



2025 National Dairy Challenge and Academy

April 6-8, 2025

Hilton University of Florida Conference Center
in Gainesville, Florida

<https://www.dairychallenge.org/contests/>

2025 Overview



- Offering both a Contest for up to 36 teams and an Academy for up to 120 students. Aggregate Contest teams will be formed if we don't have at least 32 university teams.
- As our event is primarily funded by corporate sponsors, please ensure your students understand the privilege and exposure that is being extended to them by participating. They are expected to fully participate in all event activities.
- No formal program on Sunday. Official program begins with dinner at 5:30 PM.
- Farm visits and presentation preparation on Monday.
- Presentation and education day on Tuesday.

What's New for 2025



- This year's contest runs **Sunday – Tuesday**.
 - Events officially begin with dinner on Sunday evening.
 - Local committee has arranged farm visits in northwest Florida for early arriving schools
 - NAIDC will pay for rooms Sunday-Tuesday nights and meals beginning with Sunday evening - Tuesday awards dinner. Hotel rooms and meals on either side of this window are the responsibility of the university.

What's New for 2025



- Opportunity for coach mentoring
 - We will be adding a meeting to the schedule for coaches who are new to Dairy Challenge
 - ✓ Learn the “ins and outs” of the schedule and coach responsibilities
 - ✓ Opportunity to be paired with an experienced coach who can share Dairy Challenge programming ideas
 - ✓ Travel planning for regional and national contests
 - ✓ Items for university budget submission
 - ✓ Dairy Challenge resources
 - Email Ted Halbach by April 4 if you are interested in attending at tjhalbach@wisc.edu

What's Continuing for 2025



Enhanced Academy Experience

- Continue with mixed teams
- 120 total Academy Students - Group size will be 6 with 1 advisor per team
- Some level of dairy management preparedness is preferred for student success
- There will be several floating advisors in both rooms. Floaters will have areas of expertise and will continually move from table to table.
- Adjusting Tuesday schedule to allow groups to present for 20 minutes (similar to the contest experience)
- We encourage coaches to be floating advisors
- IT support will be in both rooms for software questions
- Advisors will be instructed to have questions for students during Tuesday presentations

What's Continuing for 2025



- **Contest and Academy Participants should plan to use their own computers for the contest.**
 - It is important that each school team has at least 2 computers.
 - Mac's do not work with the dairy software, so schools may need to make arrangements for students who have Macs.
 - All participants should review computer and software requirements.
 - Dairy software (PCDART, Dairy Comp and DHI+) is available for downloading from the NAIDC website. Students should download the software to their computers BEFORE coming to Gainesville. Support is available if needed.
 - In addition to students bringing their own computers, we ask each school bring at least one school computer, two if available, to serve as back up should one of your students experience computer failure.

What's Continuing for 2025



- **Students should prepare a resume for upload to the national web site.**
 - If they uploaded one for a regional, they have the option to either upload again or authorize us to use the one previously submitted.
 - The upload link will be available on the national contest page.
 - Resumes will be distributed to sponsors for recruiting purposes. In addition, students should bring copies with them for the Career Fair on Tuesday.

What's Continuing for 2025



- **Farm Data will be Online**
 - Most Contest and Academy materials will be posted to a secure web site only accessible by registered participants. Students will get early access to the questionnaire in the days prior to the contest; the rest of the contest data will be released once onsite. **We are asking coaches to ensure that all contest data is removed from your students' computers after the contest ends.**
- **Presentation Turn In will be via Upload**
 - Students will receive instructions onsite for uploading their presentation saved in PowerPoint.

What's Continuing for 2025



- **Travel Policy**

- As noted in your invitation letter, a pool of sponsor funds has been set aside to support national contest travel costs for schools in need. The stipend amount will depend on the number of applications approved. Schools must have a team competing in the national contest and must travel (drive or fly) at least 800 miles to be considered for the stipend. Deadline to submit this form: **February 1, 2025.**

Internet



- Students may use the internet as a resource in their presentation preparation.
- The purpose of allowing student computers and internet access is to provide a more real-world experience with access to additional resources to help address specific questions that arise during the farm analysis.
- In addition, there are no restrictions on the use of pre-planned repositories for contest resources or on what dairy management resources are brought to the contest for use in preparing presentations.



