



Maryland 4-H State Dairy Goat Judging and Skills Contest Rules

Objectives of the Maryland 4-H State Dairy Goat Judging and Skills Contest

The Maryland 4-H State Dairy Goat Judging and Skills Contest is held each year during the Maryland State Fair held in Timonium, MD.

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

General Rules & Regulations

The following General Rules apply to all 4-H Judging Contests (Division U) held annually at the State Fair:

1. Only 4-H Members may compete in this division. 4-H Members may only compete in one State Fair Judging Contest (Sections I-V) per year.
2. All contestants must comply with “General State Fair Rules & Regulations”, “General 4-H and FFA Rules & Regulations”, these “Division Rules & Regulations” and the applicable “Section Rules & Regulations”. Please note that these are only general rules, please refer to the State 4-H Judging Contest Guidelines & Procedures (available from the 4-H office) for additional information.
3. Contestants will participate according to their 4-H Age (as of 1/1/26): Junior (ages 8-10); Intermediate (ages 11-13), Senior (ages 14-18) - unless noted.
4. Entries will be made by the 4-H member in 4-HOnline at <https://v2.4honline.com> by July 31st and verified by the 4-H Extension Educator. **Counties/City may enter one (1) Team (consisting of 4 members) and an unlimited number of Individuals in each age division.** All will participate in the contest.
 - a. Verification that each 4-H Member has participated in a 4-H educational program will be made by the 4-H Extension Educator.
 - b. Selection/verification of contestants will be at the discretion of the 4-H Extension Educator.
 - c. Substitutions/Alternates: Alternates are not allowed. If a Team Member is not present on day of contest, one pre-registered Individual may be substituted.
 - d. Team Members must be enrolled in 4-H in the same county/Baltimore City, exceptions are those 4-H Members that belong to a project club that crosses county/city lines (i.e., a tri-county livestock club). 4-H Members enrolled in such clubs may compete jointly as a team in that project area. The 4-H Extension Educator representing the Joint Team entry must notify the State 4-H Office by July 31, 2026.
 - e. Restrictions relating to college/vocational training for these contests are listed in the department.
 - f. There is a \$5.00 fee per participant for all judging contests. An additional \$10.00 lunch fee will be collected per participant in the Dairy & Livestock Judging contests.



5. A 4-H member who has represented Maryland on a team in a National 4-H Contest is ineligible for the State 4-H Contest in the same contest area. A 4-H member may not represent Maryland 4-H at an out-of-state competition as a member of more than one team in a given year.
6. Contestants will not be allowed to take books, notes or writing paper into the contest except cards as provided by the superintendent. Cell phones and other portable electronic devices are not allowed. While the contest is in progress there shall be no communication between the contestants or between a contestant and anyone else, except as directed by the superintendent or their representative. Contestants will be under the direct supervision of the group leader at all times.
7. Scoring: Unless otherwise noted, the top three scores of designated team members will determine the team score in the respective age divisions. All ties will be broken by the Superintendent using prescribed procedures.
8. Awards: Unless otherwise noted, all contestants (both team members and individuals) are eligible for individual awards. Ribbons and premiums will be awarded to the 20 High Individuals in each age division for each contest. Premiums: 1st (\$20), 2nd–10th (\$15), 11th–20th (\$5). Awards will be presented to the Team members in each age division for each contest as well as special awards (see each individual section).
9. **All contests (except for the Dairy Goat Judging and Skills Event) will be held on Saturday, September 5, 2026.**
10. 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 Manager to discuss reasonable accommodation requests. Accommodation requests cannot be accepted or modified on the day of the contest.
11. 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.

Additional Contest Eligibility and Registration Information

1. Participants in 4-H activities at the Maryland State Fair must be enrolled as a 4-H member in Maryland and their enrollment recorded in 4-H Online by **July 1** of the current year. 4-H members must have passed their 8th birthday and must not have reached their 19th birthday on January 1 of the current year.
2. Only registered 4-H members may participate in the contest. Individuals participating in the statewide contest must be enrolled as a Maryland 4-H member for 2026 in 4-H Online by **July 1, 2026**. All contest participants must be registered for the event in 4-H Online by **July 31, 2026**. 4-H members not registered by the deadline will not be allowed to participate in the contest. Counties will be invoiced for entry fees based on the total number of registered participants from their programs.

Maryland 4-H State Dairy Goat Judging and Skills Contest Section Rules

1. There is a \$5.00 participant fee required for this event.
2. **The contest will begin at 6:00 pm on Friday, September 11th in the Sheep Ring.**
3. The 4-H Dairy Goat Judging & Skills Event will consist of 2 parts: a Skillathon and Judging classes.
2. 4-H members may participate in the judging and skills contest without exhibiting an animal.

3. **Contestants will compete as individuals. There are NO teams for this contest. There is NO limit on the number of individuals per County/City.**
4. The Judging Contest classes will be announced at the beginning of the contest.
5. Participants are eligible to compete in other 4-H/FFA competitive events held on Saturday, September 5, 2026.

Contest Procedures and Resources

1. The written exam will be all multiple choice for Juniors and part multiple choice/short answer for Intermediates and Seniors.
2. Questions for the skills event will be on the following topics: Feedstuff Identification, Equipment Identification, Quality Assurance, Breed Identification, Wholesale Meat Cuts, Parts Identification, Disease Identification, and other applicable topics.
3. Participants will be judging 3-4 classes of dairy goats (at least 1 class of kids/yearlings and 1 class of milkers) and giving 1-2 sets of reasons or answering judging questions if time permits (Juniors- 1 set, Intermediates and Seniors 1-2 sets).
4. Dairy goat judging & skills resources can be accessed at:
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1le1zFVn4DdIKWcmC_tOKROor5j1Hkk0?usp=drive_link

Awards

1. Awards will be presented on Sunday, September 13th during the 4-H/FFFA Dairy Goat Show lunch break in the Sheep Barn.
2. Ribbons and premiums will be awarded to the 20 High Individuals in each age division.
3. An Award will be presented to the High Individual in each age division, sponsored by the Maryland State Fair.
4. An Award will be presented to the High Individual in the Skillathon portion and High Individual in the Judging portion in each age division, sponsored by the Barczewski Family.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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