

WESTERN REGIONAL DAIRY CHALLENGE

RULES and REGULATIONS

GENERAL RULES

Contestants will be required to sign an honor code and abide by it. Contestants cannot use cell phones for any purpose during the contest. Contestants will be permitted to access the Internet to obtain resources to aid in preparation of their presentations.

COMPUTERS

Please refer to the Computer Requirements page posted at http://www.dairychallenge.org/ws_event.php for computer needs and specific Software and Hardware Minimums for this contest. A failure to meet these requirements will at a minimum be a major hindrance to team performance and may at worst render the team noncompetitive. Schools should also consult this page for information regarding cameras for team use at the farms.

MATERIALS AND DATA

Schools should bring calculators, measuring tapes, stopwatches, pens and clean notepads. Additional measuring tapes may be available from contest management. Cell phones are not permitted during the contest for any purpose. If your school has cameras, please bring it. Use of cell phone, iPad or similar cameras is prohibited at the farms and during the contest.

Each team will be issued a computer loaded with herd data in all three major dairy management programs (DairyComp 305, PCDART and DHI Plus). Each team will also receive the necessary data to analyze an operating farm and their herd management practices. These data may be provided in print or electronic form, using standard industry formats.

The data will be the real on-farm data. The data shall consist of farm goals, financial statistics, cost details or estimates, standard operating procedures, ration formulations for all feeding groups, Penn State particle separator analysis of feed, housing characteristics, manure or nutrient management, milking procedures and equipment specifications, reproductive data, production records, and herd summaries with a history of production characteristics for the last 2 years.

The teams may use one or more of the data formats and great care is taken to see that the same data is available on each software platform and there is no advantage of one source over the other. In some cases, the data sets are not perfect because they are real data sets. Often in the real world you will run into imperfect or conflicting data sets. **The judges' panels receive the same data sets as the contestants and have the same amount of time with the farm manager.**

The data will be provided to each team on Thursday night, allowing teams to assess the farm and strategies their approach to address the issues. The teams are allowed to keep the computer with the data overnight, however, the team must return the data computers prior to breakfast on Friday morning. Industry mentors will be working with the aggregate teams of students. Students will have the ability to access the internet during the contest.

BIO-SECURITY

These steps are recommended for reasons of proper animal hygiene.

- All contest members are required to bring new or disinfected rubber boots (disinfectant will be provided) or

plastic boots for each farm visit and should be wearing clean protective clothing.

- Do your best to avoid contact with all farm animals for few days days prior to the contest.
- Any individual who has been in contact with infected farms or animals should have no contact with wild or domestic animals at least 10 days before arriving at the contest and must be wearing different protective clothing.

STRUCTURE OF VISITS

The teams will be handled in-groups of a maximum of twelve teams per farm visit. By analyzing the data provided each team will have already prioritized the farm areas needing a detailed examination. The farm visit will consist of ~ 180 minutes with each team deciding how to allocate their members and time to cover all areas of the farm. The judge's panel should arrive at the farm at the same time. At each area of the farm there will be assistant superintendents to answer questions, monitor the students, and provide directions when needed. Students are not allowed to ask the dairy owner or their employees any questions while on their visit, because employees can give different answers to various team members or misleading answers. Students will be allowed to examine most areas of the dairy but for bio-security will not have access to all areas. All teams will be allowed to participate in a group questioning of the farm manager or consultant to get necessary information about the data already provided and the visit. The judges' panel will also have an interview with the manager to determine their official recommendations. The judge's panel will ask the farm manager questions that pertain to their herd goals, their herd observations, and information in the herd data sets provided.

GROUP MANAGER INTERVIEWS

In the afternoon for about one hour, we will have group interviews with the farm owners/managers, with each farm meeting being held in separate rooms. ALL team members are requested to be present, and a moderator and the judges for the farm will be present (coaches are allowed to sit in on the meeting but not to ask questions). Each of the teams, in numerical order, will be given initially 4 minutes to ask questions of the farm manager to get additional specific information about the facts in the data sets already provided, the herd manager's goals, and other observations during their visit. If there is any time remaining of the 45 minutes after all teams have had their chance to ask questions, then additional questions can be asked at large until the 40 minutes as expired.

