



CLAY COUNTY 4-H DAIRY

***Updated for 2026**

4-H Cattle Club leader: Deedra Arvin – (317)616-8268 (deedraarvin@gmail.com)

4-H Cattle Superintendent: Ross Hyatt – (812) 239-6577 (rhvatt9400@gmail.com)

ENROLLMENT:

- a) Enrolled animals must be owned by the 4-H exhibitor by said deadline and must be under the continuous care, responsibility, and ownership through the date of the show, except where change of ownership was to 4-H member's complete ownership. Any animal listed under a family through Indiana 4-H Online may be shown by any member listed under that family profile.
- b) 4-H members must be enrolled in the Clay County 4-H and Dairy Project by **May 15, 2026**.
- c) All 4-H Cattle must be identified through Indiana 4-H online by **May 15, 2026**, this includes market steers, feeder steers, bulls and dairy females.
- d) 4-H dairy steers must be identified with a county 5-digit ID tag and an RFID tag by the annual Cattle ID Day on **February 20, 2026**. All steers will be weighed at this time for the Rate of Gain competition.
- e) All Dairy females must be identified with an RFID tag and tattoo or breed identification ID. The animal must be owned or leased and under the care of the 4-H member by **May 15, 2026**.
- f) All Dairy Feeder Steers and Bulls must be identified with an RFID tag by **May 15, 2026**. All dairy feeders that intend to show at the State Fair must also have a 5-digit county tag.
- g) Premise ID numbers are required for all Dairy enrollments.
- h) All 4-H'ers who plan to exhibit dairy cattle at the State Fair must supply a DNA Hair Sample to the Extension Office by **May 15, 2026** for each animal they plan to exhibit.

HEALTH:

- a) At the time of check-in with the Cattle Superintendent and throughout the duration of the fair, all cattle must be free of symptoms of any communicable disease. No cattle may be unloaded until inspected and, if necessary, approved by the Veterinarian on duty. Animals showing signs of communicable disease, including warts or ringworm, will not be allowed on the fairgrounds. Health rules established by the Indiana State Board of Animal Health will be followed, and in the event of a health concern, a veterinarian will be contacted. The Cattle Superintendent may require cattle to remain on the trailer until evaluated by a veterinarian. If an animal becomes ill during the fair, a veterinarian will assess its condition, and the Cattle Superintendent will determine whether the animal should be released. For more information on cattle health requirements, contact the Indiana Board of Health at (877) 747-3038.
- b) All animals at weigh-in and while on exhibit at the fair must be dehorned and halter-broken to the extent that they are not deemed a safety hazard to the public, other exhibitors, or their exhibitor/owner. NO EXCEPTIONS.
- c) Dehorning or castration of animals must be done by **June 15, 2026** to exhibit at the fair.

GROOMING:

Clay County 4-H encourages members and their immediate families to be the primary groomers of their animals. However, exhibitors may use outside groomers for show day assistance if needed. If you plan to have grooming help at the State Fair, please review their updated rule book to ensure all requirements are met. Contact the Extension Office with any questions.

PENNING:

- a) Exhibitors will furnish their own bedding materials (unless a donor is obtained).
- b) The superintendent will assign stall space and tie out space prior to cattle arriving at the fairgrounds.
- c) During fair week all cattle are required to have BOTH halter and necktie while at their assigned stall and tie out.
- d) One fan per TWO head of cattle is allowed. Fans must have proper safety shrouds. No misters or butt fans are allowed.
- e) Power washers will not be allowed in the wash racks.
- f) No stall panels, gates, or posts will be allowed in the tie out area.
- g) Muzzles and electric prodders will not be allowed.
- h) Stall assignments will be made according to Fair Entry completion after **July 1, 2026**. Penning will be assigned by family (siblings).

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- i) Cows in milk may arrive at the fair either on Saturday during check-in for cattle or on the day of the dairy show between 6:00 AM and noon. Cows in milk are permitted to leave either upon conclusion of the dairy show (same day) or with the normal release of livestock.
- j) There will be a stall fee of no more than \$5 per head due upon check in at the fair. Please see your superintendent for further communication on this closer to fair.

