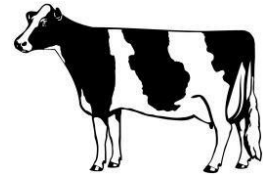




2025 DAIRY BEEF PROJECT **POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**



Species-Chair:

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IMPORTANT DATES		IMPORTANT INFO	
Registration	January 6 th , 2025	Minimum Weight @ Fair (No minimum weight for Cloverbuds)	1000lbs
Birth Date	After January 1 st , 2024		
Possession	January 1 st , 2025	Record Book (Both Market and show only)	Required Due: 9/8/2025
Tagging	January – March 2025	Thank You Note	Required Due: 10/6/2025

Participating 4-H youth must abide by all general rules and regulations listed in the Northwest Michigan 4-H Livestock Council's Policies & Procedures books and the Premium Book of the Northwestern Michigan Fair. This includes, but is not limited to, Code of Conducts, registration deadlines, showmanship and market requirements, record book and thank you letter requirements, etc.

Registration Requirements

- To participate in a 4-H market dairy beef project, youth must attain the age of thirteen (13) or older by January 1st of the calendar year OR be twelve (12) years of age with at least 2 years of market cattle experience. Youth must also be registered with 4-H online 2.0
- All dairy beef participants (market and show only) MUST complete the online registration via the Northwest Michigan 4-H Livestock Council's website NO LATER THAN midnight on January 6th, 2025.
 - Optional: Each 4-H market dairy beef participant may register an extra project animal for \$10, to be paid on tagging day. The extra dairy steer/heifer may only be used within the family that purchased the animal and only one (1) marked project may be brought to the fair per 4-H member.
- To participate in the 4-H livestock shows and auction at the fair, youth must follow all registration requirements listed in the Northwestern Michigan Fair's Premium Book.
- To participate in the 4-H livestock auction at the fair, youth must register and compete in the appropriate showmanship AND market classes

Animal Requirements

- All cattle MUST have an official radio frequency identification (RFID) electronic tag in their ear before they leave the farm on which they were born.
- Dairy Beef projects must be born on or after January 1st of the previous year.
- Dairy Beef projects must be in possession or under the care of the 4-H member by January 1st.
- Dairy Beef projects must be 100% dairy breed: Holstein, Brown Swiss, Guernsey, Jersey, etc. The calf can be a cross of 2 or more dairy breeds but cannot be crossed with a beef breed.
 - Dairy Beef projects can be a steer or heifer
 - Dairy Beef Heifers must open (not pregnant)
- Dairy Beef projects must be dehorned and show signs of dehorning. This should be done early so that it is healed by fair time. Horns cannot exceed 3".
- Dairy Beef projects must weigh a minimum of 1000 pounds at fair check-in.
- MDARD states that no lactating dairy cattle are allowed and if the cattle are originating from a licensed dairy premise's, they are required to follow the rules outlined by MDARD for exhibition per the following website: <http://www.michigan.gov/mdard/animals/id-movement-and-cattle#Exhibition>

Fair Week Requirements

- General Requirements:
 - Weigh in takes place on the first Saturday of fair.
 - Youth must be present or must have made prior arrangements with the species chair for someone else to weigh their animal.
 - Protective boots are required at all times when working with your steer/heifer (tennis shoes or sandals are not permitted).
 - NO feed, feed bags or supplies are to be left in the barn (everything must be stored at the campsite).
 - Youth are responsible for keeping their pens clean all week.
- Animal Care Requirements:
 - **Animals shall be treated humanely at all times. Any reports of unethical, inhumane, and/or abusive treatment or actions that cause distress and/or suffering to an animal will be evaluated by the Species Chair, Fair Superintendent, Fair Veterinarian, and/or other appropriate individuals and may lead to disqualification and removal from all 4-H and Open Livestock Shows held at the fair.**
 - Youth are responsible for providing enough grain and hay to care for their steer/heifer throughout the entire week.
 - Youth are responsible for feeding, watering and caring for their animal the entire week.
 - Administration of ANYTHING other than grain/feed, hay or water MUST be cleared through the Livestock Council Species Chair, the Fair Superintendent AND the Fair Veterinarian. Documentation must be signed and the Species Chair and/or Superintendent MUST be present during administration.
 - This includes but IS NOT LIMITED TO: Electrolyte replacements, (Gatorade, Pedialyte, electrolyte powders, etc.); Medications (Aspirin, Pepto Bismol, Antibiotics, etc.); Bloat Drench; etc.
 - Failure to follow this policy WILL result in disqualification and removal from all 4-H and Open Livestock Shows held at the fair.
- Show Day Policies:

- Failure to comply with these policies WILL result in a disqualification from the show.
- All cattle barns will close 2 hours prior to the start of the first cattle show.