After the teams are done interviewing the manager, the judges' panel will be allotted 5-10 minutes to ask questions of the manager. A moderator will be present during each session to exclude questions that call for a conclusion on the part of the manager. An individual will be asked to rephrase a question if it is deemed inappropriate. Later the moderator should inform them why it was inappropriate to ask the question in that way. If the initial stage of asking questions is a little slow in starting, the moderator can ask the farm manager to make some general remarks or the moderator or a judge could ask the first question.

TIME MANAGEMENT

One of the objectives of the contest is to mirror what happens to consultants in the real world of on farm consulting. Therefore, strict time allocations are followed which are similar to what consultants would be given by a real farm manager. Time management and prioritization of questions are very important throughout the contest.

Each team will be asked to turn in their final presentation on a specific time schedule (approximately 5:30 pm). This schedule allows the contest management to make sure they have correctly downloaded the presentations to the machines for projection on the next day, and allows all teams to have similar amounts of time for preparation after their interview with the manager.

PRESENTATIONS

Each team will be asked to provide a presentation to a panel of four judges that recommends improvements to the operation of the dairy and/or its finances. Each team will COMPLETE their presentations on the first day (Friday) and will deliver their FINAL PRESENTATIONS on the second day (Saturday). The contestants are encouraged to network with sponsors and other contestants after they finish their presentation.

Presentation order of the possible teams will be by random draw. Each team will follow in order at approximately 45-minute or 1 hour intervals until all teams have given their presentations. The presentations should be designed as if the team was making a presentation to the farm owner or manager. Team number should be included in their presentation.

Each team will be allowed 20 minutes for their presentation with notices from a timer when 5 minutes and 2 minutes are left in their 20-minute time limit. Time limits are strictly enforced, and teams will be stopped even if the presentation is not complete. An additional 10 minutes will follow for questions from the judges' panel. All member of the team members must speak during some part of the presentation and during the question session. Teams may briefly confer on a question or may choose not to confer during questions, as each team member should have a specialty area in questioning that they can be responsible for.

Every team will have access to PowerPoint, a laser pointer, and a projector to aid with their presentation. All coaches will be allowed to view each team's presentation. A part of the room will also be open to sponsors for viewing the presentations. No spectators will be allowed to enter or leave a room until the entire presentation is complete.

After each presentation the judges' panel will privately rate each team against the scorecard. Each team and their coach(s) will then be invited back for a ten-minute session where the judges comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the presentation. After all presentations are complete a final rating will be given to each team. A summary of the judges' evaluation for each farm visit will also be provided. Teams will receive these materials at the end of the contest.

STUDENT NETWORKING WITH STUDENTS AND SPONSORS

Each contestant will have the opportunity to network with fellow contestants and company representatives of the various sponsors. Several meal functions will also be provided to enhance networking opportunities. The contestant summary will be provided to all contestants, coaches, and sponsors to allow post contest contact and future networking. In addition, representatives of each sponsor will have the opportunity to view the presentations of the teams to watch the students in action. This should provide an excellent opportunity for each contestant and sponsor to maximize his or her ability to network for the future.

BENEFITS AND AWARDS

Each individual, team or school will receive complimentary rooms for 2 nights (reservations will be made from completed entry forms by contest management). If Schools are unable to return to home campus for Saturday night, this night will also be covered at a hotel of the choice, with the cost per room not to exceed the cost of the room in Twin Falls - \$69/nt. Simply send receipts to contest management.

There will be rankings given to each team. Each participant will receive a Dairy Challenge Certificate of Participation. Members of the 1st and 2nd Place teams from each host farm division will be announced as the winners. Group contest photos will be taken of each participating university. The contest results will available to all sponsors, published in local farm publications and in several prominent national agriculture publications. The top teams in each division will be featured on the Dairy Challenge website www.dairychallenge.org.