

Dear Friends,

As we celebrate 75 years at Rock Springs Ranch, the future of Kansas 4-H Camp is bright. We invite Kansas 4-H families like you to join us in celebrating this success and to learn about the steps we are taking to ensure another 75 years of youth-focused growth, enrichment and pure, simple fun. We are working to create a lasting model and want to assure you that every decision we make will bring us closer to our mission:

Rock Springs Ranch, the Kansas 4-H Camp & Conference Center, will be a catalyst for our state, committed to the betterment of all Kansans.

Starting with our children.

Why are we making changes?

Kids are busy! There is more vying for their attention and grabbing their time than ever before, and making sure camp is an option for your family is important to us. Creating life-changing summer camp experiences that are exciting, educational, and safe is rewarding and complex. While camp looks like fun on the outside — and it is — developing programming, recruiting campers, hiring and training staff and managing the ins and outs of camp is a full time job that requires great care.

The enhancements we are making at Rock Springs Ranch are specifically designed to meet the current and future needs of Kansas youth. K-State Research and Extension, the Kansas 4-H Foundation and Rock Springs Ranch leadership teams are working together to ensure the legacy of Kansas 4-H Camp will endure tomorrow and for years to come.

How are we doing this?

Operating a safe, stable and successful overnight camp program requires a specialized team of camping professionals versed in positive youth development, a well-defined and carefully crafted plan and a population that cares deeply about it. Best of all, our current Kansas 4-H Camp provides the strong foundation that this effort will build upon.

The plan we are implementing — based on a 4-year master planning effort with 4-H stakeholders across the state — will allow us to expand programming, make major facilities and safety updates and broaden the experience to include 4-H youth aged 8-18. Working together, we can do this.



We are preserving the beauty and magic of camp for years to come.

With these meaningful and purposeful improvements, we will ensure that children, teens and young adult staff can experience the joy, freedom and challenges of a first-class camp program — ultimately empowering the youth of Kansas to meet the demands of the 21st Century. We take this process very seriously and will always do what's best for Kansas 4-H youth. Every decision is being made with our campers at heart.

Camp is all about people, relationships and memories made under a million stars. All of us at K-State Research and Extension, the Kansas 4-H Foundation and Rock Springs Ranch are 100% committed to making Kansas 4-H Camp the best it can be for all and forever!

If you have any questions we invite you to contact any of us directly.

Sincerely,

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CALLING ALL ADVENTURERS CLIMBERS FLIPPERS & BUG CATCHERS!

Kansas 4-H Camp at Rock Springs Ranch Is Getting Better and Better!

We are so excited about the newly enhanced and expanded Kansas 4-H Camp program at Rock Springs Ranch. Our goal is to build on the positive youth development of 4-H and incorporate our Centers of Excellence in Leadership, Conservation and Sportsmanship to create a truly formative experience for Kansas youth set in the beautiful tallgrass prairie of the Flint Hills.

What's New?



Year-round Summer Camp Team

A new Camp Director will lead a team of program specialists and counselors under the supervision of the Rock Springs Ranch Executive Director. This increase in staff will improve all facets of camp by accelerating our programming, streamlining operations and implementing safety protocols.



4-H Open Attendance Dates

Open attendance dates will increase flexibility for campers who might not be able to attend the same session as their local Extension Unit or Camp Group. An open attendance option helps families fit Kansas 4-H Camp into their busy summer schedules. But don't worry — all 4-H Clubs or Extension Camp Groups may still coordinate signing up for the same camp session by working with their local Agents if they want to attend camp together.



Open Invitation to All Kansas Youth

For the first time, we have the opportunity to introduce more young Kansans to the guiding principles of 4-H and its Mission of Civic Engagement, Leadership, Healthy Living, Science (STEM) and Agriculture. We are eager to share the Kansas 4-H experience as well as invite these new campers into their local 4-H groups when they return home.



