

Wood County 4-H Dairy Project Guide



Helpful information for your Dairy Projects.

The contents of this guide are meant to be just that, a **guide and may be subject to change without notice. Be vigilant about referencing the Wood County Fair website for the most up to date information regarding the fair.

There are several dairy projects that you can enroll in as a 4-H member. Here is a brief summary of each project:

4-H #	Title	Description
127CA	Dairy Calf	Raise a young dairy animal less than six months of age for breeding or production purposes.
127HE	Dairy Yearling/Heifer	Raise a young dairy animal that has not given birth yet for breeding or production purposes.
127CO	Dairy Cow	Raise a cow for breeding or production purposes.

Project Literature

You will need the following project materials for your dairy project:

- **Dairy Resource Handbook** (\$24) - Designed to be used for all years of your dairy projects.
- **Dairy Cattle Project and Record Book** (\$12) - Obtain and keep for the resource information it contains. Note: do not use for your annual record keeping (with the exception of the first year).
- **Wood County Livestock Project Record Book** (free) - Download this document and use as your Record book for your project. You may also purchase one from the Extension Office for \$4. Obtain a new one each year. *You will need to bring this completed document to 4-H Project Interview Judging.

In Summary: obtain the first two books listed above and keep and use them for all years you are taking a Dairy Project. Each year, download a new Livestock Record book and use it to keep your annual project records.

**Note to those with Food Animal Projects: as a food animal producer you are required, by law, to keep a record of any treatments, medications, drugs, etc. that are used for the health of your animal. Use the Treatment Record within your Wood County Livestock Record Book to keep this information.



IMPORTANT DATES FOR 4-H PARTICIPATION: * = Mandatory

Activity	Due Date	Location	Reference Page # (in this guide)
*Enroll in 4-H	No later than March 15	https://v2.4honline.com/#/user/sign-in	2
*4-H Project Interview Judging	Thursday, July 16 th	Wood County Fairgrounds Junior Fair Building	2
Skill-a-thon	Thursday, July 16 th	Wood County Fairgrounds Junior Fair Building	3

Activities that will take place prior in order to complete your 4-H dairy project.

The following 4-H activities are described below.

4-H Enrollment

Membership requires enrollment in an authorized Ohio 4-H club or group under the direction of an OSU Extension professional or an approved adult volunteer. Your 4-H club Advisor will assist you with the online enrollment process. Joining Ohio 4-H is a privilege and responsibility for individuals and is subject to the Ohio 4-H Code of Conduct and applicable policies of The Ohio State University. Members must remain in good standing with their 4-H club, meaning: attending a minimum of five meetings, completing a demonstration, fully participating, etc.

Project Interview

Project judging is an exciting time to showcase your hard work spent on your 4-H project. Our judges love talking with you and learning about your project. Please be patient and understand if a judge is running behind. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Judging Hints

- Arrive at the Junior Fair Building with your project book and record books. Remember to wear nice attire to judging. See Dress Code below.
- Check in at the registration desk.
- Complete the top of a judging interview sheet. Be prepared to talk about your project, know what you did, how you did it, and what you learned. Be proud of your accomplishments! You worked hard. Have a seat, talk to friends, and RELAX!
- If you are unable to attend the specified project interview judging day in July at the Junior Fair Building, your advisor may judge the project and provide a grade to the Extension Office by the required date.
- *Please note* To be eligible for awards (premier livestock interviewer) you must be judged on the day your project is assigned at the Junior Fair Building.



Dress Code Rule for Project Interview Judging

Exhibitors must wear a collared polo or buttoned shirt with some sleeve and nice blue jeans (no rips or cut-offs and no tank-tops, t-shirts or sleeveless tops) or your show whites.

- **Consequences for not following this rule may include no interview until wardrobe is changed. This rule was adopted by the 4-H Committee and Junior Fair Board.

Skill-a-thon

This is where you have the chance to shine as an exhibitor. This is a contest to show who knows the most about their species. You will study various topics on dairy and then at 4-H Project Interview Judging, you will go into the skill-a-thon and answer the questions they pose for you. There are two levels: juniors (8-13 years old) and seniors (14-18 years old.) The exhibitors with the highest scores can earn ribbons and then have a chance to earn cash prizes.

- The Dairy Skill-a-thon is an activity that takes place prior to fair, at 4-H Project Interview Judging. It is a series of stations on topics you are learning about in your dairy project. The goal of the Skill-a-thon is to facilitate learning about your dairy project. It is not *expected*, but *highly encouraged* that you participate in the Skill-a-thon.
- A Dairy Skill-a-thon Study Guide is available to assist your learning. The Study Guide can be found on the Wood County 4-H web site:
https://wood.osu.edu/sites/wood/files/imce/Program_Pages/4H/skillathon/dairyskillstudy17.pdf
- Online study resources:
 - <https://ohio4h.org/statewide-programs/animal-sciences/dairy/dairy-publications-resources>
- Additional information for the Skill-a-thon can be found in your Dairy Resource Handbook.
- Prizes are awarded to exhibitors who perform well in the Skill-a-thon. Prizes typically include cash and rosettes which are handed out at 4-H Spirit Night in October.

