



Maryland 4-H State 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl Contest: General Rules

Objectives of the 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl

The primary objective of the Maryland 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl Contest is to provide an opportunity for youth enrolled in 4-H to demonstrate the breadth of their knowledge and understanding of animal science and management in a competitive setting where attitudes of friendliness and fairness prevail.

The 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl offers age-appropriate quizzes and match questions that are designed to test youth knowledge of the dairy industry. The practical application of the contestants' knowledge and skills is emphasized. The contest's coordinators strive to provide an educational experience for participants as well as an opportunity for the creation of new friendships.

General

1. This is a contest in which teams (or individuals) compete. Points are earned or lost by quickness and accuracy of response to specific questions drawn from 4-H project materials and other references.
2. Contest date and time: **Saturday, April 11, 2026 at the Carroll County Extension Office, Westminster, MD. Check-in begins at 9:30 AM, Orientation for participants and coaches begins at 9:45 AM, Contest begins at 10:00 AM.**
3. Counties may enter up to a maximum of eight members (comprised of a team of four members and four additional individuals or a team of four members/one alternate and three additional individuals) in each of the Junior, Intermediate, and Senior divisions. Counties may enter only individuals if they do not have enough members for a team. Individual contestants in each age division will be assigned to composite teams by the contest organizer. If a county has more than four members, they must identify the members on the team, its alternate, and those entering as individuals. Composite teams and coaches will be determined prior to day of the contest. Composite teams will select team captains by drawing and select team coaches at the contest. 4-H members participating in the statewide competition must be certified by their 4-H Extension Educator and pre-registered for the state contest by the registration deadline. Counties with Junior, Intermediate or Senior teams of 2 members or less have the option to combine individuals from age divisions to compete as a county team or to have the members compete as individuals that are randomly assigned to a composite team. Coaches may move younger 4-H members to an older age division; however, older 4-H members cannot move down an age level.
4. Rules may be varied to meet local club or county events; however, statewide competition will be governed by the prescribed procedures and regulations found in this document.
5. Additional rules may be promulgated for specific project areas.



6. Each participating county can submit 5 phase B/team questions and 20 phase C/toss up questions per age category. Submit to April Barczewski at adhall@umd.edu by **March 6, 2026** on the Dairy Bowl Question Template 2026 Excel spreadsheet.
7. Each county is responsible for providing a minimum of two volunteers to assist with the contest the entire day (Volunteers may be rotated in and out).

Contestants and Eligibility

1. Individuals participating in the statewide contest must be enrolled as a Maryland 4-H member for 2026 in 4-H Online by **March 30, 2026**. Contest registration must be submitted via the 4-H Online registration system by **March 30, 2026**. Counties must verify registration in 4-H Online and will be invoiced for entry fees based on the total number of participants registered from their programs. There will be a \$5.00 entry fee for each contestant.
2. Junior contestants must be between the ages of 8-10; Intermediate contestants must be between the ages of 11-13; and Senior contestants between the ages of 14-18 as of January 1 of the current year.
3. Contestants may attend a college beyond high school. However, youth who enroll in or audit a Dairy Science or Animal Science course prior to the fall term are not eligible for the contest. Also, youth who enroll in any Dairy Science or Animal Science short course or satellite course eligible for credits towards a college degree prior to the fall term are not eligible for the contest.
4. Contestants participating in out-of-state 4-H dairy bowl contests as a result of state competition are ineligible for participation in future state contests.
5. Contestants requesting a reasonable accommodation to participate in this event must indicate the need on the contest registration form in 4-H Online by the registration deadline. A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to a program that will enable a person who has a disability to participate in and/or benefit from the program. A parent/guardian of the contestant requesting an accommodation will be contacted by a contest coordinator to discuss reasonable accommodation requests. Accommodation requests cannot be accepted or modified on the day of the contest.
6. Participation in this event requires the 4-H member and his/her parent/guardian to agree to the terms and conditions of the Maryland 4-H Event Liability Release and Informed Consent Agreement. The agreement will be signed electronically during the contestant's event registration in 4-H Online.

