



Minnesota Dairy Princess Handbook



An informational guide for dairy princess coordinators and county dairy princesses

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Introduction

For more than 65 years, the dairy princess program has been a highly visible and positive public relations program for our industry. Dairy princesses can be very effective at connecting with consumers about the dairy community and promoting the goodness of dairy products. Their work can amplify the work being done on behalf of dairy farmers through the dairy checkoff.

Throughout the year, a dairy princess has numerous opportunities to make public appearances. It is important, therefore, that her general attitude, personality, behavior, knowledge and appearance create a positive image for dairy products and Minnesota's dairy community.

As a dairy princess, a young woman must be an excellent communicator who is able to interact with people of all ages. As a spokesperson for the dairy industry, she must be poised, articulate and confident during speeches and media interviews. Princesses who advance to compete for the Princess Kay of the Milky Way contest must also be capable of written communications, time management and personal responsibility for assignments.

While a dairy princess doesn't have to be a "dairy expert," she should have sufficient knowledge of dairy production and the importance of milk and other dairy foods in a healthy diet.

There are two primary purposes for this handbook:

1. To assist county coordinators in their planning efforts; and
2. To provide uniform guidelines for use at all levels of dairy princess activity, thus ensuring consistency throughout the program.

Information regarding the Princess Program in Minnesota can be found at: Midwestdairy.com >> [Young Dairy Leaders](#) >> [Dairy Princesses](#) >> [Minnesota](#). Additionally, watch for communication from princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com and add to your safe sender list.

Midwest Dairy is an equal opportunity employer. We celebrate diversity, and are committed to creating an equitable and inclusive environment for all employees, consultants and vendors.

Section 1: Local County Programs

Planning Your County Princess Contest

- If you are new at coordinating your county princess contest, invite people who have previously planned the contest to attend your first planning meeting.
- Ask past county princesses to serve on the planning committee.
- Send a news release to area media to increase coverage and publicity of the contest. (See the sample release on page 17.)
- Use social media to attract candidates (See sample on page 7.)
- Following the contest, schedule an evaluation meeting to discuss what worked and suggest plans for next year.
- **A reminder, county crowns must be under four inches tall.**
- Keep a scrapbook of notes, correspondence, clippings, contacts, etc. that can be passed on to next year's contestants.
- Visit MidwestDairy.com >> Young Dairy Leaders >> Dairy Princesses >> Minnesota for resources
- Reach out to princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com for questions or guidance as you are planning your contest.

Insurance

Midwest Dairy provides insurance coverage to Princesses, in their capacity as a Princess serving a local ADA unit. Activities covered include speaking events, banquets, parades or other organized activities they are attending in the capacity of a Dairy Princess.

The insurance is not able to cover chaperones or vehicles used to transport the Princess to, for or in these various activities.

Suggestions for Recruiting County Princess Candidates

- Send a news release to local newspapers and county extension offices announcing that candidates are being sought for your county's princess contest (see the sample release on page 6).
- Use social media (see sample posts on page 8) to recruit candidates. Encourage your county dairy farmers and past princesses to share your post to seek candidates.
- Contact the school guidance counselor and agriculture teacher and ask them to promote to their students.
- Work with your local extension agent and 4-H coordinator.
- Encourage farmers to talk to their employees to let them know that they or their children may be eligible.
- Encourage current or past princesses to participate again. (Candidates who have been selected as a Princess Kay finalist in any previous year are ineligible to compete to be Princess Kay Finalist again but can serve as a county dairy princess again.)
- Schedule an informal meeting for all interested candidates to attend. Explain the duties and benefits of being involved in the princess program. Have current or past princesses speak to the group.
- Use the current princesses as recruiting tools for younger candidates through 4-H, FFA, Junior Holstein Assoc., etc.

(SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: (Name & phone number) (Date)

DAIRY PRINCESS CANDIDATES SOUGHT

The American Dairy Association of _____ County is seeking candidates to participate in this year's dairy princess program. Dairy princesses serve as goodwill ambassadors for the dairy industry through appearances that help explain dairy farmers' passion for taking care of their animals and land while providing nutritious food for people locally and throughout the world. The princess contest will be held _____ *(date)* at _____ *(Location)*.