Other tools



- Cameras: Contest teams should bring a camera for use on the farm. A limited number will be available. **Use of cell phone, iPad, or other similar cameras is prohibited at the farms.**
- Schools should bring a calculator, measuring tape, watch/stopwatch, pens and clean notepads.
- Contest students are NOT to wear clothing with identification of their respective school once the contest gets underway. This does not apply to Academy students.



Printed Data



- Farm Map
- Contest and Academy Schedules
 - All other contest material will be electronic
 - Participants will receive an email with information for accessing the contest data site

Financial Information Template

Farm Income Statement

Cash Basis

DAIRY ID	For the Year	
	2016	2017
Farm Revenues:		
Milk Sales	\$0	\$0
Raised Calf, Cow, & Cull Sales	\$0	\$0
Other Dairy Revenues	\$0	\$0
Non-Dairy Farm Revenues	\$0	\$0
Gross Income	\$0	\$0
Farm Expenses:		
Dairy-Specific Expenses:		
Bedding	\$0	\$0
Chemicals	\$0	\$0
Contract Heifer Raising	\$0	\$0
Purchased Feed Expense	\$0	\$0
Homegrown Feed Expenses	\$0	\$0
Fuel & Oil	\$0	\$0
Insurance	\$0	\$0
Labor (Wages, Payroll)	\$0	\$0
Milk Marketing (Hauling, Promotion)	\$0	\$0
Rent/Lease (Land & Equipment)	\$0	\$0
Repairs (Building & Equipment)	\$0	\$0
Supplies	\$0	\$0
Utilities	\$0	\$0
Veterinary, Medicine & Breeding	\$0	\$0
Other/Misc. Dairy Expenses	\$0	\$0
Non-Dairy-Specific Farm Expenses:		
Interest	\$0	\$0
Property Taxes	\$0	\$0
Insurance	\$0	\$0
Rent (Land & Equipment)	\$0	\$0
Depreciation (not including Section 179)	\$0	\$0
All Other Farm Expenses	\$0	\$0
Total Farm Expenses	\$0	\$0
Net Farm Profit Before Taxes	\$0	\$0
Other Information:		
Total Annual Non-Farm Income	\$0	\$0
Total Annual Owner Withdrawals	\$0	\$0
Total Annual Principal & Interest Payments	\$0	\$0
Capital Purchases during the year		
Machinery & Equipment	\$0	\$0
Breeding Livestock	\$0	\$0
Buildings, Improvements, Facilities	\$0	\$0

BALANCE SHEET SUMMARY, AS OF DECEMBER 31

Fair Market Value

DAIRY ID	2016	2017
CURRENT ASSETS		
Cash and Savings	\$0	\$0
Accounts Receivable	\$0	\$0
Dairy Livestock Held for Sale	\$0	\$0
Homegrown Feed Inventory	\$0	\$0
Purchased Feed Inventory	\$0	\$0
Investment in Growing Crops	\$0	\$0
Supplies Inventory	\$0	\$0
Prepaid Expenses	\$0	\$0
Crops Held for Sale	\$0	\$0
Non-dairy Livestock/Products Held for Sale	\$0	\$0
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	\$0	\$0
INTERMEDIATE ASSETS		
Breeding Livestock - Dairy	\$0	\$0
Non-Dairy Breeding Livestock	\$0	\$0
Equipment and Farm Vehicles	\$0	\$0
All Other Intermediate Assets	\$0	\$0
TOTAL INTERMEDIATE ASSETS	\$0	\$0
LONG TERM ASSETS		
Farm Real Estate & Improvements	\$0	\$0
Buildings and Facilities	\$0	\$0
All Other Long Term Assets	\$0	\$0
TOTAL LONG TERM ASSETS	\$0	\$0
TOTAL ASSETS	\$0	\$0
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	\$0	\$0
Operating Loan Balance	\$0	\$0
Accrued Interest (Operating & Term Debt)	\$0	\$0
Current Portion of Term Debt (amount due within 1 year)	\$0	\$0
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$0	\$0
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Remaining Principal on Intermediate Loans	\$0	\$0
Remaining Principal on Long Term Loans	\$0	\$0
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$0	\$0
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$0	\$0
NET WORTH	\$0	\$0

Financial Information Template



- Financial template posted on the resources site:
https://www.dairychallenge.org/pdfs/student_resources/NAIDC_Financials_Template.pdf
- Additional resources available at:
 - <https://www.dairychallenge.org/student-resources/>
- Closer to the contest we will also post financial benchmarks for Florida dairies

2025 Herds



Herds for 2025 Contest

- 4 judging panels/2 herds
- 1 herd 6,000 cows
- 1 herd 3,500 cows

Herds for 2025 Academy

- 2 herds/groups split between herds
- 1 herd 3,000 cows
- 1 herd 400 cows



2025 Herds



- All herds are on DHI test
- All herds use Dairy Comp 305
- Data will be loaded into DC305, DHI-Plus and PC-DART
- Health events by month and DIM will be provided as an Excel Spreadsheet
- We will be asking students on their form if they have had a job or internship on a Florida dairy to avoid any conflicts.

