

## MSU students close dairy cattle judging season at NAILE

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Five MSU students competed in the dairy cattle judging contest during the North American International Livestock Exposition.

The 2021 dairy cattle judging season came to a close at the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) in Louisville, Kentucky in early November. Five students from Michigan State University competed: a three-person team representing the MSU Institute of Agricultural Technology (IAT) and two individuals in the senior college division.

Michigan did not send a 4-H team to this judging contest for several reasons. Participation in national contests this year was limited to those youth who had previously competed in the 4-H Youth Dairy Days state judging contest in 2018 or 2019. The 4-H Youth Dairy Days and the state judging contest were not held in 2020 or 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, only youth who would be aging out of 4-H or not be eligible in future years, taking a dairy cattle evaluation class as an example, were contacted about practices held in August to be on team in September.

Because of this, the number of youths to form teams or participate as individual was limited and those eligible



The MSU IAT team consisted of (from left) Abby VanDyk, Drew Neyer, and Rachael Bosse

youths competed at contests earlier in the year. The Michigan 4-H dairy cattle judging program expects to return in full in 2022 with the state contest during 4-H Youth Dairy Days in July. Additional information will be shared in the coming months.

The MSU IAT team participated in their third contest of the season, earning their highest awards and honors of the year. The team, consisting of Rachael Bosse, Drew Neyer, and Abby VanDyk, placed first in the Ayrshire cattle class, second in Brown Swiss, third in Guernsey, fifth in oral reasons, and fifth overall. There were 30 students on eight teams participating in the contest. Bosse earned the highest placing in the Ayrshire class, fourth in Brown Swiss, seventh in Guernsey, third in Holstein, second in oral reasons, and fourth place overall as an individual. Neyer placed fifth in Ayrshire, eighth in Brown Swiss, 10<sup>th</sup> in Guernsey, and seventh in oral reasons.

The two individuals competing in the senior college division representing MSU were Kristin Burkhardt and Kelsey Pasch. These two competed with 58 individuals in the contest. Pasch won first place in the Jersey class.



The two individuals competing in the senior college contest were (from left) Kelsey Pasch and Kristen Burkhardt. Photos courtesy of Allison Schafer.

“For not knowing if we would have a dairy cattle judging season earlier this summer, I’m so proud and impressed by what the MSU students and 4-H’ers accomplished this year,” said coach Joe Domecq. “The ribbons and awards are great, but what makes all of these young people winners is their dedication to showing up in a difficult time that had a lot of uncertainty. They supported each other through all the practices and contests, with the wins and losses. That is what dairy judging is about, not the cows or reasons, the community and support that comes from working toward a common goal with passion and caring about the team.”

MSU students and 4-H members competed in two contests earlier in the year, the All-American Dairy Show and World Dairy Expo, both in September.

To learn about the current program and history of dairy judging at MSU, visit the [Dairy Judging website](#).

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