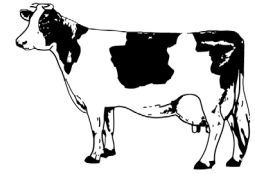




# Alternatives to Live Lactating Dairy Cow Activities at 4-H & Youth Dairy-Related Shows & Events



MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY | Extension

On May 1, 2024, officials with the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (MDARD) announced that “all lactating dairy cattle, and those in the last two months of pregnancy, are prohibited from being exhibited until there are no new cases of HPAI [highly pathogenic avian influenza] in dairy cattle” in Michigan for at least 60 days. The order continued, “No dairy cattle of any age from an infected premises may be exhibited until further notice” (MDARD, 2024). This decision affects dairy shows at county and regional fairs and other local events within the 60-day window.

Michigan State University (MSU) Extension has identified opportunities for 4-H’ers with dairy-related projects to showcase their work if this order affects their fair. The alternatives to dairy shows and other activities that are described in this resource sheet can offer 4-H’ers with dairy cattle projects valuable learning experiences.

## Lactating Cow Breed & Showmanship Classes

### Virtual Showcases

Fairs may choose to host virtual showcases for exhibitors with lactating dairy cows and cows in the last two months of their pregnancy. MSU Extension and Michigan 4-H have contracted with the FairEntry virtual platform, which is available to all counties, along with support and related resources provided by MSU Extension, for a reduced fee. However, counties are free to decide which platform they will use.

In virtual showcases, youth submit photos or videos of their projects to be showcased online.

For more information about virtual showcases, visit these MSU Extension webpages:

- » **Virtual Learning Showcase—Dairy Classes and Tips** ([www.canr.msu.edu/resources/virtual-learning-showcase-dairy-classes-and-tips](http://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/virtual-learning-showcase-dairy-classes-and-tips)) —Offers information about class options and how to collect photos and images for virtual showcases.
- » **Virtual Learning Showcase and Auctions: Fair Managers and Staff** ([www.canr.msu.edu/virtual-showcase/fair-managers-staff](http://www.canr.msu.edu/virtual-showcase/fair-managers-staff))—Offers information on how to organize virtual showcases.
- » **Virtual Learning Showcase and Auctions: Youth Members** (<https://www.canr.msu.edu/virtual-showcase/Youth-Members/>)—Links to resources for young people covering various aspects of preparing for and exhibiting at a virtual showcase.

### Interview Judging

In interview judging contests, young people:

- » Demonstrate their knowledge of the breed characteristics of their animals.
- » Answer dairy management and dairy industry questions.
- » Answer questions about the life skills they have developed through their projects.
- » Discuss biosecurity protocols with a judge.

Judges use the Danish rating system (with A, B, and C awards) to evaluate the entrants’ knowledge and skill.

Visit Project Evaluation Questions—Non-Livestock ([www.canr.msu.edu/resources/project-evaluation-questions-non-livestock](http://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/project-evaluation-questions-non-livestock)) for sample life skill-related questions.

**Note:** Participants should bring a photo of their animal to the interview to help with breed evaluation.

## Still or Static Exhibits

Still or static exhibits allow young people to showcase their skills outside of the show ring. Many fairs already include such classes. Fairs are encouraged to display the dairy-related exhibits in the dairy barn, when appropriate, to showcase the adaptability of 4-H'ers.

Descriptions of three still exhibits that fairs could offer follow.

### **Photography**

Exhibitors submit their photos on dairy-related topics for display. Rules for one cattle photography contest can be found on pages 6 and 7 of the *2024 Maine/Chi National Junior Heifer Show Official Rulebook* ([https://docs.google.com/document/d/19HEA3Fud6\\_LaGqPCjwO3T4ZBx8iNd93hbX9MCDcafl8/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/19HEA3Fud6_LaGqPCjwO3T4ZBx8iNd93hbX9MCDcafl8/edit)).

### **Poster Design**

Young people create educational posters on dairy-related topics. The posters are judged on organization, content, neatness, and overall quality. After judging, the posters can be displayed in the dairy barn.