Contest Officials

1. **Moderator (Quiz Master)** - The moderator assumes complete direction of all contests, asks all questions, designates contestants to answer questions, accepts or rejects all answers unless overruled by **both** referee judges. He/she may seek interpretation of questions and answers from referee judges. The moderator designates the start of total time, the start and stop of time-outs, the winner of each contest, and shall be in charge at all times. The moderator shall have the final voice in all decisions, except for answers to questions, which are ruled on unanimously by referee judges. **WHEN ONLY ONE JUDGE IS AVAILABLE, THE MODERATOR MAKES THE FINAL DECISION.**
2. **Referee judges** - One or two judges are to be used who are knowledgeable in the subject matter. The referee judges may rule individually or jointly on the acceptability of any answer. Both referee judges, or one referee judge and the moderator, must agree on the acceptability or rejection of a question and/or answer if is challenged either by team captains or coaches.

3. **Timekeepers** - One or two individuals will be used to record total elapsed time for each contest and to indicate to the moderator the expiration of total time or the expiration of the time allowed in which to answer questions.
4. **Score keeper** - Two individuals shall keep scores on each contest—one to be written in such a manner that all points awarded or taken away in penalties may be checked; and one that will be visible to the moderator, the contestants, and in so far as possible, the viewing audience.
5. **Coaches** - A Coach or Coach's Representative will be identified for each county prior to conducting phases B and C of each match.

Equipment

1. **Response Panels** - Each contestant will have a response panel to indicate intent to answer by activating a light and/or buzzer.
2. **Time recorder** - One stopwatch or other form of elapsed time recorders with stop/start (time-out) capabilities is needed. It should have at least a 20-second range and have accuracy to fractions of a second. Time recorder is integrated within state buzzer systems.
3. **Bell/Buzzer** - This signal device will be used by timekeepers (this may be a buzzer with a distinctly different sound than contestant buzzers).
4. **Scorekeeping device** - This may be a blackboard; a flip chart or electronic light display system which will score for both teams in multiples of five.
5. **Questions** - Written and oral questions will be prepared by a state 4-H Dairy Bowl Contest Coordinator. The Phase A questions format is detailed below. Phase B and C questions will be short answer or multiple choice.

Equipment Failure During a Match

1. It shall be the responsibility of each contestant to be assured that all equipment is operating correctly at the start of the match.
2. If the device being used ceases to function during a match or is believed to be malfunctioning, a "time out" may be called by a contestant, the Moderator, or by either coach.
3. If it is determined, after checking the equipment, that there is an equipment malfunction, the faulty part(s) will be replaced and play resumed.
4. Scores accumulated up to the point of the "time out" shall stand and all further points awarded during the remainder of the match will be added to or subtracted for this total.
5. If both referee judges or one referee judge and the Moderator deem it advisable, points awarded for the two (2) questions asked immediately before the equipment was deemed to fail may be recalled and two (2) additional questions used.
6. Under no conditions shall there be a replay of a match in which there was equipment failure.

Procedure of Play

1. Teams will compete in a series of one-on-one elimination contests until the top team is chosen. The contest coordinator will assign teams to the first round of competition before the contest. Some teams may be awarded a bye during the elimination as a part of the assignment process.
2. Competition between teams will be in multiple phases:

Phase A – A written test of 50 questions will be given to each contestant prior to the state competition. Tests will be administered by an authorized UME individual at the county level between **March 23-March 30, 2026**. The coach is allowed to read the test questions out loud to all Junior participants with the UME individual monitoring. Phase A consists of ten rounds with five questions per round. The same **5** questions will be designated for both teams but each group of 5 questions will be used for only 1 round (Round 1 = Questions 1-5, Round 2 = Questions 6-10, etc.). Each correct answer will be worth **5** points. Each round in Phase A has a possible 100 points per team (4 team members x **5** questions each x **5** points/correct answer). No points will be deducted for incorrect or blank answers. Points earned by each team will be announced at the end of the match and combined with scores from Phases B and C to determine the winners of a match. Question format will be as follows:

- i. Junior Division questions will be a combination of true/false and multiple choice (mostly multiple choice).
- ii. Intermediate Division questions will be a combination of true/false, multiple choice, short answer, and fill in the blank. (mostly multiple choice).
- iii. Senior Division questions will be a combination of true/false, multiple choice, short answer and fill in the blank.

Phase B – Judges will ask each Junior team 10 questions of a higher degree of difficulty, while Intermediate and Senior teams will be asked 5 questions of a higher degree of difficulty. Questions may only be repeated once, and correct responses are worth ten points. Answers must be started within ten seconds and are to be given by a team captain, but assistance may come from any team member. Partial credit may be given at the discretion of the judges. After the first team in a match has been questioned, the other team will enter the contest room and be asked the same questions in any given round. Results of Phase B will be announced at the conclusion of Phase B for each contest.