Greater Opportunities For 4-H Teens

Our teen campers will have new opportunities to participate in 4-H Teen Camp, Leader-in-Training and Counselor-in-Training programs. These programs teach community building, spark initiative and enhance college applications — all in the camp setting surrounded by fun, adventure and friends!



New Online Registration System

Our new system from CampInTouch will streamline communications, allow direct registration, keep parents updated and ensure accurate health records.



Rock Springs Ranch is proud to be accredited by the American Camp Association.

Exclusive Priority Enrollment for Kansas 4-H Members!

Beginning September 1, all Kansas 4-H members ages 8-18 are eligible to enroll for Camp 2022. Sign up before October 31 and receive a **10% discount** on the session of your choice!

Sign up at rockspringsranch4hcamp.org



“A Whole New Way To Experience Camp!”



We still have our beloved horses, lots of swimming, paddling, exploring and climbing at Rock Springs Ranch. We've added programs and activities, two choices of camp sessions, our Leadership Adventure Course and a new Health Center.



Extended Camp Sessions

We want our campers to take advantage of all that Kansas 4-H has to offer, so we now have two camp attendance options.

Traditional 4 Day/3 Night Sessions – This is the perfect way for young campers to experience time away from home and still be immersed in Kansas 4-H programming. Our 4-day camp is jam packed with the many activities that make time at Rock Springs Ranch so magical and fun!

All New 7 Day/6 Night Sessions – This option expands Kansas 4-H Camp to a full week! These sessions allow our campers to repeat their favorite activities, cement new friendships and truly experience the positive youth development of 4-H.



Transportation

Kansas is BIG and we know that some of our campers drive for several hours to get to Rock Springs Ranch. Our new camp transportation plan will accommodate scheduled camp sessions as well as campers who attend outside their club dates. Rock Springs Ranch and Extension Agents will coordinate transportation based on regional hubs and transportation fees will be included in the price of camp.

The improvements coming to camp at Rock Springs Ranch will continue the vision that began with the purchase of 348 acres of land in 1946. The dedication and determination of the first 4-H County campers, who paid off the note for that land shortly after, will endure as we move into our next 75 years and beyond.

YOU ARE A PART OF THIS PLACE. LIKE THE KIDS BEFORE YOU AND THE KIDS TO COME.



We have created this FAQ to answer your questions about the changes and enhancements coming to Kansas 4-H Camp at Rock Springs Ranch.

1. What is the relationship between Rock Springs Ranch and Kansas 4-H?

Rock Springs Ranch is owned and operated by the Kansas 4-H Foundation and is responsible for hosting and operating Kansas 4-H Camp.

Rock Springs Ranch leadership works closely with Kansas 4-H youth development staff to ensure camp programming aligns with the latest in positive youth development. During 4-H camp, Rock Springs Ranch is responsible for everything from programming, dining, health center, facilities maintenance, camper recruitment and retention, communications and risk management to insurance, marketing and social media.

2. What is the role of 4-H at RSR?

We wouldn't be who we are without 4-H. Rock Springs Ranch was established to extend the 4-H experience to camp and give campers the chance to learn in a unique and beautiful environment, outside of the traditional classroom. The values of 4-H influence all of our activities and programming and we will continue to place 4-H at the heart of everything we do, now and for the future.

3. What does 4-H Open Attendance mean? Will my club no longer have specific camp sessions?

They will! From Sept. 1 through Oct. 31, 2021, 4-H youth and their families can choose any camp session for which they are eligible. During this exclusive early opportunity, members will also receive a 10% discount on their registration fee. Open Attendance will increase flexibility for campers who might not be able to attend the same session as their local Extension Unit or Camp Group. This option helps families fit Kansas 4-H Camp into their busy summer schedules. But don't worry — all 4-H Clubs or Extension Camp Groups may still coordinate signing up for the same camp session by working with their local Agents if they want to attend camp together.

