

## 4-H and Youth



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# 4-H Dairy Youth Opportunities in Utah

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Utah has a long history of great agricultural practices. These traditions have been passed down from one generation to another, and many of the past and current Utah farmers have been taught basic principles in their youth through local 4-H programs. Involvement in 4-H provides opportunities to develop leadership and citizenship skills, enjoy “hands on” learning, and additional opportunities to interact with successful adults.

A great way to get started in 4-H is to visit your local County Extension Office ([www.extension.usu.edu](http://www.extension.usu.edu)) where you can learn more about enrollment opportunities. Once you have enrolled in 4-H in your county, you will be eligible to participate in a variety of activities which are interesting, educational, and fun. For information on county, regional, and state 4-H activities, contact your local 4-H office, or visit Utah 4-H at <http://utah4h.org/htm/featured-programs>.

One of the great projects for 4-H youth participation is the Dairy activities. These activities help develop a better understanding of cattle and the dairy industry. Your local 4-H leaders have youth guide books to help you develop and demonstrate your knowledge of dairy practices by participating in specific youth activities. These guide books will help you:

- Become a knowledgeable and responsible animal caregiver.
- Develop experience-based science skill sets that pertain to health and disease.
- Appreciate the variety of opportunities available in dairy careers.

- Recognize and practice the skills and abilities necessary for success in animal related careers.
- Practice the life skills of communication, evaluating data, decision making, planning, and organizing, character development and more.

The following list of activities will help youth enjoy and gain more from their 4-H Dairy Project. These activities are open to all, and you might look at alternative ways to start a dairy 4-H project in your community.

### Dairy Calf Contests

The Richmond Black & White Days Heifer Contest, formerly known as the KSL Calf Contest, was started in 1964 and awards as first prize a registered Holstein dairy heifer calf every year. The contest consists of a questionnaire about dairy cattle and the



dairy industry. The Extension Dairy Youth Specialist sends questionnaires out to interested dairy youth in April. Questionnaires must be completed and returned by an early May deadline. Finalists are then interviewed and awards are presented at the beginning of the Junior dairy show at Richmond Black and White Days. In addition to the first prize of a dairy heifer calf, other great prizes are given, such as scholarships, cash awards, and an expense paid trip to the World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wisconsin.

## Dairy Bowl Contests

The Dairy Bowl was created to help youth develop their knowledge of the dairy industry. In 1992, Utah hosted the National Holstein Convention, which gave birth to the first Utah Dairy Bowl teams. There are two teams, a junior team (ages 9-15) and a senior team (ages 16-21). Youth take a written test to qualify for a place on one of the two teams. The test is administered in July at the Jr. All-Utah Contest. Once the teams are created, practice tests are administered to team members in preparation for the Dairy Bowl contest, these begin in January and continue through March. The youth that participate in the practices and competition develop critical thinking, decision-making, and other communication skills that will help build their knowledge base. Participants will be tested on their knowledge of marketing, dairy nutrition, milk quality, herd health, breeding, and many other facets of the dairy industry.

The National Bowl is held each year at the National Holstein Convention during the last part of June. The Utah Holstein Association has provided some financial support, but the youth and their families raise the majority of the funding. Those interested in trying out for the dairy bowl team should contact the USU Extension Dairy Youth Specialist, or their local 4-H Extension Agent before the Jr. All-Utah contest. Information about National Dairy Bowl Contests, along with practice questions are available on the Holstein Foundation website at [www.holsteinfoundation.org](http://www.holsteinfoundation.org) under the youth programs tab.

## Cache County Heifer Program

Most counties in the state have a Junior Livestock Sale, where junior members sell their market steers, lambs, and/or hogs. Cache County has expanded that to include commercial dairy heifers. The process and objectives of raising commercial dairy heifers is very similar to that of market livestock. Participants must own, be in possession of, and raise all dairy heifers for a minimum of 120 days. Youth are expected to keep a set of financial records as outlined by the dairy committee and participate in various dairy activities throughout the year. The dairy heifers are exhibited at the county fair and sold through the junior sale according to their placing in the class.



