



4-H Dairy Cattle Project

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

One of the most important parts of agriculture in Michigan is milk production. Our milk comes from the hundreds of dairy farms in the state. Raising dairy cattle is an exciting project to learn about, and it's more than just showing your animal at the fair!

- » Gain life and science skills by owning and taking care of dairy cattle.
- » Learn how a cow turns her food into milk for others to drink or make different dairy foods.
- » Practice good biosecurity—actions to keep you and your animals healthy—to produce high quality milk.
- » Discover how dairy products are an important part of your diet and help keep you strong and healthy.

CURRICULA & RESOURCES

Michigan 4-H Curricula

- » Michigan 4-H Animal Science Cloverbud Record Book: http://msue.anr.msu.edu/resources/cloverbud_animal_record_book
- » MSU 4-H Youth Development Dairy Cattle: http://4h.msue.msu.edu/4h/dairy_cattle

Curricula – Other States

- » Cornell University Dairy Youth Recommended Resources: <http://www.ansci.cornell.edu/4H/dairycattle/dairyresources.html>

National 4-H Curricula

- » Dairy Cattle: <http://www.4-h.org/resource-library/curriculum/4-h-dairy-cattle/cowabunga/>
 - 1 – Cowabunga (08161)
 - 2 – Moving Ahead (08162)
 - 3 – Rising to the Top (08163)
 - Helper's Guide (08164)

Other Resources

- » The Dairy Site: <http://www.thedairysite.com/>
- » Holstein Foundation: <http://www.holsteinfoundation.org/>

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THE BIG PICTURE

Starting Out:

- » Learn the breeds of dairy cattle.
- » Identify parts of the animal.
- » Explore milk production systems.

Learning More:

- » Learn how to handle and show your dairy animal.
- » Describe how a healthy dairy animal behaves and what is different if she might be sick.
- » Watch your dairy animal to learn about how she behaves.

Expanding Horizons:

- » Demonstrate how to groom a dairy heifer.

HOW CAN PARENTS SUPPORT CLOVERBUD PROJECTS?

Parents play an important role in helping their children find out what they like and don't like. As a parent, you can be supportive and encourage your child to try new things. Be there to help them figure out the answer when they have questions. Don't just answer the question for them, but help them know where to go to find the answer. The important part of a cloverbud project

is not the outcome, but the experience children have while participating. It's OK if your child ends up not liking their current project, but they should finish it and try something else. Remember, cloverbuds are at an age where they can explore lots of different topics to try and find the ones they really want to focus on in the future.



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FOCUS ON 4-H DAIRY CATTLE

Science

- » Experiment with different kinds of milk (skim, 2 percent, whole). What do you notice is the same? What is different?
- » Watch a dairy animal and make notes on what she is doing. How does she move? Stand? Lay down? What does she eat and drink? How could you tell if something was wrong with your animal?

Communication

- » Create and present a poster on a dairy breed.

Citizenship & Leadership

- » Volunteer your animal for a petting zoo to share the importance of dairy cattle.
- » Participate in a dairy promotion event.

Life Skills

- » Keep records on your animal.



Curricula & Resources Continued...

- » MSU Department of Animal Science, Youth Dairy Cattle Programs: <http://www.midairyyouth.ans.msu.edu/>
- » National Dairy Herd Improvement Association: <http://www.dhia.org/>
- » National Milk Producers Federation: <http://www.nmpf.org/>
- » World Dairy Expo: <http://www.worlddairyexpo.com/>

HOW CAN YOU GET INVOLVED?

- » Contact your local Michigan State University (MSU) Extension office for workshops, activities and events.
- » Join a local 4-H club.
- » Tour a dairy farm. Try the MSU Dairy Teaching and Research Center, open daily 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., or the Kellogg Biological Station Pasture Dairy near Kalamazoo, Michigan.
- » Attend a dairy show and observe the techniques of the participants and judges.
- » Visit a local veterinarian to learn more about animal health.
- » Attend a state level 4-H dairy event; visit http://www.ans.msu.edu/ans/youth_extension_programs for many more opportunities.
- » Complete a Michigan 4-H Cloverbud Animal Science Record Book to track your experiences in 4-H.

QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT:

- » What was your favorite part of this activity/project?
- » What do you know now that you did not know before?
- » What do you want to explore more/next?

Adapted with permission from "4-H Dairy Cattle Project" by Iowa State University Extension, 2011, Iowa 4-H Project Hot Sheet. Retrieved from <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/4h/projects/>.

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