

National Dairy Challenge Contest & Academy

Convention Center at
Denny Sanford Premier
Center
1201 N West Avenue
Sioux Falls, SD 57104

April 12-14, 2026

Sheraton Sioux Falls
& Convention Center
1211 North West Avenue
Sioux Falls, SD 57104
Phone: (605) 331-0100

Convention Center at Denny Sanford Premier Center

All events are in the convention center unless otherwise noted

Full Schedule

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Saturday, April 11

12 noon	Staff arrive	
10:00 AM - 10:00 PM	Set up Dairy Challenge Central (DCC) office	Meeting Room 3
	Set up IT area	
	Coaches, teams, board, arrive in Visalia	
3:30 PM	Precon Meeting with hotel staff	

Sunday, April 12

9:00 AM - 10:00 PM	Dairy Challenge Central & IT office	Meeting Room 3
7:30 AM - 10:30 AM	NAIDC Board of Directors breakfast & meeting	Meeting Room 11
12:00 PM and 2:00 PM	Optional Pre-Contest Dairy Tour (offered at 2 times)	Perry Creek Dairy 20243 Co Rd K22 Merrill, IA 51038
4:45 PM - 5:15 PM	Registration (Contest Coaches, Judges, Sponsors/Volunteers)	Meeting Room 3
5:00 PM	Social Media Corps meeting	Meeting Room 3
5:30 PM	Dinner	Ballroom A
	Welcome 5:30 PM Dinner 6:15 PM Dairy Challenge Welcome – Jeff Elliott, Chair, NAIDC Board 6:20 PM Midwest Regional Welcome – Gail Carpenter & Maristela Rovai, Host Co-Chairs	
6:30 PM	Group Photo	
6:15 PM	Academy Advisor orientation	Ballroom B
7:00 - 9:30 PM	Contest software followed by distribution of contest materials. <i>All teams (contest students) should be present.</i>	Ballroom A
7:00 PM	Snacks available	
7:15 - 9:45 PM	Academy Session 1: Software overview followed by distribution of Academy materials	Ballroom B
7:30 PM	Judges' orientation	Meeting Room 1-2
7:30 PM	Gathering for new coaches	Meeting Room 7
		Meeting Room 6 -or- Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8608448448?pwd=NjFrd2pJTmg2NW5HdjVvRUNUMVFkdz09&omn=86579731866 Meeting ID: 860 844 8448 Passcode: 980248
7:30 PM	Volunteer meeting for Monday morning farm visit volunteers	

Monday, April 13

6:00 AM - 9:00 PM	Dairy Challenge Central & IT office	Meeting Room 3
6:00 AM – 8:30 AM	Breakfast buffet	Ballroom A
6:00 AM – 8:00 AM	Sponsor and media check-in at Dairy Challenge Central	
6:30 AM	Volunteer meeting (instructions for farm visits)	Meeting Room 6
6:30 AM - 12:00 PM	Contest Farm Visit	
6:30 AM	Farm visit overview and instructions for students and judges	Ballroom A
6:45 AM	Teams begin loading buses for contest dairy visits.	

