



**21<sup>st</sup> Annual Western Regional Dairy Challenge**

**March 5-7, 2026**

**Hosted by University of Alberta in Camrose, Alberta Canada**

**To Register: <https://2026WesternRegionalDairyChallenge.eventbrite.com>**

**Deadline to register is Friday, January 16, 2026**

December 4, 2025

The 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Western Regional Dairy Challenge will be held in Camrose, AB Canada March 5-7, 2026. Registration entry forms are available to complete online at the Western Contest page on the Dairy Challenge website <https://www.dairychallenge.org/contests/western/>. This letter contains important information about participation in the Western Regional Dairy Challenge. Please review it carefully.

**Participation requirements for student participation include:**

1. Being actively enrolled in an agricultural curriculum which includes classes related to dairy production.
2. Having satisfactorily completed at least one year of college.
3. Having a genuine interest in a possible career associated in the dairy industry.
4. Students are eligible to participate in 2 regionals, 2 academies, 1 national contest. *New this year: Students who participated in 2 regionals at a 2-year school, then transferred to a 4-year school will still have eligibility to participate in another regional. This would allow these transfer students the opportunity to participate in a total of 3 regionals, 2 academies, 1 national contest.*

**Registration:** Registration fee is \$50 per student participant and is due at time of entry.

Deadline to register is Friday, January 16, 2026.

Each school may register up to 6 students. If you have additional students interested in participating, you may register them as alternates. Alternates will be added should we have fewer than 60 students with a maximum capacity of 72. Please review Western Contest Rules, Eligibility of Contestants as you select participating students.

Schools will be notified of their acceptance shortly after the January 16 deadline. Please review Contest Rules, Eligibility of Contestants as you select participating students.

*As a reminder, passports are required for entry between the US and Canada. Current processing times to get a passport are 4-6 weeks. Passports must also be more than 90 days from expiring. For the latest travel guidance, visit the [U.S. State Department's Canada travel page](#).*

To register go to <https://2026WesternRegionalDairyChallenge.eventbrite.com> Be prepared with your students' email addresses when you begin registration.

Once participation is confirmed (on or about January 16), students will be responsible for completing a Student Information form online. A link to this form will be available on the Dairy Challenge web site after confirmations are sent, on or around January 22. Students have until February 5, 2026 to submit their form. The signing of the Contestant Liability Waiver, Contest Information Release Waiver, and the Contestant Honor Code will be handled on the online Student Information form.

Students should also prepare a resume for upload by February 5. The upload link will be available on the western contest page at <https://www.dairychallenge.org/contests/western/> Resumes will be distributed to sponsors for the Western Region for recruiting purposes. In addition, students should bring copies with them for the career fair on Saturday.

**Student information forms must be submitted, and resumes must be uploaded by the February 5 deadline.** Students who miss the deadline without prior permission will be canceled from the event.

Teams will be aggregated, meaning students will be assigned to a team with students from other universities.

**Coach's Webinar:** We will be hosting a webinar for coaches attending the Western Regional contest on Tuesday, December 16 at 1 PM Central, 12 PM Mountain, 11 AM Pacific to help you prepare for your participation in the contest. Meeting access information is below.

#### **Western Dairy Challenge Coaches Webinar**

**Tuesday, December 16 at 1:00 PM CST, 12:00 PM MST, 11:00 AM PST**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/8608448448?pwd=NjFrd2pJTmg2NW5HdjVvRUNUMVFBdz09&omn=88996898058>

Meeting ID: 860 844 8448 | Passcode: 980248

**Computers:** Participants will use their own computers for the contest (computers will not be provided). It is important that each team has at least 2 computers to work with. Note, Mac's do not work with the dairy software, so schools may need to make arrangements for students who have Macs. See computer requirements on the Western page at <https://www.dairychallenge.org/contests/western/> Schools are asked to check in at least 1 additional university computer, 2 if possible, as backups and for use during the contest.

Dairy software (DHI-Plus, PCDART and Dairy Comp) will be available for downloading from the Western site. Students should download the software to their computers BEFORE coming to the contest. Doing so ensures teams have the maximum time to review data. Support is available if needed.

