

NATIONAL HOLSTEIN FOUNDATION



2026 DAIRY BOWL CONTEST RULES & REGULATIONS

What is Dairy Bowl?

The dairy bowl contest is an activity for youth where teams of four members compete against each other. Competition points are awarded for correctly answering questions about the dairy industry and closely related areas.

Teams compete in a series of one-on-one double-elimination contests until the top team is chosen. Each team member will answer a 25-question written exam prior to the contest. Team totals from the written exam are used to determine the seating of the teams. The exam scores do not carry over to the team competition.

Competition between teams is in two phases. In Phase I a total of 12 individual questions are asked. In Phase II a total of 16 toss-up questions are asked. Bonus questions may be earned in Phase II. The winning team is determined by the highest score from Phase I, Phase II and bonus questions.

Eligibility

Each state may enter one junior age and one senior age team. Participants must be between the ages of 9 to 20 years old to participate but have not reached their 21st birthday by January 1 in the year competing. Age division breakdowns are as follows:

Junior: 9 to 15 years old as of January 1 in the year competing
Senior: 16 to 20 years old as of January 1 in the year competing

1. **Entry forms must be postmarked by April 1st** and be approved by the State Secretary, Junior Advisor or Youth Programs Manager. The contest will take place at the National Holstein Convention in Orlando, Florida on Wednesday, June 24, 2026, and the finals will be on June 25, 2026. The knowledge exam will be on Tuesday, June 23, 2026.
2. Junior-aged contestants may be on the senior team but may not compete in two divisions.
3. Contestants competing in the National Holstein Dairy Bowl Contest are not eligible for participation in the Holstein Foundation Dairy Jeopardy Contest in the same year.
4. All entrants are eligible for three years' participation on a junior team as well as three years' participation on a senior team. The exception would be any member who is on a winning team in the junior or senior division. Individuals on a winning junior team are not eligible for further competition in the junior division. Winning senior team members are not eligible for further competition.

5. Once an entrant has participated on a senior team, he or she is ineligible for participation on a junior team. Youth entered as an alternate in a current or previous year who did not take a seat on their team during the competition do not lose a year of eligibility.
6. One or more alternates may be listed on the entry form. Final team selection must be made prior to the written exam. All teams must designate a team captain and a coach.
7. Alternates will be allowed to take the written exam. However, their exam will not be counted toward the team total. Alternates may compete on the team only in extreme cases, where approved by the Youth Programs Manager.

Sources

Questions will be taken from publications dated June 2023 through June 2026. Questions will cover feeds and feeding, milk quality, herd health, udder health, breeding and genetics, marketing, dairy foods, calf raising and the Holstein breed. Although questions may come from a variety of sources, most questions will be selected from:

- Dairy Herd Management
- Hoard's Dairyman
 - Calf Care
 - Corn Silage: From Seed to Feed
 - Dairy Cattle Fertility
 - Feeding Guide (4th Edition)
- Holstein Foundation Workbooks
- National Dairy Shrine's First 50 Years
- Progressive Dairy
- Progress of the Breed
- Red Book
- The Pulse
- We Need a Show
- www.dairy.org
- www.holsteinfoundation.org
- www.holsteinusa.com
- www.uscdcb.com
- www.worlddairyexpo.com

Rules

1. A team shall be comprised of four members. However, teams of three members will be allowed to participate. A 3-person team must understand they will be competing at a disadvantage as they will start with a 30-point handicap from Phase I questions.