Phase C – Two teams will be questioned simultaneously with a total of 15 questions will be asked for Junior teams and a total of 20 questions for Intermediate and Senior teams. Each question, including bonus questions, is worth 15 points.

- a. Once a question is posed, the first team to signal will answer the question within 5 seconds after being acknowledged by the judge or lose 10 points. Any member answering a question without having their light lit or being acknowledged will lose 10 points. If an incorrect answer is given, the other team has the opportunity to answer the question immediately without having it repeated. No partial credit is available in Phase C.
- b. If neither team can offer an answer to the question within 10 seconds, the moderator will give the answer, the question will be dropped and neither team will forfeit points.
- c. When a signal is pushed before the question is completely read, the moderator shall stop reading the question when the light goes on. Once the moderator recognizes the contestant, that person may answer the question. If correct, the team will receive credit. The judge may not ask the contestant to explain their answer. If the answer is incorrect, the question shall then be repeated in its entirety, and the other team will have the opportunity to answer it.
- d. Bonus questions will be asked whenever three team members have each answered a Phase C question correctly with the count kept individually for both teams within a match. Bonus questions will be pulled from a “fishbowl” by the team captain. Bonus questions are not passed on to the other team, nor are points deducted for an incomplete or incorrect answer. After a bonus question is asked, the answer must be started within 20 seconds, and the tally of correct answers is reduced by one for each



individual on the team earning the bonus. For example, on the team from Cow County, Judy answered three questions right, Joyce two questions right and John one question right before the bonus was asked. After the bonus, Judy would have two correct, Joyce one correct and John none correct. Eligibility for bonus questions does not carry over to another match. Bonus questions can receive partial credit.

- e. The only discussion allowed between team members will be on bonus questions and in Phase B. The answers must come from the team captain and only the number of answers required by the bonus question will be accepted. Example: If the bonus has a four-part answer, the first four answers given by the team captain will be accepted.
3. Questions will cover feeds and feeding, milk quality, herd health, udder health, breeding and genetics, marketing, dairy foods, calf raising and other areas. Junior questions will be a combination of multiple choice and short answer/fill in the blank and Intermediate and senior questions will be short answer/fill in the blank
4. The winning team will be determined by the highest total score from Phase A, B and C. In the event of a tie, the two teams will be asked an additional five Phase C questions.
5. The contest will be conducted as a double-elimination contest, with pairings for the first round based on Phase A, Round 1 results.
6. Answers and interpretations of questions will be the sole responsibility and final recall of the judges. A team member will have the privilege to ask the judges' panel to verify an answer that he/she feels is correct. If a coach challenges the judge's decision, the coach must call "**time out**" immediately before the next question is read. A decision made by the judges after the answer is verified will be final.
7. There shall be no protest of any questions or answers following the declaration of the winner.
 - a. Any protest of questions or answers to questions may be made by a team captain or the team coach at the time a particular question is read or an answer is indicated. There will be only one coach recognized for each team. When a question or protest is raised, time shall be called. For a protest in the Junior or Intermediate room, the coach must have the resource in the room with them, however, should the official disagree with the answer in the reference material, the question will be thrown out.
 - b. If a protest is sustained, the moderator will take one of the following actions, as deemed appropriate:
 - i. If a question is protested before an answer is given and the protest is sustained, discard the question.
 - ii. If an answer is protested (either correct or incorrect), at least one of the referee judges and the moderator or both referee judges determine the protest is valid, points will be added or subtracted accordingly.
 - iii. If a question is protested after an answer is given (correct or incorrect), and at least one referee and the moderator or both referees determine validity of protest of question, then the question may be discarded at no loss of points. If the question is allowed, the gain or loss of points will be determined in the same manner as above.
 - c. Abuse of protest provisions shall subject a team to the following:
 - i. Dismissal of team coach from contest area.
 - ii. Dismissal (or replacement) of team captain.
 - iii. Dismissal of entire team with forfeiture of contest.

Selection of High Individuals in the Written Exam

The total points awarded to each individual from Phase A will determine the high individuals. The top three individuals in each age division will be recognized at the contest. Individuals must also participate in Phases B and C to be eligible for top individual awards for Phase A.