SHOW:

- a) All cattle will use the rules and age grouping classification utilized at State Fair.
- b) Show classes will be divided into breed and/or weight classes based upon the enrollment each year. Heifers will be shown by age as listed below. The dairy superintendent will divide the classes and adjust as needed.
- c) Show order for all heifers/cows, steers, and feeder calves will be posted no later than 6:00 PM the night before the dairy show.
- d) AOB class will not be offered
- e) All animals will be weighed and/or checked in upon unloading at fair check-in. Registration papers, tags and/or tattoos, and lease agreements will be checked at this time.
- f) To show a dairy female, you must have an RFID tag, signed lease agreement if the animal is leased, and registration papers and legible tattoo if the female is registered. The registration paper and lease agreement (if applicable), must be provided upon weigh in at the fair. If you do not have the lease agreement (if applicable) or if your papers, tattoo and RFID tag does not match the Indiana 4-H Online family profile entry, that heifer/cow will be disqualified.

AGE REQUIREMENTS FOR REGISTERED DAIRY FEMALES:

- **Spring Heifer Calf** - Born **March 1, 2026 to May 15, 2026**
 - **Winter Heifer Calf** - Born **December 1, 2025 to February 28, 2026**
 - **Fall Heifer Calf** - Born **September 1, 2025 to November 30, 2025**
 - **Summer Yearling Heifer** - Born **June 1, 2025 to August 31, 2025**
 - **Spring Yearling Heifer** - Born **March 1, 2025 to May 31, 2025**
 - **Winter Yearling Heifer** - Born **December 1, 2024 to February 28, 2025**
 - **Fall Yearling Heifer** - Born **September 1, 2024 to November 30, 2024**
 - **Junior 2-year old Cow** - Born **March 1, 2024 to August 31, 2024**
 - **Senior 2-year old Cow** - Born **September 1, 2023 to February 28, 2024**
 - **Junior 3-year old Cow** - Born **March 1, 2023 to August 31, 2023**
 - **Senior 3-year old Cow** - Born **September 1, 2022 to February 28, 2023**
 - **4-Year old Cow** - Born **September 1, 2021 to August 31, 2022**
 - **5-Year old Cow** - Born **September 1, 2020 to August 31, 2021**
 - **Aged Cow Six Years and Older** - Born **prior to August 31, 2020**
 - **Dry Cow** – Any milking age
- g) Steers must have milk teeth in place and will be shown by weight and shown only against dairy steers. County ID and RFID tags will be checked at the fair weigh in and if they do not match the Indiana 4-H online family profile entry, the animal will be disqualified.
 - h) In addition to the grooming guidelines, no false tails and/or use of and/or addition of any type of artificial hair is prohibited. Only natural hair growing in its original location will be permitted.
 - i) All 4-H livestock will be shown by current Clay County 4-H members only.
 - j) The Mini 4-H Cattle show will include members that are enrolled in the Clay Co. Mini 4-H program and **are currently in the 2nd grade**. Mini 4-H members must be entered in the cattle project by **May 18, 2026** to allot time for pairing with an older 4-H member & their animal

FEEDER CALF: DAIRY

- a) Calf must meet all Clay County 4-H and Indiana BOAH Health Requirements
- b) Animals must be owned by the 4-H member no later than **May 15, 2026**.
- c) The animal must be 100% dairy. Beef/dairy cross breeds will be shown during the beef show. Classes are for steers and bulls.
- d) All calves must be dehorned by 4-H Fair. No ruptured calves may be exhibited.
- e) Calf Age: **August 1, 2025 to March 31, 2026**. Feeder calves **must not exceed 700 lbs.** the day of fair weigh-in. If the feeder calf exceeds 700 lbs., you will be able to show them as a dairy steer.

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- f) A Grand Champion and Reserve Grand Champion will be selected from the class winners. Calves will be shown by weight.
- g) Show classes will be determined by enrollment each year and at the discretion of the dairy superintendent.
- h) Calves do not have to be weaned at tagging but must be weaned by fair time.

BORN & RAISED:

- a) Born and Raised animals must be born and raised by the Clay County 4-H member.
- b) These animals will be exhibited during the steer and female show and placed. After each Champion and Reserve placing is selected, Born and Raised animals will return for Champion and Reserve Born and Raised placings as necessary.
- c) Exhibitors must indicate born and raised on livestock entries through Indiana 4-H Online.
- d) Exhibitors must enter **both** the Born & Raised breed class **and** the regular breed class in FairEntry to qualify for the Born & Raised award. *Superintendents are not responsible for entry errors.*

Example: A Guernsey Female you've raised since birth must be entered in both the **Born & Raised Guernsey Female** and **Guernsey Female** classes.