Congratulations on the successful completion of your project!



GETTING STARTED WITH YOUR DAIRY PROJECT**Selection**

Select animals that:

- Dairy breed to include: Holstein, Jersey, Ayrshire, Brown Swiss, and other breeds, no beef breeds.
- Genetics of dam and sire should be considered before purchasing.
- **Look and act healthy with no signs of scours (diarrhea) – most common in calf projects.**
- Long bodied with a straight top line (back).
- Quality animals should be sound on their feet and showing growth. There should be no signs of internal or external parasites.

Finding a calf

Start asking past exhibitors, club advisors, etc. about local, reputable dairy farms willing to sell dairy calves, heifers, or cows for dairy projects. **NEVER buy a project animal from an auction sale barn, newborn calf jockey or a calf that has not received at least two feedings of high-quality colostrum. No Exceptions.**

Nutrition

- Young dairy calves will need to be on a high fat/high protein milk replacer (remember its cold when project starts) until they are 6-8 weeks old. The rule of thumb is to wean calves from milk once they are eating at least 2 lbs. of highly palatable calf starter each day. Pre-weaned & weaned calves need to be offered fresh clean starter grain and water twice each day. **Young calves can be blanketed with calf jacket below 40 degrees to reduce energy loss/stress.**
- Dairy calves need 2-4 lbs. of **hay** per day throughout the duration of project.
- It is recommended to follow project book recommendations and consult with those knowledgeable in raising dairy animals (area farmers, experienced exhibitors and feed/nutrition consultants) to learn proper types of grain feeding strategies and amounts.
- Dairy calves should eat between a 12-18% protein feed.
- Clean/ freshwater access.

Health

- A normal body temperature for all bovine is 100.4°F-102.8°F.
- If your calf is not dehorned at purchase, seek assistance from a veterinarian for getting this procedure done. You might also seek assistance from an experienced producer who has the proper equipment and can help you.
- Common health concerns to look for:
 - scours (diarrhea), pneumonia (elevated temperature/nasal discharge/heavy breathing/persistent coughing) & umbilical hernia in very young calves
 - acidosis/overeating/bloat (digestive disorders that can cause much harm after sudden changes in feed amount and type. Could show as not eating, belly swelling or kicking at side) and coccidiosis (dark watery stool) in weaned calves.

- Dairy calves that do not feel well will stand by themselves, not eat or move, as well as other symptoms.
- It is very important to observe your animal's normal behavior every day so you can notice abnormal behavior.
- Remember: a healthy animal almost always stretches when it stands up after it has been sleeping, sick ones do not.
- **Calves acting unusual or exhibiting signs of disease must be addressed immediately. SEEK HELP!**

Facilities and Equipment

- Good ventilation and protection from all elements. It is usually cold when calves are started as babies for this project and must be kept warm and free of drafts. However, once spring arrives the animals must be kept cool in a pen with adequate shade, shelter and air flow.
- Space- 25-30 square feet per animal recommended. A large pen is best, as dairy calves do not need to be provided access to pasture. Heat, sun, parasites, and horseflies will all negatively impact growth rates- keep your animals comfortable!
- Gates should be strong and 4 ft. or more in height ***Be careful using wire to tie gates/buckets as calves will chew these and can ingest them, causing harm to your animal.**
- Rope halter- 1 per animal
- Show halter- 1 per animal
- Neck rope or chain (per preference) - 1 per animal
- Feed pan
- Water tub
- Blower (ask to borrow a blower at fair time to remove dust from your animal if you need to, as blowers are not necessary at home)
- Scotch comb
- Curry comb
- Grooming topline clipper
- Hose/sprayer
- Bucket and soap (livestock soap or regular shampoo and whitening shampoo)
- Pitchfork/shovel (to clean pens)



Wood County Junior Fair Participation

All Wood County Junior Fair Dairy information can be found here: <https://www.woodcounty-fair.com/dairy-cattle> or in the Wood County Fair Book (printed annually each spring.)

Project Requirement for Exhibition at the Wood County Junior Fair

Participation is an opportunity available to you because you are a 4-H member. Exhibition at the Wood County Fair is not mandatory to fulfill the commitments of taking your 4-H project, but it is highly recommended. If you are interested in exhibiting a dairy project at the Wood County Fair, you need to know and meet the exhibition requirements. Basic exhibition requirements include (additional mandatory requirements can be found online):

- You must be enrolled in 4-H (or FFA), no later than March 15th, in the project you want to exhibit.
- You must be a member in good standing of your 4-H Club: meaning attending a minimum of five meetings, completing a demonstration, fully participating, etc.
- You must participate annually in Livestock Quality Assurance Education, by the deadline of June 1st for lactating cow projects only.
- You must register your animals in FairEntry online by the deadline of June 1st.
- Complete a Drug Use Notification Form (DUNF) online by the required date set by Junior Fair.
- Health Requirements can be found under the Junior Fair Rules & Guidelines section in the Wood County Fair Book.