	<i>Judge panels follow buses travelling in a group in their own vehicle.</i>	
7:00 AM	Buses 1 and 2 leave for Contest Dairy AB	Tri-Cross Dairy, 45144 289th St, Viborg, SD 57070. 51 minutes SW
7:15 AM	Buses 3 and 4 leave for Contest Dairy CD	Moody Dairy, 48778 264th Street, Garretson, SD 57030. 45 minutes NE
7:30 AM - 12:00 PM	Academy Session 2: Farm Visit	
7:30 AM	Farm visit overview and instructions for Academy students and mentors	Ballroom B
7:45 AM	Groups begin loading buses for Academy dairy visit	
8:00 AM	Buses 5 and 6 leave for Academy Dairy E	E: Boadwine Farms Inc. 25130 470th Avenue, Baltic, SD 57003. 25 min N
8:00 AM	Buses 7 and 8 leave for Academy Dairy E	
	<i>Academy Advisors may ride buses or follow in their own vehicle.</i>	
8:00 AM	Contest teams and judges arrive at dairies - 15 min Dairy managers welcome teams, provide overview and guidelines - 2 hours On-site assessment of contest dairies - 15 min All teams gather with dairy managers for group interview with judges observing	
8:00 AM	Coaches meet, depart for dairies	Sheraton lobby
8:30 AM - 8:40 AM	Academy groups arrive at dairy - 15 min Dairy managers welcome groups, provide overview and guidelines - 2 hours On-site assessment of dairy - 15 min All groups gather with dairy managers for group interview	
11:00 AM	Buses 1 and 2 leave Contest Dairy AB	
11:15 AM	Buses 3 and 4 leave Contest Dairy CD	
11:30 AM	Buses 5 and 6 leave for Academy Dairy E	
11:30 AM	Buses 7 and 8 leave for Academy Dairy E	
	<i>All buses return by 12:00 PM</i>	
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM	Lunch buffet	Ballroom A
11:30 AM	Lunch: Coaches and Staff	Ballroom A
12:00 PM - 12:45 PM	Contest Lunch - <i>Teams pick up lunches and workroom assignments upon return from dairy</i>	Ballroom A
12:00 PM	Academy students and Advisors return with time to freshen up before lunch	
12:30 PM - 1:30 PM	Academy Lunch	Ballroom A
12:15 PM – 1:00 PM	Judges have lunch with dairy managers	Dairy AB: Meeting Room 1 Dairy CD: Meeting Room 2
12:45 PM – 5:45 PM	Teams plan and develop presentations in assigned work rooms	Sheraton assigned workrooms
1:00 PM – 1:15 PM	Volunteer meeting, instructions for interviews	Meeting Room 6
1:00 PM – 1:15 PM	Judges meeting, instructions for the afternoon	Dairy AB: Meeting Room 1 Dairy CD: Meeting Room 2
1:15 PM - 6:00 PM	Judges plan and develop presentations in assigned work room	Dairy AB: Meeting Room 1 Dairy CD: Meeting Room 2
1:30 PM - 6:00 PM	Academy Session 3: Analyzing a Dairy	Ballroom B
1:45 PM	Interviews with Dairy Managers	Ballroom B
	Academy E:	Ballroom B
1:10 PM – 3:50 PM	Individual team interviews with dairy managers with judges observing (17 minutes/2 teams, scheduled at 20-min intervals)	Dairy A & B: Meeting Room 6 Dairy C & D: Meeting Room 7
	<u>Dairy: A & B C & D</u>	
1:10 PM	Teams: 1 10 19 28	
1:30 PM	Teams: 2 11 20 29	
1:50 PM	Teams: 3 12 21 30	
2:10 PM	Teams: 4 13 22 31	
2:30 PM	Teams: 5 14 23 32	