RATE OF GAIN:

The Rate of Gain class is for Steers only. The top award will go to the animal with the highest Average daily Gain between the Annual Cattle ID tag day (**February 20, 2026**) and the weigh-in at the fair.

SHOWMANSHIP:

4-H members may only show their own animals that they will also exhibit in a regular 4-H class.

- a) **Junior Showmanship:** 3rd–5th graders as of Jan. 1, 2026. Once a 4-Her wins Overall Junior Showman, they may only compete in Intermediate Showmanship the following year.
- b) **Intermediate Showmanship:** 6th–8th graders as of Jan. 1, 2026, and all previous Junior winners. Once a 4-Her wins Overall Intermediate Showman, they may only compete in Senior Showmanship the following year.
- c) **Senior Showmanship:** 9th–12th graders as of Jan. 1, 2026, and all previous Intermediate winners. Winners may compete in the Champion of Champions class that year and in future years.
- d) **Champion of Champions Showmanship:** Open to all past Senior Division Champions, including the 2026 winner.

AWARDS

Champion Rate of Gain Dairy Steer	Breed Grand & Res. Grand Females	Supreme – Third Overall Dairy Female
Supreme & Reserve Overall Clay County Born & Raised Female	Breed Champion Dairy Steers	Grand – Third Overall Dairy Steer
Breed Champion Feeder Steers & Feeder Bull	Grand & Res. Grand Dairy Feeder Calf	Champion Rate of Gain Dairy Steer

CLAY COUNTY 4-H LIVESTOCK AUCTION:

Only Dairy Beef Steers (no feeder calves) will be eligible to participate in the Livestock Auction. Minimum weight for steers will be based on the market truck assigned. **Exhibitors wishing to exhibit a Dairy Beef Steer weighing below 700 pounds must sign a release form acknowledging that their animal is not eligible for sale at the auction.** Failure to sign this waiver will disqualify the animal from the beef steer show. **Animals MUST have an RFID tag in place before going through the auction. See leader if one needs to be obtained at check-in.**

The livestock auction will be held at the conclusion of the fair. In order to participate, you must show an animal at the fair and designate an animal to go through the auction at fair check-in. A small auction fee percentage will be deducted from each member's check. Detailed auction information will be finalized closer to fair.

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INDIANA 4-H QUALITY LIVESTOCK CARE TRAINING

To exhibit beef cattle, dairy cattle, swine, sheep, goats, poultry and rabbits, 4-H members must be certified through the Indiana 4-H Quality Livestock Care Training. This is an annual program that can be completed in-person by attending one of the classes on the following dates at the Fairgrounds:

- **March 18, 2026**
- **April 27, 2026**
- **May 21, 2026**
- **June 30, 2026**

An online option is available for \$12 through the YQCA program. Once you complete this [online course](#), you must email the Extension Office your final certificate emailed to you at completion showing your certification number.

STATE FAIR:

4-H Dairy cows and heifers must be entered separately to be shown at the Indiana State Fair. Refer to the [Indiana State Fair website](#) for entry deadlines and additional rules.

REFERENCES:

[Purdue Extension Dairy Cattle Project](#)
[Indiana State Fair Book – Dairy Cattle](#)

IMPORTANT DAIRY DATES:

February 20, 2026 (4:00 PM – 8:00 PM)	Cattle ID Day at the Fairgrounds
May 18, 2026	Mini 4-Her's must be signed up to participate in the Mini dairy show.
May 15, 2026	Deadline to enroll beef cattle on y2.4Honline.com —Your enrollment will not be complete if your animals are not enrolled online. Exhibitors who fail to register their animals online before the May 15th deadline will not be eligible to exhibit at the county or state fair.
May 15, 2026	DNA Samples due to the Extension Office if going to the State Fair.
July 1, 2026	Fair Entry due on fairentury.com (where you will enter your show classes for the fair)
TBD	Deadline to register dairy online for the State Fair.
July 18 - 24, 2026	Clay County 4-H Fair
July 17, 2026	Dairy check-in at the Clay County Fair
July 18, 2026	Dairy check-in at the Clay County Fair
July 18, 2026	Mini 4-H Cattle Show
July 21, 2026	Dairy show at the Clay County Fair
July 23, 2026 (9:00 PM)	Dairy released
July 24, 2026	Clay County livestock auction
August 7 - 23, 2026	Indiana State Fair