2. The first competition will be between two teams that have not previously competed against each other, unless there are an odd number of teams then the team having the most points on the written exam will receive a bye. The second round will be against either a winning team or a losing team, depending on the first contest. A second loss eliminates a team from continuing competition.
3. Competition between teams will be in two phases. Phase I: A total of 12 questions will be asked. Each team member will be asked three general dairy questions in rotation. Each are worth 10 points with no deductions for incorrect answers. Contestants have 5 seconds to begin their answers. Each team will be asked the same set of questions. Other teams will remain in isolation until the team in action completes the questions.
4. Phase II: A total of 16 toss-up questions will be asked. All questions correctly answered will be worth 15 points. No teammate assistance may be offered or received in phases I & II and questions will not be repeated. Contestants have 10 seconds to begin their answers.
5. In the event of a tie after the last toss-up question has been asked, the two teams will be asked an additional five Phase II questions. There will be no bonus questions during the tie breaker.
6. A contestant wishing to answer a toss-up question must activate the signaling device. Since more than one contestant may think they have signaled the device, contestants may not answer until acknowledged by the moderator. After being acknowledged by the moderator, the contestant must begin an answer within 10 seconds. The team receives 15 points for a correct answer. A team will lose 10 points if an incorrect answer is given.
7. If an incorrect answer is given, the question will then be reread to the opposing team. Any member of the opposing team must signal to answer the question. If the answer is correct, the opposing team will receive 15 points. If the answer is incorrect, the team will lose 10 points. If the opposing team chooses not to answer, no points are awarded or deducted.
8. If a contestant answers a toss-up question without signaling, or waiting to be recognized by the moderator, the answer will be declared invalid, and 10 points will be deducted. The toss-up will then be offered to the opposing team. If a contestant signals for an answer, is recognized, but fails to start an answer within 10 seconds, the team will lose 10 points and the toss-up will be offered to the opposing team.
9. If neither team can offer an answer to the question within 10 seconds, the moderator will give the answer, and neither team will forfeit points.

10. When a signaling device is activated before the question is completely read, the moderator shall stop reading the question when the light goes on...that person may answer the question. If correct, the team will receive credit. If the answer is incorrect or incomplete, the question shall then be completely reread, and the other team will have an opportunity to answer it. The moderator or judge may not ask the contestant to explain his or her answer.

11. The only discussion allowed between team members will be on bonus questions in Phase II. The answers must come from the team captain. Only the number of answers required by the bonus question will be accepted.

12. All team members must stay in the staging room during the contest unless competing. Once a team has been eliminated, members can leave. Alternates may stay with the team. Coaches also have the option to decide whether they would like to stay in the staging room with their team except when the team is competing, or to stay out of the staging room and be allowed to move in and out and watch the various contests. Once a coach or alternate has made the decision to stay in or out of the staging room, it must be adhered to during the team's entire competition.

13. Only one coach per team can stay with the team in the holding room. The coach must stay with the team the entire day unless the team is eliminated. Coaches with a team competing in each division must choose which team they will be accompanying. There will be no alternating of coaches within a team or between divisions.

14. Each team is requested to maintain a respectable demeanor throughout the contest. Any disruptions in either the contest room(s) or the holding room will result in the immediate elimination of the team in question from the contest.

15. The decision of judges is final. Any spectator or coach who questions or argues with a judge or moderator or interferes with the running of the contest will be asked to leave. A contestant, however, may ask for verification of an answer to a question, but only a contestant.

16. Every effort will be made to run a fair contest. If an answer is accidentally revealed before either team answers, a new question will be asked. If an incorrect answer is given and the answer is accidentally revealed before the opposing team has had the opportunity to answer the question, a new question will be asked to that team only.

Bonus Questions

Bonus questions may be earned in the toss-up round. To receive a bonus question, three different team members must correctly answer a toss-up question. Bonus questions are not passed to the other team if not answered correctly or completely.

Bonus questions will be asked whenever three team members have answered toss-up questions correctly with the count kept individually for members of both teams within a match. Individual counts of correct answers do not start at zero following the awarding of a bonus question. Eligibility for bonus questions does not carry over to another match.

Consultation among the team members is permitted on bonus questions. Bonus questions must be answered in a reasonable time. A team must start to answer within 15 seconds. Credit will be given to the portion of the bonus question answered correctly.

