

Southeast Milk, Inc. Dairy Check-Off Report
Florida Dairy Youth Program Update

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The Florida Dairy Youth Program targets youth and volunteer audiences to achieve the following objectives:

For youth to:

- Develop leadership including decision-making skills, citizenship, sense of responsibility, self-confidence and dependability attributes.
- Become familiar with research-based principles and methods required for successful agricultural enterprises.
- Learn about career options in Agriculture and specifically, the Dairy Industry.

For volunteers to:

- Acquire information and skills to help youth develop useful competencies and attributes in the Dairy Science area.

Since 1988 the Florida Dairy Youth Program has helped more than 2000 different individual youth with and without a dairy animal project. Thousands of additional youth have been made aware of and exposed to the Florida dairy industry through school enrichment programs, such as, dairy station's taught in "Ag in the Classroom" events. Some of these school enrichment outreach programs are even taught by the dairy youth themselves as part of their project work. In addition, hundreds of volunteers have been supported in their quest to further develop dairy youth interest in their clubs. Youth gain invaluable experience about Dairy Husbandry through ownership and care of Dairy Animals and through participation in Dairy Judging and Quiz Bowl educational experiences. Participation with an animal develops responsibility and other personal qualities needed for a successful life career, participation in judging, and particularly, giving oral and written reasons, develops leadership, confidence and the ability to make and defend decisions. Fairs and shows provide a venue for youth to exhibit their project work and to exchange information with other youth on what has worked and not worked in their project. Awards provide recognition and incentives to participate in the various programs.

The Florida Dairy Youth Program has six main events that have numerous activities in them to help provide and develop life changing results.

1. State 4-H Dairy Show is the event where the youth come together to show off all aspects of the dairy project in one location each year and be recognized for all their achievements for the past project year. The show is held in Kissimmee, FL in

conjunction with the Osceola County Fair. The youth participate in Showmanship, heifer and cow classes, quiz bowl, judging, county herdsmanship contests, project record books contests and the annually year end awards recognition banquet for all dairy youth events that occur that past year.

2. Dairy judging is where the youth compete at local, regional and state wide fairs and shows. They then compete for space to join the summer dairy judging workout program where they will invest a large part of their summer traveling the state to dairies to develop their evaluation and oral reasons skills. The youth are then placed on one of five different teams that will represent Florida at the following contests:

- Alabama National Fair Dairy Judging Contest (Montgomery, AL)
- Mid-South Dairy Judging Contest (Memphis, TN)
- North American International Livestock Exposition Dairy Judging Contest (Louisville, KY)
- All American Dairy Judging Contest (Harrodsburg, PA)
- World Dairy Expo, National Dairy 4-H Judging Contest (Madison, WI)

3. Dairy Quiz Bowl, where the youth compete at regional and state fairs and shows. Youth then also tryout for a summer workout program where they continue to learn and process the concepts and science behind the dairy animal and industry. The youth that are selected to represent Florida travel to compete at the following contests:

- World Dairy Expo Quiz Bowl Contest (Madison, WI)
- North American International Livestock Exposition Dairy Quiz Bowl Contest (Louisville, KY)
- National Ayrshire Dairy Quiz Bowl Contest (different location each year)
- National Guernsey Dairy Quiz Bowl Contest (different location each year)
- National Holstein Dairy Quiz Bowl Contest (different location each year)
- National Holstein Dairy Jeopardy Contest (different location each year)

4. National 4-H Dairy Conference is held in conjunction with World Dairy Expo in Madison, WI. This education conference provides senior 4-H youth the opportunity to learn more about the dairy industry, careers in the dairy industry, develop additional competence in a special-interest area of the dairy industry and practice leadership and group participation skills.

5. Dairy Camp and Southeastern Dairy Youth Retreat are summer events that provide the youth opportunities to continue to learn about all aspects of the dairy industry and to develop friendships with youth from other parts of the state and beyond that share in their love of the dairy project and industry.

6. The dairy volunteer and leader training workshop is a two to three day event that is held annually to train volunteers how to better work with the youth of today, give them the confidence and expertise to effectively run program and activities in their local communities and to continue to educate them on dairy specific subject matter to then pass on to their local interested youth.

In addition to these six key events the Southeast Milk, Inc. Dairy Check-Off Program also provides undergraduate scholarships to UF and UGA students and collegiate dairy judging team support when needed.

The Dairy Youth Program this year has started a quarterly newsletter called “The Scoop” to help keep everyone informed on the great young people we have in the dairy youth program and all their accomplishments throughout the project year. Also, something new this year, the beginning of the The Florida Dairy Youth Ambassador Program. This program is going to be offered for senior level 4-H members and graduates that have a desire to continue to hone their leadership, communication, public speaking skills and, more importantly share their passion and love for the dairy project and industry. This program’s goal will be to take a group of highly motivated young people that have a desire to spread the message about the dairy project and industry, whenever a situation presents itself, to educate the public on what the dairy project and industry is all about and why it means so much to all of us. The young people that desire to join this group will have a series of workshops and trainings that will enhance their leadership skills, media abilities and agriculture advocacy. This program will also help them to think “outside of the box”, to harness their natural passion for the dairy project and industry, to educate their fellow youth and public by telling their dairy story.

The Dairy Youth Program has had some great success this past year. Here is just a few of the results from some of the contests that our youth competed in.

Dairy Judging:

- Placed 13th Overall and 8th in Reasons at the National 4-H Dairy Judging Contest in Madison, WI.
- Placed 6th Overall and 6th in Reasons at the All American Dairy Show in Harrisburg, PA.
- Placed 1st Overall, 3rd in Reasons at the Mid-South Dairy Judging Contest.
- Placed 12th Overall, 6th in Reasons at the North American International Livestock Exposition Dairy Judging Contest.

Dairy Quiz Bowl:

- Placed 2nd at the World Dairy Expo Contest.
- Junior and Senior teams placed 3rd at the National Ayrshire Dairy Quiz Bowl Contest.
- Senior team placed 7th at the National Holstein Dairy Quiz Bowl Contest.

Florida State Fair Champion of Champions Program:

- Four of the past seven overall winners of the Florida State Fair Champion of Champions Youth Program have been products of the Florida Dairy Youth Program. In 2008 Sarah Luther of Suwannee County placed 3rd Overall in the program.

The Florida Dairy Youth Program is an awesome program that provides countless life

skills to our youth and helps them spread the word about the dairy industry to others. The program continues to grow and remain strong and we are humbled and honored that the Southeast Milk, Inc. Dairy Check-Off Program continues to see the value in our dairy youth and continues to support the program. Thank You!

Notes