A bonded buyer sets a floor price for each heifer and then businesses or individuals are invited to either boost that price or purchase the animals outright. All heifers are required to pass a blood test and have a health certificate and brand inspection. Only springer heifers have been sold in the Cache County sale. Interested youth have worked with local dairymen to purchase the heifers initially. The purpose of this effort is to strengthen the dairy youth program in the county by increased involvement of commercial dairymen as well as purebred breeders.

If you have any questions or need further information about this program please contact your local county 4-H representative.

## Dairy Judging Contests

One of the time-honored traditions of the state's 4-H program is the spring and summer dairy shows located throughout the state. These shows give 4-H members the opportunity to raise, judge, and get dairy cattle ready to show competitively.



Dairy judging contests are great activities to demonstrate the dairy skills you learned throughout your 4-H dairy project. Some of the skills you will incorporate into the judging contests will include decision making, communication, and leadership skills. These skills will help you identify and select quality dairy animals, practice and provide good management habits, and develop dairy fitting and showing skills.

Each year an elite four-member team is selected to attend the National 4-H Dairy Judging Contest held in Madison, WI as part of the Central National Show. To qualify youth must be registered high school students and qualify by participating in state judging contests. Team members are selected by receiving the highest average score of three judging contests. The judging contests and schedules are listed below and contain the Entry deadlines for each.

The first of these contests is at the All-Utah Show/Plain City Dairy Days, in Ogden, Utah. The second takes place at the Richmond Black & White Days in Richmond, Utah. The third and final contest is held in July at State 4-H Contests in Logan, Utah. Youth must participate in the State 4-H Contest in order to be eligible for the chance to participate as a member of this team. Youth scores from the top two contests are averaged and those with the highest score make the final cut for the team selected to represent the local 4-H program. If youth attend all

three contests, the lowest score is dropped. Younger 4-H members can practice at the All Utah Contest and the Richmond Contest.

## Jr. All-Utah Dairy Show and Activities

This event is held in Heber City sometime during the month of July and has been a tradition since 1985. The central activity is a show just for Dairy Youth. The night before the show, there is a purebred sale and youth meeting for the Jr. Holstein Association. Other activities include the dairy bowl quiz, clipping, animal nutrition, and other demonstrations. For this show, each exhibitor can show dairy animals that may or may not be owned by themselves. Only animals that are owned by Junior members are eligible for Junior All-Utah recognition, however.

## Success of 4-H Dairy Projects

The skills, opportunities, and experiences that are learned by participating in 4-H dairy projects not only apply to the projects, but these skills become lessons that will be used in your everyday living. The dairy projects will help you learn these important skills, by first doing, then reflecting, and then applying. The goal of this program is to help you develop life, leadership, management, and decision making skills, but overall build your knowledge and understanding of the dairy industry.

## Typical Calendar of Events

March	Begin Practice for Dairy Bowl Contest
Early April	Dairy Heifer Contest
Late April	County Dairy Demonstrations and Spring Dairy Show
Early May	Interviews for Dairy Heifer Contest Finalists
Mid May	All Utah Dairy Show and Judging Contest – Ogden
Mid May	Richmond Black and White Days – Show and Sale
June	National Dairy Bowl Contest
July	Junior All-Utah Dairy Show and Sale – Heber City
August	County Fairs
September	Utah State Fair
October	World Dairy Expo – Madison, WI

Specific questions please contact:

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### **Additional References:**

#### **4-H Youth Dairy Guides**

Dairy 1: Cowabunga  
4-H Skills for Life Animal Series, Dairy Youth  
Activity Guide

Dairy 2: Mooving Ahead  
4-H Skills for Life Animal Series, Dairy Youth  
Activity Guide

Dairy 3: Leading the Way:  
4-H Skills for Life Animal Series, Dairy Youth  
Activity Guide

Dairy Helpers Guide  
4-H Skills for Life Animal Series, Dairy Youth  
Activity Guide

**Holstein Foundation:**  
[www.holsteinfoundation.org](http://www.holsteinfoundation.org)

**Holstein Association**  
[Holsteinusa.com](http://Holsteinusa.com)

**National 4-H website**  
[www.n4hccs.org](http://www.n4hccs.org)

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