4. What does Open Enrollment mean?

This means 4-H campers can bring their friends! Kansas 4-H Camp is a great opportunity to introduce more young Kansans to 4-H programming and we hope that leads to seeking out their local 4-H club when they return home. Our invitation to non-4-H members will allow all Kansas kids to experience the benefits of camp, which can be life changing. A study from the American Camp Association reports that kids return home from camp more confident, independent, compassionate and resilient.

5. Will bus transportation to camp still be available?

Campers will be coming from all corners of the state to Kansas 4-H Camp! Rock Springs Ranch will work with local Extension Agents to organize group transportation to and from camp based on regional hubs. We look forward to seeing campers roll into camp with their newest friends! Transportation fees are included in the price of camp.

6. Is 4-H Camp getting more expensive?

Our goal is for everyone who wants to attend Kansas 4-H Camp to do so! But in order to make programming, facilities and staffing improvements, we will need to raise camp prices. However, at the subsidized camp rate with a 4-H discount, the all-inclusive cost will be just a few dollars more per day than the current rates charged by camp groups.

We know how transformational a camp experience can be and in our efforts to continue to make camp affordable, we will offer a tiered-pricing program that allows all 4-H youth the chance to attend.

Rock Springs Ranch was built because of generous philanthropists. To continue that tradition, the Kansas 4-H Foundation is also launching a statewide campership (scholarship) program that will work in concert with local campership funding to provide access to those families who need additional subsidies. During the registration process, families will be asked if they need confidential assistance to pay for camp. If checked, then campers will be eligible for local and statewide camperships.

7. Will my county Extension Agent still be at camp with my child?

K-State Research and Extension Agents are ALWAYS welcome to attend 4-H camp at Rock Springs Ranch. As 4-H positive youth development agents, these professionals are a powerful force in the 4-H camp world. If you, your club or local extension unit decides to sign up together for the session and your extension agent would like to be at camp at the same time, they can sign up to serve as support staff for that session.

8. What age ranges of children can attend camp?

We believe that all kids deserve to have a fulfilling camp experience. Kansas youth ages 8-18 can attend camp at Rock Springs Ranch. Every camper will have opportunities to experience developmentally appropriate activities along with all the fun and adventure that happens in the great outdoors. Camp teaches our teens to live in the now, to treasure a non-screen experience and build their relationship and leadership skills.

9. My teen was looking forward to being a counselor at RSR. How is this opportunity changing?

Our traditional teen counselors have been vital to the Kansas 4-H Camp experience. However, the legal mandate of care means that it's no longer appropriate for minors ages 14-17 to supervise other children in a camp setting twenty-four hours a day. But we are NOT excluding them from camp. We're just simply reframing the teen experience to provide even more options for these youth to have their own unique camp experience.

10. What opportunities are available for my teen?

Based on age, teen campers will have opportunities to participate in 4-H Teen Camp, Leader-in-Training or Counselor-in-Training programs. These programs teach community building, spark initiative and enhance college applications. Our hope is that one day these young people will return as future counselors or join our permanent staff.

11. What is Rock Springs Ranch doing to ensure health safety for my camper?

Our newly updated Health Center will be staffed by medical professionals and open 24/7, serving camper's mental and physical health needs. Our nurses and your child's counselors will ensure your camper is receiving the best care at all times. They'll be there for the bumps, bruises, stings and even a few tears.

12. How do I enroll for Camp in 2022?

Visit rockspringsranch4Hcamp.org to access our new online registration system. This new system from CampInTouch will streamline communications, allow direct registration, keep parents updated and maintain health records.

This new camp model meets, and in some areas, exceeds current camp sector best practices established by the American Camp Association. The ACA stamp is what parents seek out as it ensures we have met the most stringent standards in the camp industry. For many, it is the trusted indicator of a safe, well-run program.

We hope this answers your questions about what's happening with Kansas 4-H Camp at Rock Springs Ranch. The goal of the Kansas State Research and Extension, 4-H Foundation and Rock Springs Ranch leadership is to remain firmly grounded in the values of 4-H as an essential component in the plan to develop Kansas youth into future community leaders.