

Illinois 4-H Superior Young Producer Award Scholarship Program

The Superior Young Producer Award (SYPA) program is an event held during the Illinois State Fair. The purpose of the contest is to create an educational activity that promotes youth development, career development, and personal growth through increased knowledge of the animal agriculture industry. This three-phase competition emphasizes the youth's knowledge of the industry. The "top three" overall participants are awarded a \$1,000 scholarship.

Superior Young Dairy Producer Award – August 22, 2026

(Please note: You do not need to be an exhibitor at IL State Fair to participate. This is a great opportunity to win a \$1,000.00 scholarship and have fun doing it while at the Illinois State Fair). Scholarships are sponsored by Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc. The contest will be held on Saturday, August 22, 2026.

Questions and requests for reasonable accommodations should be directed to Derek Nolan, dtnolan@illinois.edu.

Eligibility: Any Illinois 4-H member who is a current dairy project member in their local 4-H club and 14 years or older, as of January 1, 2026 is eligible for the 2026 4-H Superior Young Dairy Producer Award (SYDPA) program scholarship. However, all ages and non-4-H members are allowed to participate in the contest.

Registration: Walk-up registration will start at 7:30 AM in the Illinois State Fair in the Livestock Center (open show ring)

Awards: The top three youth (IL 4-H members) with the highest point scores in the total contest will receive a \$1,000.00 scholarship and plaque. A plaque will also be presented to each of the "top three" place winners in the individual phase competitions. All participants will be recognized, and the overall winners will be announced on Saturday afternoon, August 22, following the contest.

Contest Format: The contest will be held at the Illinois State Fair in the Livestock Center (open show ring) on Saturday, August 22. Registration check-in will be from 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. The contest will consist of 3 phases.

8:00 a.m. - Phase 1 – Dairy Judging: Six classes, of four animals each, will be placed by the participants based on type conformation. Study resources include: Google "Dairy Judging 101" and look for VA Tech Dairy Judging. Oral reasons are not part of this contest BUT they are for the State Dairy Judging Contest.

10:00 a.m. - Phase 2 – Management Test: A written test relating to any aspects of dairy management and related facts.

10:30 a.m. - Phase 3 – Skillathon: This will involve a series of three learning stations with specific tasks and questions for participants to answer. Station 1) DHI 202 Report; Station 2) Pedigree Analysis; Station 3) Dairy Equipment ID.