2025 Herds



Diets

- Penn State Particle Separator (shaker box) for High Group diet and prefresh/close-up group
- Copies of all diets will be provided
- Map to match group to ration



Milk Marketing Programs in Florida (milk over base)

- Farms have a base
- Reduction in milk price for milk produced over base
- Programs are specific to the coop/handler farms ship to
- Base amounts and details for each farm to be included in data provided to farms.

Contest



Manager Interviews

- Un-opposing teams from Dairies AB and CD will interview dairy managers together on Monday afternoon, for example Teams 10 and 19 will interview dairy together.
- Interview times will be 17 minutes each – 20-minute blocks



Examples of Appropriate and Inappropriate Questions



- **Invalid:** How much overcrowding do you have in pen one?
- **Allowed:** What is your definition of over-stocking?

- **Invalid:** What is your biggest metabolic problem?
- **Allowed:** The number of ketosis cases in your database indicate a big problem; are these data correct?

- **Invalid:** What is your biggest reproductive problem?
- **Allowed:** The data show that your cows average 120 days open; is that a correct value?

- **Invalid:** How much do your cows eat in one day?
- **Allowed:** Do you weigh the feed provided and feed that is refused daily? Or Are the feed intake data in the TMR management software a true reflection of the cow's consumption?

Contest



- Presentation format: Can use Google slides for preparation but final presentation must be in PowerPoint.
- Reminder that at national, there is no prep room. Morning presenting teams should plan time on Tuesday morning to practice, afternoon presenting teams should plan time on Tuesday afternoon to practice.
- Students will gather in a holding area 15 minutes prior to presentation and will be escorted to the presentation room.



Sunday Schedule



Sunday April 6

4:45 PM – 5:15 PM	Registration for coaches
5:30 PM	Dinner, Welcome
7:00 PM	Data distribution

For schools arriving early, there are farms offering visits.

Coaches Tour of Farms



- Students will visit the farms on Monday via buses.
- Coaches will carpool to the farms in groups at the same time as students on Monday morning
- The coaches meeting and reception will be held off site on Monday afternoon

Monday Evening Event



- Sponsor student dinner and mixer offsite at The Swamp, University of Florida's football stadium
- Excellent networking opportunity for your students to meet and mingle with industry representatives
- Student attendance *is not* optional
- Coaches are asked to drive students

Tuesday-when students are NOT presenting



- Required to attend the Career and Innovation Fair
- Required to attend the Corporate Technology Presentations
- Students will need their **cell phone** on Tuesday during debriefing to complete our surveys.
- We are asking for your help to ensure all students are onsite all day Tuesday. **Attendance will be taken.**



Student Preparation



- A variety of items have been posted on the Dairy Challenge web site to aid in student preparation:
<https://www.dairychallenge.org/student-resources/>
- Coaches have access to past presentations and data sets that you can also use for student preparation via the “Coaches Resource” link on “Student Resources” page. Login is “coach”

NAIDC Scorecard



The scorecard serves as the basis for evaluating the student presentations.

NEW: The updated scorecard includes space for judge feedback.

Judges will be reminded to prioritize a team's ability to defend their recommendations rather than directly align with the judges' recommendations.

