is too big or small – let's talk poultry!

- *This session is appropriate for all grade levels.*

2D - BEEKEEPING: The Buzz with Bees: Native and Managed Pollinators

By: Mike Haberland, Associate Professor/County Agent II. Rutgers Cooperative Extension.

- This session will look at the various pollinators. Most importantly bees are vital to a healthy environment, and we're excited to present this event to our community, especially as people start to plan for spring. We'll also look at some of the plants that pollinators need to survive and how you can help by planting habitat. Adding native plants in your garden will increase the number of pollinators in your yard and you will enjoy attractive flowers throughout the season at the same time.
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your knowledge into practice by assembling animal skeletons to explore anatomy, history, and human connections!

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2G – RABBIT, CAVY, & SMALL ANIMAL: Showmanship

By: Denise Ancharski Stutler, 4-H leader and youth ARBA coach.

- Learn the basics to rabbit, cavy, and small animal showmanship so you are prepared to complete showmanship at county and state level shows!
- *This session is appropriate for 4th grade and up*

Session #3 (12:45 - 1:45pm)

3A - EQUINE: Barn Management Jeopardy

By: Dr. Carey Williams, Bryce Bitsie and Lexie Birch, Rutgers University. (Red Barn – right side, Treadmill side)

- Come test your knowledge on what you learned in the morning sessions with this highly interactive and competitive game. Prizes will be awarded!!
- *This session is appropriate for all grade levels.*

3B - SMALL RUMINANT (Sheep & Goat): Managing Parasites in Sheep and Goats

By: Dr. Jon Higgins, Veterinarian, Acorn Farmvets.

- In this session, you will learn from one of New Jersey's most successful farm animal veterinarians (and former 4-H member!). Dr. Higgins will cover the ever-important topic of parasite management in sheep and goats – including major internal and external parasites, how you know if they are a problem, and how to limit their impact.

3C - LARGE RUMINANT (Dairy): Dairy Cattle Judging

By: Daniel Persichili, New Jersey 4-H Alumni.

- Ever wonder what goes through a judge's mind when they're placing animals at your fair? Join us for an exciting session where we'll uncover all the secrets of dairy cattle judging! You'll learn the essential tips and tricks, discover the dos and don'ts, and dive into the Dairy Cow Unified Score Card to master the art of judging. Whether you're a beginner or looking to sharpen your skills, this is your chance to unlock the mysteries of the ring!
- *This session is appropriate for all grade levels.*

3D- BEEKEEPING: Products from the Hive

By: Alayne Torretta, Professor/ County Agent I. Rutgers Cooperative Extension.

- Learn how to render beeswax to make a variety of products. In this workshop, we'll be making lip balm after rendering wax. Participants can keep their lip balm!
- *This session is appropriate for all grade levels.*

3E – CANINE: Dogs by Design

By: Kelly Dziak, Morris County 4-H Agent and Dr. Sharon Toth, Hunterdon County 4-H Agent

- From Chihuahua to Great Dane, every dog breed started as a wolf. In this workshop, explore hundreds of dog breeds recognized around the world, learn about their unique qualities, and discover some rare breeds that may surprise you.
- Youth will learn about the AKC breed groups and traits to understand how people directly changed dogs to meet their needs/interests. Youth will design a new dog breed to meet a specific and current need.
- *This session is appropriate for all ages.*

3F – ANIMAL WELFARE

By: Dr. Kristofer Smith, VMD, Diplomate ACAW

- The topic of animal welfare has gained significant attention due to growing awareness of the ethical, environmental, and societal implications of how we treat animals. But what exactly is animal welfare? This session will teach about how to use Animal Welfare in practice for both domestic and wild animals.
- *This session is appropriate for 4th grade and up*

3G - CAVY: All About Guinea Pigs

By: Christy Gotwols, Cape May County 4-H Leader and Cavy handler.

- Join this session to learn all about cavy (guinea pigs). Learn what goes into caring for a guinea pig; their health, diet, grooming, and housing.
- *This session is appropriate for all grade levels.*

Session #4 (2:00 - 3:00pm)

4A - EQUINE: Finding a Career in the Horse Industry

By Dr. Karyn Malinowski, Rutgers University, Equine Science Center Director, Equine Extension Specialist. (Red Barn – right side, Treadmill side)

- The talk will provide an overview of types of careers that exist in the equine industry and also tips on positioning oneself in a positive manner to ensure securing a position.
- *This session is appropriate for all grade levels.*

4B - LARGE RUMINANT (Dairy Cattle): Dairy Cattle Fitting

By: Daniel Persichili, New Jersey 4-H Alumni.

- Ready to master the art of fitting a dairy animal? In this hands-on session, you'll discover everything you need to know to make your dairy animal shine! From prep work to perfecting the topline, we'll show you the best techniques and tools to use to get that flawless look. Whether you're clipping for the first time or want to refine your skills, this session will have you feeling like a pro in no time!
- *This session is appropriate for all grade levels.*

4C – CANINE: Canine Communication

By: Kelly Dziak, Morris County 4-H Agent and Dr. Sharon Toth, Hunterdon County 4-H Agent

- Can you speak “dog”? And can a dog speak “human”? This workshop will explore the many ways dogs communicate their feelings and how they've evolved to speak directly to us. Participants will identify common dog communication signals, learn what they mean, and put this knowledge to work training a puppy. Youth will learn basic dog communication behaviors (i.e. body language, sounds) and what they mean. Youth will identify the appropriate emotion a dog is experiencing through pictures. Youth will practice how to safely approach and handle a dog as well as basic training techniques using positive reinforcement.
- *This session is appropriate for all ages.*

4D – RABBIT, CAVY, & SMALL ANIMAL: Genetics

By: Rosemary 'Bunnie' Turley, ARBA judge and breeder

- Participate in an interactive session about genetics to help you prepare your show line!
- *This session is appropriate for 4th grade and up.*

4E - 4-H ANIMAL SCIENCE VIDEO CONTEST/FILM FESTIVAL

- Youth may work individually or as a team to create educational videos about sheep, goats, horses, poultry, rabbits, dairy/beef cattle, swine, or ANY animal project to enter in the 4-H Animal Science Video Contest. A selection of videos will be shared at the film festival during the final session of the Junior Animal Science Symposium. Videos due March 3. For more information go to <https://nj4h.rutgers.edu/animals/film-festival/>