Selection of High Individuals Overall

The total points awarded to each individual from Phase A and the team's first two completed rounds of Phase B and Phase C of the state contest will be added together. Each correct answer in Phase A is worth 2.5 points. Each member of a county team will be assigned the total number of points awarded to that county team during the first two rounds of Phase B. Each correct answer in the first 2 rounds of Phase C is worth 15 points minus any points deducted. Each member of a county team will be assigned the total number of points awarded to that county team for any bonus questions asked during the team's first two rounds of Phase C. No points earned in Phase B and Phase C after the team's first two completed rounds are counted towards selection of high individuals. The ten individuals with the highest point total in the Junior, Intermediate, and Senior Divisions will be identified at the end of the contest.

Selection of Maryland 4-H State Dairy Bowl Team

The top 12 individuals in the Senior Division with highest total scores in Phases A, B and C of the state contest, as described above, will be invited to try out for the Maryland 4-H State Dairy Bowl Team. The youth are asked to complete a dairy bowl commitment form at the conclusion of the awards ceremony. If more than four individuals are interested in being on the state team, they will compete in a buzz-off. The buzz off will follow a format similar to Phases A and C of the state contest. The top four individuals in the buzz-off will serve as the state team and the fifth-place individual will serve as the alternate. If a question is answered incorrectly, the question will be repeated for the other participants to have the opportunity to buzz-in and answer. After two incorrect answers are received, a question will be eliminated from the buzz-off and the moderator will move to the next question. In the event of a tie for the alternate, the individual with the greatest score on Phase C will be considered to have a higher score.

NOTE: 4-H members may represent Maryland 4-H on only ONE State competition team in a calendar year. If a 4-H'er qualifies for more than one State team in the same year, they must choose on which team they will participate. Once a 4-H'er commits to a State competition team, they may not withdraw in order to accept a position on a different State team.

NOTE: The selection of a State 4-H Dairy Bowl Team and the Team's participation in the Regional/National 4-H Dairy Bowl Contests are contingent upon the event(s) being held and current applicable UME travel guidelines.

2026 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl Contest Study Materials

All Age Divisions - Counties will be provided access in the shared resources drive to a Question Bank that may be used to help study for the event (see below).

Junior contest questions will come from Section 1 of the Question Bank. Intermediate contest questions will come from Sections 1 and 2 of the Question Bank. Senior contest questions will come from Sections 1, 2 and 3 of the Question Bank.

Note: Some questions from the Question Bank will be modified to be presented as true/false or multiple choice questions for the Written Test.

Juniors – Virginia Dairy Bowl Study Guide (2025 version) -

https://www.youth.dasc.vt.edu/content/dam/youth_dasc_vt_edu/quiz-bowl/2025%20VA%204-H%20Dairy%20Quiz%20Bowl%20Study%20Materials.pdf; Holstein Foundation's Showing

Ready Workbook pgs. 1-29 (2/2017); Holstein Foundation's Milking & Lactation Workbook pp. 4-11, 13-19 (11/2017); Holstein Foundation's Connecting with Dairy Consumers (11/2018) -

<http://www.holsteinfoundation.org/education/workbooks.html>

Intermediates - The Junior references listed above; Hoard's Dairyman Youth quizzes 2016-2019

- <http://hoards.com/flex-338-Youth-Quizzes.html>; Holstein Foundation's World of Dairy Cattle

Nutrition Workbook (11/2021); Understanding Genetics Workbook pp. 5-14 (4/2021) and Dairy Cattle Reproduction Workbook pgs. 4-20 (7/2017) -

<http://www.holsteinfoundation.org/education/workbooks.html>

Seniors – Not limited to set sources, but it is recommended to use the above materials and the 2015 Hoards Dairyman as a starting place; Resources on eXtension.org Dairy Cattle site except materials in Spanish - <https://dairy-cattle.extension.org/>; 2015-2023 Hoard's Dairyman End of the Year 50 Questions - <http://hoards.com/flex-338-Youth-Quizzes.html>; National Written Test Questions 2015-2019, 2020-2025.

NOTE: Additional Study Resources & Information can be found online at

<https://extension.umd.edu/locations/cecil-county/local-4-h-youth-education/animal-science-information> (scroll down and click on the *Dairy Judging Events/Quiz Bowls/Skillathon* tab and click on *Dairy Bowl Resources*).

MV-2000, JWL-2007, KF-2013, AHB-2020, CA/AHB-2021-2026

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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