



## DAIRY CATTLE PROJECT AREA



*The dairy industry is one of the foundations of agriculture. There's more to it than just producing milk! The dairy industry is a sophisticated one, and there's a lot to learn.*

### Ideas for Project Area Learning

- Learn about dairy breeds.
- Select your animal.
- Identify parts of the animal.
- Learn to evaluate your animal.
- Feed your animal.
- Demonstrate multiple showing techniques.
- Groom your animal.
- Keep cost records.
- Research where to find answers to all your dairy questions.
- Learn showmanship techniques.
- Ramp up your judging skills.
- Make ethical decisions.
- Identify a sick animal, how to treat it, and future prevention.
- Understand medication—uses, storage, administering medication, and how it relates to food safety.
- Learn appropriate handling techniques and housing of dairy cattle.
- Evaluate feed quality and how it affects digestion.
- Find a career in dairy production.
- Learn body condition scoring.
- Debate animal welfare issues.
- Use records to make management decisions.
- Investigate the signs and causes of mastitis.
- Balance a dairy ration.
- Learn about breeding and reproduction techniques.
- Promote the dairy industry.

### APPLY WHAT YOU'VE LEARNED

#### Communication

- Design a poster on dairy breeds.
- Take part in a quiz bowl contest.
- Teach others about showmanship techniques.
- Give a speech on the importance of the dairy industry.

#### Civic Engagement

- Have your animal as part of a petting zoo sharing the importance of dairy.
- Be a part of a dairy promotional event.
- Lead tours of Dairy Farm Operations within your community.

#### Leadership

- Arrange for your class to tour a dairy farm.
- Be a mentor for a younger dairy cattle project area member.
- Organize a county grooming clinic.

#### Entrepreneurship

- Sell milk, butter, and cheese at your local farmers market.
- Create and sell feed troughs for cattle.
- Host a petting zoo of dairy calves.



## Goal Setting and Record Keeping

Goal setting is an ongoing process that guides your project area learning. Having goals is like having a road map to show you how to get you to where you want to go. Record keeping is also an ongoing process and another important life skill. In 4-H, you are encouraged to select from a variety of record keeping formats to meet your own personal needs and your preferred learning style. Keeping records of your learning experiences helps you determine how well you met your goals. Goal setting and record keeping improve your skills in organization, communication, planning, and evaluating.

## Iowa 4-H Event Opportunities

- Participate in **county and state fair** exhibit classes.
- Check with your local county 4-H youth development staff to see if there are special events or **workshops in your county** that you want to attend to learn more about your project areas.
- Iowa 4-H members in grades 9–12 can apply for **State Project Area Awards** at State Recognition Day. Applications are open December through January.
- Meet young people from around the state who have completed grades 8–12, and share your interests at the **Iowa 4-H Youth Conference** held at Iowa State University in late June.
- Apply for an in-depth hands-on learning experience on the Iowa State University campus during the three-day **Animal Science Roundup** late June. Youth in grades 8–12 are welcome to apply.

## Share Your Learning With an Exhibit

- Assemble an emergency or medical kit.
- Investigate the carcass merit of dairy steers.
- Design a poster on the many dairy breeds.
- Learn proper selection and how to judge your animal.
- Make a display on proper feed rations.
- Do a presentation on how artificial insemination and cloning has changed the dairy industry.
- Give a presentation on how to groom your animal.

## CAREER CONNECTIONS

- **Food science technicians** test food and food additives and help scientists with food research, development, and quality control.
- **Dairy farm managers** supervise all aspects of dairy production, including preparing feed, maintaining equipment, and managing the herd.
- **Livestock judges** evaluate animals at shows and teach exhibitors more about their animals through effective communication.
- **Agricultural education teachers** teach students about livestock production and get students involved in the community.

## EDUCATION CONNECTIONS

- Study **dairy science** if you are interested in animal health, management, and how lactation works in animals.
- Learn how to effectively run a farm, as well as how to use marketing, finance, operations, and production to excel with **farm management**.
- Students who study **veterinary medicine** learn more about biology and microbiology, with an emphasis on animal studies.
- Study **food and nutrition** if you are interested in maintaining health, preventing diseases, and improving nutrition.

Written Iowa 4-H Youth Development 2013. Revised in 2019 by Bonnie Dalager, 4-H Product Development Specialist, and Payton Sash, 4-H Student Office Assistant, Iowa State University Extension and Outreach.