All contest materials will be posted to a secure web site only accessible to registered participants. Students will have access to the contest data once onsite Thursday evening. We are asking coaches to ensure that all contest data is removed from your students' computers after the contest ends.

**Hotel Accommodations:** Contest management will make all the necessary hotel reservations for your team and yourself. All participants will be staying at the Days Inn Camrose Norseman at 6505 48<sup>th</sup>

Avenue, Camrose AB T4V 3K3, Canada. Rooms will be provided at no extra charge for each participating student and coach on Thursday March 5 and Friday March 6:

1 room(s) for female participants

1 room(s) for male participants

1 room(s) for coach(es)

Please note that rooms will be reserved using the student names provided on your registration form. Due to deadlines imposed by the hotel for rooming lists and to ensure the contest flows smoothly, we ask you make final any and all changes to students participating by February 5. Should you not need all the rooms that have been reserved, it is your responsibility to notify the management staff at least 3 days prior to the contest in order to have the rooms cancelled. If you fail to notify us, you will be responsible for reimbursement of the unused rooms.

As in the past, students will be assigned rooms by school and in some cases, schools will be combined to fill a room. Coaches will be paired with coaches. In situations where extra rooms are requested or required by universities (e.g. due to university rooming policies, accommodation of individual needs, etc.), the individual university will be responsible for covering the cost of rooms outside their allotment.

If your team is unable to return to your home campus for Saturday night, this night will also be covered at a hotel of your choice, with the cost per room not exceeding the cost of the room in Camrose (\$110 US).

Please contact Jenna Langrehr with any special housing requests or questions.

**Schedule:** The official schedule of events for the three days of the contest will be provided in early January. Contest rules are available at the NAIDC website, and your students should be aware of the rules and scorecard.

Biosecurity measures are being developed. We will communicate biosecurity protocols closer to the contest.

**Travel:** Airport Information for Camrose, AB Canada

- Edmonton International Airport (YEG) : 1 hour
- Calgary International Airport (YYC) : 2 hours 45 minutes

**Meals:** Meals will be provided for one coach and officially registered team members:

March 5 (Thursday): Dinner

March 6 (Friday): Breakfast, lunch, and dinner

March 7 (Saturday): Breakfast and lunch

Additional meals can be paid for when registering. Should you have any dietary needs, please include this information with the contest registration form. You do not need to collect this information for your students; students will be asked this on their Student Information Form.

**Coach Training Resources:** Several resources are available to coaches preparing students for the contest.

- Resources for student preparation: <https://www.dairychallenge.org/student-resources/>
- Coaches Resources site: The secure Coaches Resources site (accessible from the student resources page link above) includes past contest materials. Each past contest link contains a contact information folder that includes contact information for industry volunteers who are willing to help with training. This folder also includes contact information for other Southern Regional coaches. We encourage coaches to talk with neighboring schools to do joint training.

**The password for this site is “coach”**

- Dairy software training is available to schools. Contact Craig Walter [craig.walter@vas.com](mailto:craig.walter@vas.com) for Dairy Comp, Cathy Myers [cathym@amelicor.com](mailto:cathym@amelicor.com) for DHI-PLUS or Greg Palas [gepalas@iastate.edu](mailto:gepalas@iastate.edu) for Dart.

**Dairy Challenge Shirt:** Show your support for Dairy Challenge by purchasing a shirt. Coaches can order and pay using the registration form. Students can order and pay using their Student Information Forms. Orders will be shipped to the event and can be picked up during registration.

We look forward to your participation in this exciting and innovative contest. Additional information, including the schedule and guidelines, as well as entry forms and student information forms, will also be available online at the Western contest page: <https://www.dairychallenge.org/contests/western/>

Communications will follow once registration closes in mid-January with additional information, and in late-February with last-minute details. As we continue to develop this contest for the future, we appreciate your input in helping us improve the educational experience for your students. The Western Regional Dairy Challenge Committee looks forward to meeting you and your team at the 2026 Contest!

Sincerely,

Western Regional Dairy Challenge Committee