2:50 PM	Teams: 6 15 24 33	
3:10 PM	Teams: 7 16 25 34	
3:30 PM	Teams: 8 17 26 35	
3:50 PM	Teams: 9 18 27 36	
2:00 PM – 5:00 PM	Snacks available	Lobby outside of Meeting Rooms 1-2
3:00 PM - 5:30 PM	Coaches Meeting and Reception	Meeting Rooms 11-12
5:45 PM - 6:15 PM	Teams turn in final presentations. <i>Each team should send only 2 representatives for turn in</i>	Meeting Room 3
6:00 PM	Judges turn in their assessment and contest data	Meeting Room 3
7:00 PM	Training for volunteer casino dealers at 7PM	Ballroom A
7:00 PM - 10:00 PM	Monday Night Student-Sponsor Networking Event: Country & Western BBQ and Casino Night	Ballroom A
Tuesday, April 14		
6:00 AM - 10:00 PM	Dairy Challenge Central & IT office	Meeting Room 3
6:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Breakfast buffet	Ballroom A
6:30 AM - 7:00 AM	Judges meeting	Meeting Room 1
6:30 AM	Volunteer meeting	Meeting Room 6
7:00 AM - 10:00 AM	Teams to report to holding room 15 minutes prior to scheduled presentation time.	Dairy A&B: Room 5 Dairy C&D: Room 11
7:15 AM - 11:15 AM	Morning team presentations (60-minute intervals)* <i>* once teams have presented, they should meet with sponsors in the Career & Innovation Fair</i>	Dairy A: Meeting Room 1 Dairy B: Meeting Room 2 Dairy C: Meeting Room 6 Dairy D: Meeting Room 7
	<u>Dairy: A B C D</u>	
	7:15 - Teams: 1 10 19 28	
	8:15 - Teams: 2 11 20 29	
	9:15 - Teams: 3 12 21 30	
	10:15 - Teams: 4 13 22 31	
7:30 AM - 8:30 AM	Sponsor set-up for Career & Innovation Fair	Prefunction
7:30 AM-12:30 PM	Academy Session 4: Farm Analysis Presentations	
	Academy E:	Groups 1-5: Meeting Room 8 Groups 6-10: Meeting Room 9 Groups 11-15: Ballroom B Groups 16-20: Meeting Room 10 Groups 21-25: Meeting Room 12
7:30 AM - 8:30 AM	Academy Presentation Practice	
	Academy E:	Groups 1-5: Meeting Room 8 Groups 6-10: Meeting Room 9 Groups 11-15: Ballroom B Groups 16-20: Meeting Room 10 Groups 21-25: Meeting Room 12
8:30 AM - 11:15 AM	Academy Group Presentations (30 minute intervals) <i>* once groups have presented they should debrief then return to presentation room</i>	Groups 1-5: Meeting Room 8 Groups 6-10: Meeting Room 9 Groups 11-15: Ballroom B Groups 16-20: Meeting Room 10 Groups 21-25: Meeting Room 12
	8:30 - Groups: 1 6 11 16 21	
	9:00 - Groups: 2 7 12 17 22	
	9:30 - Groups: 3 8 13 18 23	
	10:00 - Break	
	10:15 - Groups: 4 9 14 19 24	
	10:45 - Groups: 5 10 15 20 25	
8:30 AM - 12:00 PM	AM Corporate Technology Presentations and Career & Innovation Fair for afternoon presenting Contest Teams	Lobby
8:15 AM - 11:30 AM	Morning team debriefing	Ballroom A

