

Daily Union Article
Saturday, June 24
Gearing Up for the Geary County Free Fair

You might think it's a bit soon to be writing about the Geary County Free Fair, but the reality is it's only four weeks away. If you are interested in entering something in the open class part of the fair, planning begins now!

There are eight different areas residents of Geary County and surrounding counties can submit entries to the fair. There is our annual special baking contest for those who like to spend time in the kitchen.

In all areas of the Open Class fair, there is no age limit. Youth ages 4-15 will be entered in a youth division and those 16 and older will fall in the adult division. Younger tots can get a participation ribbon for bringing their work for display, as well.

Read through the brief descriptions for each of these event areas to see if any of them connect with your interests:

Open Class Food Preparation: Whether you like the traditional style recipes or enjoy exploring new and unique ones, this area is for you! You can mix up homemade cookies, breads, pie or cake to enter in this event. There are even divisions for candy and snacks. For food safety reasons, foods with custard and cream cheese-type fillings and frostings will not be accepted, along with a few other restrictions.

Open Class Food Preservation: Do you enjoy preserving the abundance from your garden or fruit trees? Do you shop the farmer's market and buy fruits and vegetables in bulk? This event is for food preservation exhibits of all kinds. Jellies, jams, or other types of fruit spreads.

Special Baking Contest: This year the old-fashioned homemade oatmeal cookie will be the center of attention during the baking contest. Participants need to prepare, bake, and enter six oatmeal cookies of uniform shape and size. Commercial mixes and no-bake cookies are not allowed, but there are a lot of variations to this classic cookie.

Open Class Textiles: This is a county fair favorite for the public. Textiles includes a wide and diverse selection of divisions. Whether you knit, crochet, quilt, weave, or sew clothing, you can find a place for your textile project to be displayed.

Open Class Arts and Crafts: With the current trends in repurposing, recycling, envisioning, and creating the sky's the limit with what you can enter in the Arts and Crafts department. If you like to draw, paint, sculpt, shape, mold, make jewelry, carve wood or any other manner of art or craft, this is the department for you!

Open Class Photography: Color or Black and White, your photographs capture a snapshot into your life, recreation, travels, or people you know. Photos are to be no larger than 8x10" and no smaller than 7x9" and mounted on white or cream studio matte board. Each person can enter up to 3 photos in each of the 18 classes in the photography department.

Open Class Floriculture: Do you have an amazing flower bed that you have cultivated into a showcase in your yard? Perhaps you have some perennial flowers that give you pleasure year after year. Why not bring those to the Geary County Free Fair for others to view and appreciate? Check out the Open Class fair book to see how your foliage should be displayed and bring them freshly cut or in your favorite container.

Open Class Horticulture: What can be more tantalizing than seeing freshly picked vegetables and fruits? Fresh vegetables are judged for quality and condition of entries. Fruits need to be without blemishes and ripe for eating. Gardening is usually hot and dirty work, so let the fruits of your labor show at the fair this year!

Open Class Agriculture: Being married to a farmer myself, I know that it is hard to find time to prepare an entry for the fair. However, what better way to educate the non-farming public about what is grown in our area? Whether corn, grain sorghum soybeans, prairie hay, or any other of the 11 classes for crops – surely some of our ag producers in the area can share their harvest with us by showing what they have been growing!

I am proud to be involved in our Geary County Free Fair. This event offers a great family atmosphere, a lot of exhibits to check out, and opportunity to see our local 4-Hers show the projects that many have worked on for months to complete. Come enjoy the Geary County Free Fair with us July 24-27, 2017 at the 4-H/Senior Citizen's building at 1025 S. Spring Valley Road here in Junction City.

For more information call the Geary County K-State Research and Extension office at 238-4161 or stop by our office at 119 E. 9th Street in Junction City to pick up a fair book or Geary County Free Fair brochure. Until next time, keep living resourcefully!