A candidate must be a high school graduate by July 1, *(year of contest)* and not yet 24 years old by July 1, *(year of contest)*. A candidate must be a U.S. Citizen or Permanent Resident. She or her parents must be actively engaged in the production of milk for sale to a licensed plant during the current year. A candidate also qualifies if she or her parents are employed on a dairy farm in a dairy-related capacity, or if a sibling has taken over the home farm. Additionally, she would qualify if her or her family custom raise animals that will produce milk or lease animals in exchange for work on that farm.

The dairy princess program is sponsored by the county's dairy farmers in conjunction with Midwest Dairy's Minnesota Division and the dairy checkoff. Serving as a county dairy princess is also the first step toward potentially becoming Princess Kay of the Milky Way. Ten finalists will be selected to compete for the Princess Kay title in August.

At all levels of competition, contestants are judged on their communication skills, personality, enthusiasm for dairy promotion and general knowledge of the dairy industry.

For a complete rules and application form, contact _____ *(name, phone number, address)*.

(SAMPLE SOCIAL POSTS)

_____ County is seeking applicants interested in being a dairy princess. Please contact _____ for more information.

Are you a young lady who loves dairy? Become a _____ county dairy princess today to share your love of dairy with others. Contact _____ for more information

Three reasons to become a _____ county dairy princess:

1. Network with peers and other leaders in the dairy industry
2. Learn how to share your dairy story with others
3. Learn life-long skills that will help you in your future career

Contact _____ to learn more

Social Tips

- Less is more when it comes to social; keep your points clear and concise
- Keep it fun; you don't need to share everything in one post
- Include an image whenever possible, images help your post get more views

Feel free to edit or customize as you would like. If you have any questions regarding the news release or the social posts, please contact princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com.

Selecting Contest Judges

It is important to select judges from varying backgrounds to bring different perspectives to the judging panel. Judges might come from the dairy industry, print or broadcast media, extension offices, educational institutions, the public relations/marketing field or civic positions.

It is strongly recommended the judges you select do not all come from the same background, i.e., all dairy industry, etc. By incorporating judges with different backgrounds, you increase the chances of finding the contestant with a special blend of dairy knowledge, communication skills, poise, personality and character.

In appreciation of your judges' time and services, it is recommended that you provide them with an appropriate stipend and/or mileage reimbursement and offer them complimentary tickets to the coronation event.

Based on past experiences, a panel of three judges can select more efficiently than a larger group. It helps if at least one judge has previous dairy princess judging experience. However, that does not designate him or her as the "head judge." Reinforce that all judges are equal in the decision-making.

Prior to the contest, a princess committee member should meet with the judges to present them with an overview of the princess program. The information beginning on page 14 may be helpful in doing this. It is important to explain to the judges that the intent of the princess program is to reach consumers. Stress that the contest is not a "pageant," nor a reward program for accomplishments, but rather part of a public relations program to select goodwill ambassadors for the dairy industry. Selection should be viewed much like a job interview, seeking the skills needed to represent dairy to the public.

Also, during this meeting, the princess committee member should review the scoring sheets with the judges. These scoring sheets should list the various categories that candidates are judged on with considerations listed for each category. The following pages contain sample scoring sheets. You may wish to use them or base your own scoring sheets on them. In addition, you may wish to have the judges provide the candidates with comments. Many candidates appreciate receiving such information. A sample comment sheet is included following the score sheets.

Our newly updated score sheets have been a hit. You will notice that there are no points for the judges to fill out, this helps move things along and provide good feedback to the candidates on what they can improve upon. It is recommended that each county assign a score based on their needs, ex: good=3 points. Then a coordinator or board member should score the sheets based on the assigned column point values.

Even if you have one or two candidates, we still recommend going through a practice judging. You may decide to only bring in one judge, if that is the case, but going through a round of judging is beneficial to those that are going to run for Princess Kay of the Milky Way. It is also a great life experience for those who aren't competing for Princess Kay of the Milky Way.

