

## **WESTERN REGIONAL DAIRY CHALLENGE RULES and REGULATIONS**

### **GENERAL RULES**

Contestants will be required to sign an honor code and abide by it. Contestants will be permitted to access the Internet to obtain resources to aid in preparation of their presentations.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

#### **Regional Events**

Each participant in these North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge events must be a student in a North American educational institution that offers classes that have emphasis in dairy production.

Participants must be enrolled in a program of study to meet the requirements for a bachelor's degree or be enrolled in a dairy/animal degree or certificate granting program and have completed one year or equivalent of course work. Students, with or without a bachelor's degree, enrolled in graduate or professional studies programs are not eligible.

A student is ineligible to participate if he/she has (1) competed in the North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge National Contest, or (2) been an employee or paid consultant of any agricultural organization or service for which his/her duties included on-farm dairy consulting (excluding internships). A contestant may only participate/compete in two regional contests, one Dairy Challenge Academy, and one National Dairy Challenge contest.

This year's virtual contest will form teams by school. Team size should be 3-6 students. Schools with more than 6 students can have two (2) teams. Schools with less than 3 participants may independently work with another school to form a combined team.

Students will be responsible for completing an online Student Information Form and upload a resume - coaches *do not* have to collect and submit student forms or resume. The links to the Student Information Form and resume upload will be available on the Western regional web site. Student information forms and resume must be submitted by the deadline. Students who miss the deadline without prior permission will be canceled from the event.

### **MATERIALS AND DATA**

Teams will be provided with electronic data in all three major dairy management programs (DairyComp 305, PCDART and DHI Plus) including necessary information to analyze an operating farm and their herd management practices. 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 Wednesday, allowing teams to assess the farm and strategies their approach to address the issues. Industry mentors will be working with the teams of students. Students may access the internet during the contest.

### **STRUCTURE OF VISITS**

For this Virtual contest, photos and short videos will take the place of the in-person farm visit. These will be available on the regional web site.

### **GROUP MANAGER INTERVIEWS**

All teams will participate in online team interviews with the farm owners/managers. ALL team members should be present. Teams should designate a team leader to ask questions on behalf of the team. Teams some join the interview with their questions already developed. A moderator and the judges will be present (coaches are allowed to sit in on the meeting but not to ask questions). Teams may 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. Teams should determine a leader who will ask questions on behalf of the team. Student leaders will interview one at a time by team number, continuing to rotate through the teams until time is up. After the teams are done interviewing the manager, the judges' panel will be allotted 30 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.

### **PRESENTATIONS**

Each team will be asked to provide a presentation to a panel of four-five judges that recommends improvements to the operation of the dairy and/or its finances. This year, each team will complete their presentation on Thursday and will give their presentations on Friday. The contestants are encouraged to network with sponsors and other contestants by joining the Career Fair on Friday afternoon.

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.

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. 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 receive resumes from each participating student, will have the opportunity to meet with student during the career fair, and will have access to the team presentations to see 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**

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 be 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](http://www.dairychallenge.org).