



Dairy Cattle Project



In the dairy cattle program, youth will acquire skills such as marketing, processing multiple products, consumption of productions, and distribution. Youth will discover possible career opportunities while raising their dairy cattle. Youth will gain practical skills to further grow their herds, such as animal husbandry, veterinary skills, animal handling, animal selection, market value, and more!

Inspire Kids to Do

Explore

"I might like to do this."

Youth who explore a variety of interests before high school, through experiences like 4-H camps and educational events, can develop early interest in a career path and improve their academic performance.

Learn

"I can do this."

4-H project-based learning, guided by adult volunteers, improves youth understanding of skills and concepts, as well as their ability to problem-solve and collaborate.

Practice

"I'm interested in this."

Youth who have participated in sustained hands-on learning and engaged with professional mentors and volunteers before entering high school are more likely to explore studies and potential career paths.

Experience

"I will be this."

Real-world application is key — 91% of Kansas 4-H members have a plan for reaching their goals. Youth that have been active participants in hands-on learning, combined with strong decision-making skills, are more able to effectively navigate life.

Starting Out Beginner

- Know the dairy breeds and traits.
- Identify the parts of your animal.
- Demonstrate multiple showing techniques.
- Research where to find answers to all your dairy questions.
- Learn to properly groom your animal.
- Learn proper feeding practices.

Learning More Intermediate

- Learn to evaluate your animal.
- Develop a feed plan.
- Learn about breeding and calving. Keep herd records.
- Learn to identify, treat, and prevent sickness.
- Understand uses, storage, and administration of medicine.
- Develop a plan for safe milking procedures.

Expanding Horizons Advanced

- Learn body condition scoring.
- Evaluate feed quality and how it affects digestion.
- Use records to make management decisions.
- Investigate signs and causes of mastitis.
- Understand animal welfare issues.
- Find a career path in dairy production.

Dairy Cattle Project

Expand Your Experiences!

Healthy Living

- Create a bio-security plan for taking animals to shows.
- Learn about food safety and how it relates to milk handling procedures.
- Study the quality and health benefits of cattle milk.
- Research lactose intolerance and why it affects some people.

Science and Agriculture

- Observe and assist with the delivery of a calf.
- Learn about dairy cattle genetics and breeding.
- Diagram an efficient farm layout (milking parlor, barn, waste pond, silage piles etc.).

Community Vitality

- Volunteer your dairy cow for teaching purposes at a community event.
- Mentor younger youth interested in showing dairy cattle.
- Participate in quiz bowl and other judging contests to further your knowledge.

Communication and the Arts

- Design a poster on dairy cattle breeds.
- Teach others about showmanship techniques.
- Invite others to see your herd and answer questions.

Career Development

- Tour a dairy cattle operation.
- Get an internship at a dairy farm.
- Attend a dairy conference.
- Start your own dairy herd.
- Market and sell animals to other 4-H members.
- Consider a degree in animal science, milling, agriculture education, or agriculture communication.
<https://www.ag.k-state.edu/>

Local Contact Information

Resources and Events

Participating in educational events and learning opportunities will expand your knowledge and skills in the project area. Contact your local K-State Research and Extension office for local opportunities. Take part in:

- [Kansas 4-H Dairy Cattle Project page](#)
- [K-State Dairy Cattle Judging Team](#)
- [National Dairy Herd Improvement Association](#)
- [K-State Junior Dairy Show](#)
- [Dairy Days](#)

Curriculum and Resources

Project materials to assist youth in learning may be available through your local extension office or you can order directly from the [4-H Mall](#).

National Dairy Cattle Curriculum:

- [Level 1: Cowabunga!](#)
- [Level 2: Mooving Ahead](#)
- [Level 3: Rising to the Top](#)

4-H Record Keeping

Learning to keep accurate records is a life skill. The following forms can help you:

- [Setting 4-H Project Goals \(4H1100\)](#)
- [Kansas 4-H Record Keeping](#)

Project Exhibit Ideas

- Create a poster on a dairy cattle related topic.
- Prepare an emergency medical kit for your barn.
- Prepare a show kit.
- Make a scrapbook of your animals.
- Educate other youth and the public about your animals and the many products that come from dairy cattle.
- Showcase proper handling and fitting techniques for other 4-H members.
- Make a rope halter.
- Make homemade ice cream, butter, or cheese.