Personal Interview Score Sheet

Candidate's First Name _____ Number _____

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
IMAGE AND APPEARANCE				
Professionally Dressed and Groomed				
Smile and Eye Contact				
Posture and Gestures				
COMMUNICATION SKILLS				
Proper Grammar and Vocabulary				
Organized Thoughts				
Expressive				
Volume and Rate of Speaking				
RESPONSES TO GENERAL QUESTIONS				
Clear and Concise Responses				
Quality Information				
Displays Interest				
Responds Quickly				
Originality of Responses				
Appropriate Experiences Shared				
RESPONSES TO DAIRY QUESTIONS				
Clear and Concise Responses				
Quality Information				
Displays Interest				
Responds Quickly				
Relates Personal Connections				
Remained Positive				
Aware of Current Issues				
TOTALS				

COMMENTS:

Total Score _____

Speech Score Sheet

Candidate's First Name _____ Number _____

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
IMAGE AND APPEARANCE				
Overall Appearance				
Posture and Hand Gestures				
Eye Contact & Facial Expressions				
COMMUNICATION SKILLS				
Proper Grammar & Appropriate Vocabulary				
Vocally Expressive				
Rate of Speaking and Volume				
Not Dependent On Notes				
INTRODUCTION, BODY AND CONCLUSION				
Grabbed listeners attention				
Creativity and Originality				
Flow of Delivery				
Main Points Clearly Stated				
Content Fits Topic				
Factual Statements				
Included Key Dairy Messages				
References Were Cited				
Relates Personal Connections				
Remained Positive				
Easy To Follow				
Summarized Before Closing				
Ended With Closing Statement				
TOTALS				

TIME _____	WITHIN 4-6 MINUTES? YES NO	
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COMMENTS:

Total Score _____

Mock Media Interview Score Sheet

Candidate's First Name _____ Number _____

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
Overall Appearance				
Posture, Hand Gestures				
Projects Intelligence and Maturity				
Ability To Think and Respond Quickly				
Convincing				
Clear and Concise Responses				
Delivered Naturally, Not Rehearsed				
Uses Proper Grammar				
Demonstrates General Knowledge of Dairy Issues				
Responses Reflect Dairy's Key Messages				
Relates Personal Connections				
Remains Positive				

TOTALS				
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Total Score _____

Comments:

Application Score Sheet

Candidate's First Name _____ Number _____

	Excellent	Good	Needs Improvement
Form Complete			
Correct Use of Grammar			
Good Sentence Structure			
Expresses Ideas Clearly			
Complete Thoughts			
Answer To "What Strengths..."			
Answer To "Consumer Misconceptions..."			
Answers Reflect Interest In Dairy Community			
Answers Reflect Dairy Knowledge			
Answers Reflect Positive Attitude Towards Dairy			

TOTALS			
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Total Score _____

Comments:

From the Judges to the Candidate

These comments are to provide you with constructive feedback on your strengths, and areas of opportunity to grow and develop as perceived by the judges. They are given to you in confidence; no one else receives these.

Name of Candidate:

Strengths:

Areas of Opportunity to grow and develop:

Judges' Signatures:

Sample Judge Letter

Dear Dairy Princess Judge,

Dairy princesses serve as goodwill ambassadors for Minnesota's dairy industry. Throughout their reign, they make numerous public and media appearances on behalf of their local dairy association and dairy farm families. The dairy princess program is a well-established, visible public relations program for the dairy industry, funded by dairy farmers through Midwest Dairy and the local promotion organizations.

Because of the role's visibility, it is important that a young woman's general attitude, personality, behavior, knowledge and appearance create a positive image for dairy products and Minnesota's dairy industry. She must also have excellent communication skills and an ability to interact with a variety of audiences, including adults, children, the media and dairy farmers.

Although a dairy background is a requirement for dairy princesses, consumers are the ultimate audience of the princess program. While knowing details about the dairy farm is important to a dairy farmer, a consumer relies on the princess's communications skills, credibility and values in order to make a judgment about dairy. Therefore, judging emphasis should be on a candidate's general knowledge of dairy farming and dairy products and ability to share them with consumers.