### **Graphic Design**

Young people create graphic designs that promote some aspect of the dairy industry, a dairy breed, or a specific dairy herd. Entries are evaluated on their purpose and message, ability to attract attention, creativity and originality, design and use of space, and overall effect.

Rules and a scoresheet for a graphic design contest can be found in the American International Charolais Association's "2024 Junior National Contest Rules" (<https://charolaisusa.com/jr-national-contest-rules.php>).

## Other Contests

### **Salesmanship**

Individuals or two-person teams are given real-life dairy cattle sales scenarios that they must prepare and deliver a 5- to 8-minute sales pitch about. Sample rules can be found

in the National Junior Angus Association Sales Competition at [https://www.angus.org/njaa/contests/team\\_sales\\_rules.pdf](https://www.angus.org/njaa/contests/team_sales_rules.pdf).

### **Scenario Presentation**

Two- to four-person teams are given a dairy-related scenario that they must then prepare and deliver a presentation about. After the presentation, team members answer questions from a panel of judges. The judges evaluate the presentation's accuracy, the ideas presented in it, and how well it addressed the scenario, as well as the team members' answers to the judges' questions and overall effectiveness. The rules for one scenario contest are at <https://www.canr.msu.edu/resources/dairy-scenario-contest>.

### **Quiz Bowls**

Three- or four-person teams compete to show they know more about the dairy industry than any other team. Teams can be self-identified or formed based on the results of a written test.

Visit "How to Get Started in 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl" (<http://extension.msstate.edu/publications/publications/how-get-started-4-h-dairy-quiz-bowl>) for information on organizing and participating in the contest.

County MSU Extension offices may have quiz bowl buzzers that are available for your use. Additional quiz bowl resources can be found at:

- » 2024 Maine/Chi National Junior Heifer Show Official Rulebook ([https://docs.google.com/document/d/19HEA3Fud6\\_LaGqPCjwO3T4ZBx8iNd93hbX9MCDcafl8/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/19HEA3Fud6_LaGqPCjwO3T4ZBx8iNd93hbX9MCDcafl8/edit))—Quiz bowl rules appear on pages 9 and 10.
- » 2024 Virginia 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl Materials ([https://www.youth.dasc.vt.edu/content/dam/youth\\_dasc\\_vt\\_edu/quiz-bowl/2024VADQBmaterials.pdf](https://www.youth.dasc.vt.edu/content/dam/youth_dasc_vt_edu/quiz-bowl/2024VADQBmaterials.pdf))—This reference is the source that questions for the Virginia 4-H dairy quiz bowl questions are drawn from.
- » Wisconsin 4-H State Dairy Bowl Source Material (<https://4h.extension.wisc.edu/files/2024/02/4-H-State-Dairy-Bowl-Source-Material.website.pdf>)—Links to

the reference materials that questions for the Wisconsin 4-H dairy quiz bowl are drawn from.

- » 4-H Dairy Youth Quizbowl Study Questions (<https://dairy.ces.ncsu.edu/dairy-youth-programs/quizbowl/dairy-quizbowl-study-questions/>)—This page links to the dairy quiz bowl questions used in North Carolina 4-H from 2000 to 2019 and later.

### ***Skill-a-thons***

Participating in a dairy skill-a-thon helps young people demonstrate their relevant, hands-on skills. For information on setting up and participating in a skill-a-thon, visit:

- » **2024 Michigan 4-H Animal Science Skillathon State Championship** ([www.canr.msu.edu/otsego/uploads/files/2024%20Skillathon%20-%20Rules%20and%20Regulations.pdf](http://www.canr.msu.edu/otsego/uploads/files/2024%20Skillathon%20-%20Rules%20and%20Regulations.pdf)).
- » **Otsego County 4-H Skillathon Study Guide** ([www.canr.msu.edu/otsego/4-h/skillathon-study-guide](http://www.canr.msu.edu/otsego/4-h/skillathon-study-guide))

\*Please clean and disinfect any tools and equipment before you bring it to the fair and again after you take it from the fair.

### **References**

Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. (2024). *Determination of extraordinary emergency HPAI risk reduction and response, May 1, 2024.* (<https://bit.ly/3KbqYRP>)