	8:15 - Teams 1, 10, 19, 28 9:15 - Teams 2, 11, 20, 29 10:15 - Teams 3, 12, 21, 30 11:15 - Teams 4, 13, 20, 31	
8:30 AM - 12:00 PM	Career & Innovation Fair	Lobby
8:45 AM - 10:50 AM	Corporate Technology Presentations <i>* All afternoon presenting Contest Teams are required to attend all these sessions - attendance will be taken.</i>	
8:45 AM - 9:15 AM	Choose one: Customer & Consultant of the Future. <i>Lauren Blauch, Dairy Innovation Lead Advisor, Cargill Inc.</i>	Meeting Room 13
	Advancements of Technology in Genetic and Reproductive Programs. <i>Ethan Haywood, Genetic Specialist, Select Sires Inc.</i>	Meeting Room 14
9:30 AM - 10:00 AM	Choose one: Macro Trends & Technology Shaping the Future of Dairy Farming. <i>Kyle Froslic, Agribusiness Lending Vice President, AgCountry Farm Credit Services</i>	Meeting Room 13
	Precision Dairying: Driving Performance Through Sensor Technology and Genetic Innovation. <i>Brian Behnke, Genetic Program Specialist, ST Genetics</i>	Meeting Room 14
10:15 AM - 10:50 AM	Keynote: Turning Insights into Action. <i>Kevin Coffey, Chief Executive Officer, VAS</i>	Meeting Room 14
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM	Coffee Break available	Prefunction
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM	Contest Team photos	Prefunction
11:00 AM - 1:30 PM	Lunch buffet	Ballroom A
11:15 AM - 11:45 AM	Judge Lunch	Ballroom A
11:30 AM	Volunteer meeting	Meeting Room 6
11:30 AM - 12:30 PM	Advisor feedback, comments from dairies, debriefing, wrap up and group picture.	Ballroom B
11:45 AM - 4:45 PM	Teams to report to holding room 15 minutes prior to scheduled presentation time.	Dairy A&B: Room 5 Dairy C&D: Room 11
12:00 PM - 5:00 PM	Afternoon team presentations (60-minute intervals)* <i>* once teams have presented, they should meet with sponsors in the Career & Innovation Fair</i>	Dairy A: Meeting Room 1 Dairy B: Meeting Room 2 Dairy C: Meeting Room 6 Dairy D: Meeting Room 7
	<u>Dairy: A B C D</u>	
	12:00 - Teams: 5 14 23 32	
	1:00 - Teams: 6 15 24 33	
	2:00 - Teams: 7 16 25 34	
	3:00 - Teams: 8 17 26 35	
	4:00 - Teams: 9 18 27 36	
1:00 PM - 4:15 PM	Career & Innovation Fair	Lobby
1:30 PM - 4:15 PM	Academy Session 5: Corporate Technology Presentations and Career & Innovation Fair	
1:30 PM - 3:35 PM	PM Corporate Technology Presentations <i>* All morning presenting Contest Teams and all Academy Students are required to attend all these sessions - attendance will be taken.</i>	
1:30 PM - 2:05 PM	Keynote: Turning Insights into Action. <i>Kevin Coffey, Chief Executive Officer, VAS</i>	Meeting Room 12-14
2:20 PM - 2:50 PM	Choose one: Customer & Consultant of the Future. <i>Lauren Blauch, Dairy Innovation Lead Advisor, Cargill Inc.</i>	Meeting Room 8-10
	Advancements of Technology in Genetic and Reproductive Programs. <i>Ethan Haywood, Genetic Specialist, Select Sires Inc.</i>	Meeting Room 12-14
3:05 PM - 3:35 PM	Choose one: Macro Trends & Technology Shaping the Future of Dairy Farming. <i>Kyle Froslic, Agribusiness Lending Vice President, AgCountry Farm Credit Services</i>	Meeting Room 8-10
	Precision Dairying: Driving Performance Through Sensor Technology and Genetic Innovation. <i>Brian Behnke, Genetic Program Specialist, ST Genetics</i>	Meeting Room 12-14
3:45 PM - 4:15 PM	Career & Innovation Fair - Academy	
1:00 PM - 5:15 PM	Afternoon teams debriefing	Ballroom A

	1:00 - Teams 5, 14, 23, 32 2:00 - Teams 6, 15, 24, 33 3:00 - Teams 7, 16, 25, 34 4:00 - Teams 8, 17, 26, 35 5:00 - Teams 9, 18, 27, 36	
4:45 PM - 5:30 PM	Dismantle sponsor booths	
5:00 PM – 6:00 PM	Judges complete and turn in assessments and rankings, finalize presentation	Meeting Room 3
6:00 PM - 6:15 PM	Judges meet with Contest host farms	Dairy AB: Meeting Room 8-10 Dairy CD: Meeting Room 12-14
6:15 PM – 6:45 PM	Judges present their findings to participants	Dairy AB: Meeting Room 8-10 Dairy CD: Meeting Room 12-14
6:45 PM	Presentation equipment returned to IT	Meeting Room 3
7:15 PM - 9:30 PM	NAIDC Awards Banquet	Ballroom AB