Revised 2024

Dairy Challenge Scorecard

TEAM # _____

1. Material presented - 55 points		Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Farm Overview		5	4	3	2	1
General overview of the farm operation (1 point)	5					
Benchmarking of relevant key performance indicators (financial and performance) with regional or national metrics (4 points)						
Assessment		21 - 23	16 - 20	11 - 15	6 - 10	1 - 5
Clear understanding of farm's goals (5 points)	25					
Identification of relevant opportunities within context of the farm's goals, financial position and KPI's (10 points)						
Justification for importance of opportunities based on provided data or information obtained during the farm visit (10 points)						
Recommendations		21 - 23	16 - 20	11 - 15	6 - 10	1 - 5
Recommendations are justified and ranked based on economic significance, farm's goals, and sustainability of the business (e.g., environmental factors, animal welfare, ownership succession planning) (15 points)	25					
Recommendations are practical with a clear implementation strategy (10 points)						
2. Presentation and visual aids - 20 points		Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Presence		13 - 15	10 - 12	7 - 9	4 - 6	1 - 3
Enthusiastic, confident and professional (5 points)	15					
Spoke clearly with appropriate volume, speed, grammar and eye contact (10 points)						
Slide Formatting		5	4	3	2	1
Legible, organized, void of excessive wordiness. Images and data provide clear illustrations (5 points)	5					
3. Preparation and organization - 10 points		Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Presentation and engagement by all team members (4 points)		9 - 10	7 - 8	5 - 6	3 - 4	1 - 2
Knowledge of farm practices by all team members (4 points)	10					
Effective use of the 20 minute time allocation. Presentation will be stopped at 20 minutes (2 points)						
4. Response to questions - 15 points		Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Provided confident and concise answers to questions (5 points)	15	13 - 15	10 - 12	7 - 9	4 - 6	1 - 3
Provided an effective summary of relevant supporting information (5 points)						
All team members involved in answering at least one question (5 points)*						
*Team members may confer briefly but no lengthy conferences						
Total - 100 points		TEAM'S SCORE _____				

Judges Comments:

What was the highlight of this presentation?

What could be changed to make it better?

Additional comments (if any):

Housing, Meals and Transportation



- Headquarter hotel is the Hilton University of Florida which is connected to the UF Conference Center
- Coaches will receive a housing form with their team confirmation (after Feb 21) to complete and submit to the hotel by March 6.
 - Coaches are responsible for making their school's housing reservations using the NAIDC Housing Form. The Hilton UF will house both students and coaches.
 - Contest and Academy students can room together.

Housing, Meals and Transportation



- NAIDC will pay for student rooms that fall within the allotment. Coaches will receive a NAIDC Student Room Allotments table for number of student rooms being paid for by NAIDC.
- Coaches are responsible for their own room charges at the national contest. As such, a coach may wish to share a room with a coach from another school. To do so, we suggest one coach make the reservation and other indicate as such on their form. Coaches should not room with students.
- Rate per room per night: \$144 + tax
- **Reservation Cut-Off Date is Thursday March 6, 2025**

Housing, Meals and Transportation



- Most meals (dinner Sunday; breakfast and lunch Monday; and breakfast, lunch and dinner Tuesday) will be at the convention center. Monday dinner will be offsite.
- Schools are responsible for their own transportation arrangements for Sunday activities prior to the start of the contest. Schools are also asked to provide transportation to Monday night's student/sponsor dinner at the nearby UF football stadium.

Suggested Dress



- Sunday evening - Business casual for dinner and data release
- Monday morning - Dress in layers for farm tours
- Monday Evening - Business casual for dinner with sponsors and fun event (blue jeans are acceptable, but no holes)
- Tuesday - Professional business for presentation and for the banquet
- Dairy Challenge will supply safety vests and plastic boots for the Monday farm visits. Clean personal boots can also be worn to the farm.
- Schools doing optional Sunday farm visits should plan to supply their own plastic boots for biosecurity purposes.

Social Media Corps Opportunity



- Accepting applications for students interested in serving on this year's Social Media Corps team
- Seeking 4 students
- Visit with students in your dairy club and ag communications department about this opportunity
- Application is on the Dairy Challenge website



Dates to note



- January 13 National Contest & Academy invites sent
- February 20 forms and fees due
- After February 21 confirmation letters will be sent
- March 3 student information forms due
 - WE schools should submit entry forms by Feb 21 but have until March 3 to finalize student names. Additional flexibility offered on March 3 student forms deadline as well.*
- March 6 Housing forms due to hotel

Communication is Important



- Please respond quickly to e-mails from Laura Herschleb or Molly Kelley
- Please notify Laura Herschleb of any changes to your team.
- Make certain that your students have filled out the Student Information Form and uploaded their resumes by the deadline

Final details...



We need at least 10 LCD projectors for the event. Let us know if you can bring one.

Schools should bring 1-2 additional computers

If you have any questions, contact

- Jeff Elliott or Melanie Herman (local host chairs) – jelliott@balchem.com or mherman@premierselect.com
- Trevor DeVries (program committee chair) – tdevries@uoguelph.ca
- Laura Herschleb (NAIDC registrations) - lherschleb@wdexpo.com
- Molly Kelley (NAIDC) – mollyk@dairychallenge.org