- During the barn closure times, only the 4-H'er and ONE (1) support person of their choice may enter the barn and/or wash rack areas.
- The 4-H'er and their support person may fit and prepare the steer/heifer for show.
- Use of false tail heads or adding of hair or hemp is prohibited.
- NO forced administration of fluids to create gut fill will be allowed.
- Possession of the equipment used to produce gut fill will not be allowed.
- Completely clean and scrape down pens.
- Stall mats needs to be taken home. All mats not taken home at the end of fair will become property of the fair.
- Bars on the pen dividers need to be scrubbed and wiped down.

After Fair Requirements

- All market dairy beef participants must turn in a completed record book at the September Livestock council meeting to the specie chair.
- Electronic copies of a record book will not be accepted.
- A Thank You note and 5x7 Auction photo must be given to your buyer and a copy of the thank you note is due at the October Livestock Council meeting.
- Failure to submit a completed record book at the September meeting and a Thank you at the October meeting of the 4-H Livestock Council WILL result in suspension from the 4-H Livestock classes and auction held during the NWMI Fair the following year. Suspended youth who complete their record book and submit it to the 4-H Livestock Council by the November meeting that same year will again to eligible to register for 4-H Livestock classes and auction held during the NWMI Fair the following year.

Important Information & Tips for a Successful Dairy Beef Project

- Cost:
 - Animal: \$800 to \$2500
 - Feed: \$1500-\$2000 (figure \$2000 if you must purchase all your feed)
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- Housing:
 - Shelter: from rain, snow and sun
 - Exercise: Ensure that the dairy steer will have room to move at it's final size
- Nutrition:
 - Fresh water at all times. Ensure that it does not freeze throughout the winter.
 - Purchased steer/heifer should weigh between 450-600 pounds in the fall.
 - Dairy Beef should be fed 3% of its body weight per day in order to gain 2.25 to 2.5 pounds of weight per day (approx. 750 pounds of gain)
 - Feeding from November to August (280 days) will require approx. 5000 pounds of feed
 - Feed hay at all times
 - Most grain mixed contain 14-16% protein. If feeding straight corn or oats you will need to feed about 1 to 1.5 pounds of protein supplement each day
 - Different Feeds:
 - Energy – corn (cracked or whole shelled), processed grain from feed mill/store
 - Roughage – hay, silage
 - Supplements – soybean meal, processed supplements from feed mill/store

- A finished project will have .2 to .3 inches of fat cover over his back and ribs. As

- fair approaches, cut back or increase the grain to control the amount of fat finish
- Be sure any changes to the animal's feed and nutrition are done gradually
- Health:
 - Observe daily: note any differences in behavior (not eating not getting up, sluggish, ears down, etc.) or any difference in appearance (bloating, runny nose, mucus eyes, etc.). Changes in behavior or appearance usually indicates something is wrong; seek help or advice from a veterinarian immediately.
 - Wash and clip your steer/heifer several times before the fair so it gets used to it.
 - Trim hooves about 4-6 weeks before the fair
 - Vaccination boosters are highly recommended: injection should include IBS, BRSV, PB, and BVD type I and II vaccines.
 - Dairy Beef projects should be wormed once every 2 month, leaving a proper withdrawal period before slaughter
- Training:
 - Start slow: Begin by just watching and talking to your project animal.
 - Tie your steer/heifer to a fence post or secure object for an hour or two at a time. This will get it used to being restrained and standing still. This is also a good time to brush it down so that it gets used to being touched. For safety reasons, NEVER leave your animal alone when it is tied up.
 - Expose your steer/heifer to as many sights/sounds as possible; i.e. play a radio in the barn
 - Be sure to practice with the show halter and show stick that will be used during fair
- Fair Week Show Attire:
 - Clean pants or jeans (free of rips or holes)
 - Long or short sleeve dress shirt (button down is recommended)
 - Protective boots or leather shoes
 - A show halter, show comb and show stick

Tips

- ASK QUESTIONS!!! If you encounter a situation or a question that you don't know the answer to, be sure to ask for help. Reach out to the species chair, your club leader, another member raising a large beef or any member of the Livestock Council board. If that person does not have the answer, they WILL help you get it.
- Education – Attend as many education sessions and events as possible to help further your knowledge of your species.
- Project Selection – Always focus on looking for good structure: sturdy legs, sound hooves, a straight back, a wide and long loin and a full/meaty rear leg. Animals should look free from illness and walk without any noticeable stiffness.
- Hot Weather – A Dairy Beef will tend to lose its appetite when it is too hot. If the temperature outside is above 80 degrees, cool down your steer/heifer with water or a bath; Remember to always start by putting the water on the legs and working up toward the back.
- Keep Good Records – Use a calendar to track purchases, weekly feeding schedules, weight gain and medication. This information is important for your record book and is a great guide to use for next year's project.

