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## Levy County 4-H day camp wraps up Livestock Week; *One week of day camps remains*



Levy County 4-H day campers enjoy learning about beef, from farm to fork, as they visit local cattle ranches during the week before Camp Cherry Lake. In this combination of photos, the children and others are seen at the Quincey Cattle Co. (top photo), Hardee Farms (bottom left photo - Chris Hardee) and Whitehurst Cattle Co. (where they all climbed in and were weighed). Levy County Extension Director Ed Jennings said he is pleased to see how local caring adults involved with agricultural interests have been very helpful as they assist Levy County 4-H to use a learn-by-doing approach to help summer camp participants to gain the knowledge and life skills they need to be productive, responsible members of their communities.

*Photo courtesy of UF/IFAS Levy County Extension Office*

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By Jeff M. Hardison © July 19, 2017 at 11:17 p.m.

**BRONSON** -- The series of Levy County 4-H day camps continued this week with Livestock Week wrapping up on Thursday, July 20.

During the session Wednesday (July 19), the campers started their day with breakfast at 8:30 a.m., and they enjoyed lunch as they have every day of the various day camps this summer.



**4-H Campers wear lab coats and hardhats while on a visit to the UF/IFAS Meat Processing Center in Gainesville during a field trip. The children look**

**like an adorable set of student agricultural scientists, escorted by adult counselors and agricultural educators.**

*Photo courtesy of UF/IFAS Levy County Extension Office*



**A camper points to beef hanging at the UF/IFAS Meat Processing Center in Gainesville during a field trip that was part of one of the Levy County 4-H day camps. The children learned about beef from being raised on a ranch through the point of being sold at stores like Winn-Dixie, Save-A-Lot, Publix and Walmart where families buy food to cook at home.**

*Photo courtesy of UF/IFAS Levy County Extension Office*

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Each day camp has gone from Monday through Thursday. Programs conclude each day at 4 p.m.

All of the camps for the rest of this summer are booked. The fee this year was \$35 a week. That covered two meals a day, and a level of fun and educational experiences that goes off the chart in value.

Parents may want to plan for next summer's 4-H day camps.

The previous week to this week's day camp, was Camp Cherry Lake for Levy County 4-H. This is a sleep-over or residential type of camp.

"Camp Cherry Lake was super fun," Levy County 4-H Agent Genevieve Mendoza said.

Participants who went to Camp Cherry Lake have expressed their agreement with the 4-H agent's assessment of that week.

Next week, there are two sets of Levy County 4-H day camps. One set of campers will learn about peanut farming. In the peanut farming day camp, campers will learn about peanuts from the point where the peanuts are at the farm up until they reach the point where people eat them (farm-to-fork).

From next Monday through Thursday, the other day camp will be for marine science.

The marine science group potentially could go to Shired Island in Dixie County, or they may have an opportunity to visit Seahorse Key in the Gulf of Mexico off of the coast of Cedar Key, Levy County 4-H Agent Mendoza said.

The campers who are going to be young student marine scientists definitely will be visiting Cedar Key to learn about clams, oysters and more.

Meanwhile back at the UF/IFAS Levy County Extension campus in Bronson on Wednesday, the lessons of the day were dairy calf oriented.

Twenty-eight campers participated Wednesday with five counselors and a number of other support staff and volunteers.



**Campers take turns walking a calf to demonstrate they have learned the method to show a dairy animal.**

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**Reagan Hancock, a Levy County 4-H day camp participant, leads a calf as she practices the method to show the animal.**



**Assisting the young Miss Hancock at the rear of the calf is Archer Trailblazers 4-H Club President Ava Standridge, 17. Kim Massagee the organizational leader of Archer Trailblazers 4-H Club donated calves for use by Levy County 4-H for this dairy calf aspect of lessons during**

**Livestock Week. This camper appears to have mastered calf showing.**

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**Archer Trailblazers 4-H Club President Ava Standridge demonstrates the proper method to brush a calf in preparation for showing it. Standridge volunteered to help teach campers at the Levy County 4-H day camp program. This part of the program on Wednesday is in an area also used for 4-H rifle and shotgun exercises, although the area is clear of any weapons or ammunition during this week of camp.**

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Four of the lessons Wednesday were hands-on lessons to learn how to show a dairy calf. Another experience for the campers involved methods to prepare a calf for show.

