

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

Schedule at a Glance

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Sunday, April 12

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
5:30 PM	Dinner	Ballroom A
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
7:30 PM	Judges' orientation	Meeting Room 1-2
7:30 PM	Gathering for new coaches	Meeting Room 6
7:15 - 9:45 PM	Academy Session 1: Software overview followed by distribution of Academy materials	Ballroom B

Monday, April 13

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
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
11:30 AM - 1:00 PM	Lunch buffet	Ballroom A
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
1:30 PM - 6:00 PM	Academy Session 3: Analyzing a Dairy Interviews with Dairy Managers	Ballroom B
1:10 PM – 3:50 PM	Individual team interviews with dairy managers with judges observing (17 minutes/team, scheduled at 20-min intervals)	Dairy A & B: Meeting Room 6 Dairy C & D: Meeting Room 7
3:00 PM - 5:30 PM	Coaches Meeting and Reception	TBA
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
7:00 PM - 10:00 PM	Monday Night Student-Sponsor Networking Event: Country BBQ & Casino Night	Ballroom A

Tuesday, April 14

6:00 AM - 9:00 AM	Breakfast buffet	Grand Ballroom A
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
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	
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: Meeting Room 13 Groups 16-20: Meeting Room 14
8:30 AM - 12:00 PM	AM Corporate Technology Presentations and Career & Innovation Fair for afternoon presenting Contest Teams	Prefunction, Dogwood, Live Oak
8:15 AM - 11:30 AM	Morning team debriefing	Ballroom A
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM	Contest Team photos	Prefunction
11:00 AM-1:30 PM	Lunch buffet	Ballroom A

11:30 AM	Volunteer meeting	Meeting Room 6
11:45 AM - 2:45 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 - 4:00 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
1:00 PM - 4:15 PM	PM Corporate Technology Presentations and Career & Innovation Fair for morning presenting teams and Academy students	Prefunction, Dogwood, Hawthorne
1:00 PM - 4:15 PM	Career & Innovation Fair	Prefunction
1:30 PM - 4:15 PM	Academy Session 5: Corporate Technology Presentations and Career & Innovation Fair	
1:30 PM - 3:45 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>	
3:45 PM - 4:15 PM	Career & Innovation Fair - Academy	
1:00 PM - 4:15 PM	Afternoon teams debriefing	Ballroom A
4:45 PM - 5:30 PM	Dismantle sponsor booths	
5:45 PM – 6:15 PM	Judges present their findings to participants	Dairy AB: Meeting Room 8-10 Dairy CD: Meeting Room 12-14
6:45:00 PM - 9:00 PM	NAIDC Awards Banquet	Ballroom AB