Points for Bonus Questions:

The value of each bonus answer will be worth 15 points. However, answers may consist of several parts:

2 parts...	1 correct	5 points
	2 correct	15 points
3 parts...	1 correct	5 points
	2 correct	10 points
	3 correct	15 points
4 parts...	1 correct	4 points
	2 correct	8 points
	3 correct	12 points
	4 correct	15 points
5 parts...	1 correct	3 points
	2 correct	6 points
	3 correct	9 points
	4 correct	12 points
	5 correct	15 points

Clarification of Answers

Full Names of Animals - contestants must use the full registration name of an animal with the exclusion of the suffix. If the suffix is used, it must be correct, i.e., ET versus ETS or *TD versus *TM.

Examples:	Long-Langs Oman Oman	Correct
	Long-Langs Oman Oman-ET	Correct
	Oman	Incorrect
	Long-Lang Oman Oman	Incorrect

Long-Langs Oman-Twin

Incorrect

Names of People - when giving a specific person's name, the last name only will be acceptable. The first name is not necessary but, if given, it must be correct. If a prefix or suffix is used, it must be correct.

Examples:	Lamb	Correct	Jonathan Lamb	Correct
	Lamp	Incorrect	David Lamb	Incorrect
	Dr. Lamb	Incorrect	Jonathan Lamb, Jr.	Incorrect

Pronunciation - judges must recognize the answer given as mispronunciation. The error in pronunciation can affect the correctness of an answer.

Example: For a question with antibody as an answer, antibiotic is incorrect.

Volunteering Information - if a contestant first gives a correct answer and goes on to add incorrect information, the entire question will be incorrect.

Correcting Answers - if a contestant gives a complete answer, he or she cannot make a correction. If a partial incorrect answer is given and the contestant makes the correction mid-answer or word, the corrected answer will not be accepted.

Call of the Coordinator

The call of the coordinator rule would be in place for contestants to use when the judges rule a question incorrectly, but the team member or members in question feel very strongly that the judge's ruling is incorrect. For a team member or members to use this rule, they must institute their right for the call of the coordinator before the next question is read. The team will have three minutes to compile their materials to refute the answer to the question.

Noting that this rule should only be instituted in very specific circumstances and that each team is limited to a maximum of two "calls to the coordinator" per the entire contest. Once the "call to the coordinator" has been instituted, the coordinator may make a ruling, or call upon additional judges. The coordinator's ruling will be final. Any questioning of the coordinator's ruling will result in the immediate elimination of the team in question.

The information used in this contest is based on data from various sources. While every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of contest information, the Holstein Foundation and the Holstein Association USA, Inc. cannot guarantee that errors or omissions will not occur. Therefore, neither the Foundation nor the Association can be held responsible for Dairy Bowl competition outcomes in the unlikely event inaccuracies occur.

Electronic Devices

The use of cell phones or other electronic devices will not be allowed in the Dairy Bowl holding areas. Audience members in the contest rooms will also be required to turn off all electronic devices.

Officials

Moderator - The moderator assumes complete direction of all contests, asks all questions, designates contestants to answer questions, accepts or rejects all answers unless overruled by both judges. He/she may seek interpretation of questions and answers from judges. The moderator designates the winner of each contest and shall always be in charge; having the final voice in all decisions, except for answers to questions which are ruled on unanimously by judges.

Judge - Two judges are to be used who are knowledgeable in the subject matter. The judges may rule individually or jointly on the acceptability of any answer. Either both judges, or one judge and the moderator, must agree on the acceptability or rejection of a question and/or answer if either is challenged by a contestant.

Timekeeper - One individual will be used to record time and to indicate to the moderator the expiration of the time allowed in which to answer questions.

Scorekeeper - Two individuals will keep scores on each contest. One scorekeeper will write in such a manner that all points awarded may be checked while the other remains visible to the moderator, the contestants, and insofar as possible, the viewing audience.

Door Guard - One individual will be used to control the flow of the room by operating a walkie talkie. Once the contest has begun no one will be allowed to enter the contest room.

Holding Room Guard - Two individuals will oversee keeping the holding room in order. They are responsible for noise control, corresponding on the walkie talkies and getting the proper team to the correct competition room in a timely manner. They are also in charge of making sure once teams have completed a round of play, they return to the holding room, if they have not been eliminated from the competition.