In the afternoon, they were indoors and learned how to make homemade butter from cream. Then they learned how to make homemade ice cream.

Campers who made their own butter and their own ice cream on Wednesday appeared to enjoy the activity very much. And they enjoyed dining on the products they made with their own hands.

This week started with Monday's theme being about poultry. Levy County 4-H Agent Mendoza said campers on Monday (July 17) enjoyed learning about the many different breeds of chickens, both for show and for commercial uses.

Levy County Extension Director Jennings said there were some animals of a poultry persuasion on the premises on Wednesday too.

Both Jennings and Mendoza expressed their happiness at seeing campers having a lot of fun and learning at all of the 4-H day camps this summer.

On Tuesday, the 4-H campers sojourned over to the UF/IFAS Swine Unit in Gainesville.

They learned about swine production versus show pigs. They visited the farrowing barn, which is a space designed for sows and piglets during farrowing. Farrowing is the production of a litter of pigs.

They saw older pigs as well at the university's facility in Gainesville.

Some of the campers had not seen or been close enough to touch chickens, pigs and calves before their experiences at this most recent Livestock Week series of events.

"The agricultural community has been very supportive of our 4-H day camp program," Extension Director Jennings said. "Next week, the children will be visiting peanut farms. They have visited watermelon farms."

Cattle ranchers at the Quincey Cattle Co., and the Hardee (Chris Hardee) and Whitehurst ranches helped the children to learn about raising beef at those sites a couple of weeks ago, Jennings said.

On Thursday (July 20), the Levy County 4-H campers are scheduled to see beef cattle and to learn from Baylee Etheridge and Colby Etheridge as those young people bring their show animals.

Levy County 4-H Agent Mendoza said so far this summer she is seeing the positive results she had hoped and anticipated would come to fruition when she accepted the position to lead Levy County 4-H.

In the Levy County 4-H day camp this summer, she said, it has been educational for the campers. They have enjoyed days that were filled with interactive learning opportunities.

Mendoza said she is especially pleased where the hands-on learning experiences highlighted the agricultural industry in Levy County.

One hope Mendoza has for all of the participants this summer is that when they get older, they can look back with fond memories of the experiences they had at the various summer day camps where they participated with others at Levy County 4-H.

Mendoza, as well as the many counselors and other support staff, are bound to have pleasant memories from this summer too.

Children in all age groups in these summer camps have learned about food and nutrition as well.

The 4-H Cloverbuds of Levy County, though, are separate because they are the

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youngest. The Florida 4-H programs offered to children ages 5 to 7 years old are a component of the Florida 4-H Youth Development Program. Their camp was at a different time from the older campers.

The 4-H Cloverbud program has a goal of offering age appropriate, fun and exploratory learning experiences for children in the 5 to 7 age group. This summer, the Cloverbuds had a week of their own day camp.

Among the many things the Cloverbuds learned about during their week of fun adventures was the difference in the taste between fresh green beans that are uncooked, in comparison with those that had been cooked, Mendoza said.

During another part of the gardening and nutrition program for Cloverbuds this summer, Mendoza said she enjoyed hearing one child say “I never knew that I liked broccoli.”

Counting Camp Cherry Lake, there will have been 10 different Levy County 4-H camps by the conclusion of the seven weeks of summer.

The program wraps up after next week’s set of two day camp offerings.

Here is a brief listing of the camp names in chronological order:

## **Week 1**

Fishing FUNdamentals

-or-

4-H Grows Here

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## **Week 2**

Call of the Wild: Exploring the Outdoors

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## **Week 3**

Marine Science Explorations

-or-

Farm to Fork – Beef

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## **Week 4**

4-H Cloverbud Camp (5-7 year olds)

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## **Week 5**

Camp Cherry Lake – Overnight Camp

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## **Week 6**

Livestock Week

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**Week 7** (July 24-27) - filled

Farm to Fork – Peanuts

-or-

Marine Science Explorations