Fair Entries and Fair Rules

Each exhibitor is responsible for creating a fair entry for every animal that you plan to bring to the fair.

Registering in 4-H Online does not register you for fair. You register for fair in the FairEntry online program (with instruction from the Junior Fair Coordinator) by June 1st. Instruction on this will likely take place at one of your club meetings (another reason it is very important to attend meetings). Your Advisor will be able to answer questions about the Fair entry process.

When you choose to become a Junior Fair Exhibitor; you are responsible for knowing the general fair rules and the department rules for the project you are exhibiting. These can be found on the Wood County Fair website or in the Fair Book under Junior Fair Rules, Dairy.

You should also be familiar with Ohio Revised Code Sections 901.70, 901.71, 901.72, 901.73, 901.74, 901.75, 901.76, 901.99 and 2925.94. These govern all livestock shows in the state of Ohio.

It is important to note that at the fair, the only people permitted to care for, fit, clip, or groom your animal are your immediate family members, 4-H Advisors, or other members of your club and assistance is limited to explanation and minimal demonstration (ORC 901.19.31).

Should you have any questions about rules, please contact the Fair Board Dairy Committee.



GETTING YOURSELF AND YOUR CALF READY FOR FAIR: SHOW BREAKING CALENDAR AND TECHNIQUE

June – Early July

- Allow the animal to get comfortable around you to build trust, by tying the calf up each day with a rope halter, starting with 15 minutes and gradually adding time every few days. While the animal is tied up, you can brush him and pet him to build trust and begin getting him used to the show stick. Start using the show stick with the calf in a calm, light way, until they get used to it.
- Practice walking your calf around the yard on the rope halters.
- Early July, practice clipping your animal.

July – Late July

- Introduce the calf to the show halter.
- Wash and dry the calf a few times a week- this helps avoid stains on the calf, making the fitting process easier later.
- Continue washing and walking your calf and practice setting it up for the show.
- A couple of days before fair, clip your animal for exhibit.

SHOWMANSHIP SUMMARY

Preparing for showmanship

- Make sure your calf is clean and ready to go! This means at a minimum it should have a good bath and rinse in the early morning of show day, fitted for show, and kept a close eye on to stay clean until show.
- **Make sure you are professionally presented. SHOW WHITES** Collared shirt tucked in, long white pants, close toed shoes, belt.
- Be sure to watch the classes before you.
- Observe what the judge is looking for and watch what older/more experienced showmen are doing.

Going to the Ring

- Listen for your class – BE EARLY!! You do not ever want to be late!!! (MAKE SURE TO CHECK THE SHOW ORDER THAT MORNING, POSTED IN THE BARN, TO SEE WHAT CLASSES YOU WILL BE IN.)
- Do not fight other exhibitors for a spot in line, be patient and calm – your animal can sense it.
- The judge is always watching – even when you are in the make-up or holding area. (Keep your eyes on the judge when you are in the holding area, entering the show arena and during the class as much as possible).

In the Ring

- As you enter, make solid eye contact with the judge.
- Be aware of your surroundings.
- Stay in line with the other animals.



- Get your calf set-up as quickly and effectively as possible, and then watch the judge. Set the front legs even with each other. FOR HEIFERS: back leg closest to the judge is a step back. FOR COWS: back leg closest to judge is a step forward. When the judge moves to the other side of the animal, (BOTH HEIFERS AND COWS) back legs need to change position.

Grooming/Fitting

- It is a good idea to identify some of the exhibitors that have taken the project before and ask some basic questions on what they do to prepare their animals for the show.
- **Fitting your animal can make a difference, but don't feel like it is something that is essential for you to do; as the most important aspects of your project the first year are to bring a healthy, well broke animal to the fair. If you want to get more advanced, feel free to try the steps below:**

How to Fit Your Animal

It is best to practice at home a few times before you take the animal to the fair.

- First, you will want to wash and dry your animal.
- Your animal should be body shaved, except the topline and tail switch. Spray the topline with adhesive to get it to stand (a little goes a long way.) Clip to shape and blend the topline along the body of the animal. Trim the topline to about half inch to one inch in height to appear straight.
- When you have finished fitting your animal, do not mess with the topline.
- Once the animal is finished showing, you need to break down the topline to remove the adhesive. First, spray the adhesive remover (ex. – Weaver's Pro Remover and Sullivan's Hocus Pocus). Rub the adhesive remover into the back to work out the adhesive and then wash the adhesive remover with soap and water.

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<https://www.woodcounty-fair.com/>

Guide Credit: Christy Leeds, 4-H Extension Educator & Assistant Professor – Union County, Ohio