Here are some of the many activities a dairy princess may be involved in:

- ◆ being interviewed by the media;
- ◆ communicating through social media;
- ◆ visiting classrooms to explain where milk comes from;
- ◆ attending local fairs and trade shows;
- ◆ speaking to audiences at conventions or meetings;
- ◆ recording announcements with local radio stations;
- ◆ serving dairy products at public events;
- ◆ appearing in parades; and
- ◆ assisting with tours of dairy farms.

We appreciate your willingness to serve as a judge in the process of selecting these important representatives for our industry. In appreciation for your services as a judge, we will provide you with _____ (*a stipend and/or mileage reimbursement, etc.*) and offer you a complimentary ticket to the princess coronation event on _____ (*date/time*) at _____ (*location*).

_____ (*Name of county*) _____ County Princess Contest Committee

Suggested Judging Format

It is strongly recommended your judging session include more than just a professional interview as it is beneficial for the judges to see the candidates in various situations. It is also good practice if your princess decides to advance to Princess Kay judging. If you have a limited timeframe for your contest, or if you have several contestants, you may wish to include only two of these sessions, rather than all three of them.

Session One: Interviews

Each candidate should be allowed a 10-minute interview with the panel of judges. It's recommended the judges ask one or two simple "icebreaker" questions to help put the contestant at ease, such as "Describe your activities on the farm," or "What are your future career plans and why?" The judges should then ask more pertinent questions that will help them consider a contestant's qualifications.

Mechanics: One contestant at a time meets with all judges.

Timing: At least 10 minutes per contestant. All contestants must be allowed an equal amount of time.

What judges should look for:

See the sample scoring sheet on page 9.

Session Two: Speech

Each contestant gives a 4-6-minute oral presentation to the judging panel. The topic should be dairy-related. The contest committee may either pre-select the topic or allow each contestant to choose her own. Be sure to allow contestants ample time to prepare their presentations before the contest date. Using note cards for reference is acceptable, but judges will likely score a presentation higher when the contestant is less dependent on notes.

Mechanics: Individual speech in front of judges.

Timing: 4-6 minutes per presentation, depending on number of contestants.

What judges should look for:

See the sample scoring sheet on page 10.

Session Three: Media Interviews

Each contestant is “interviewed” during a media situation in front of the judges (not in front of the other contestants, however). A local radio personality or other person designated as the “reporter” should ask each contestant the same questions, using a microphone and tape recorder for effect. The questions should be provided to the reporter by the contest committee or judges. At least one or two questions should make the contestant “think on her feet.”

Mechanics: Individual media interview with judges

Timing: Observing. At least 2-3 minutes per contestant.

What judges should look for:

See the sample scoring sheet on page 11.

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
(Date)

Contact: (Your name
& phone number)

(Sample title :)

(NAME OF COUNTY) COUNTY DAIRY PRINCESSES TO BE CROWNED

The crowning of the new _____ *(name of county)* _____ County Dairy Princesses will be held (date) _____ in _____ *(town)* _____. The Dairy Princess competition is sponsored by the dairy promotion checkoff, which helps to build demand and sales for dairy products.

Judging and coronation activities will include _____

_____ :

Princess candidates are: _____ *(name of candidate)*, _____ daughter of _____ *(parent s' names)* _____, of _____ *(town)*, etc. *(A bit of biographical information on each candidate may also be included.)*

Princess candidates are judged on their communication skills, personality, enthusiasm for dairy promotion and general knowledge of the dairy industry.

###

Number of Princesses per County

Each county dairy association may choose the number of county dairy princesses they feel is manageable and best able to act locally on their behalf. County organizations are strongly encouraged to crown a certain number of dairy princesses equally, rather than naming one county princess along with attendants or runners- up. This will ensure that they understand they are advancing to possible future competition on an equal level.

Compensating Your Princess

Counties should compensate their princesses when they make appearances on behalf of their local dairy association. Princesses must obtain approval from their designated county contact person prior to making any public appearance as a dairy princess. This policy must be clearly explained to each princess and she should be provided with the name, address and phone number of that contact person immediately after her coronation.

Counties may determine their own compensation policies; however, the following is a suggestion:

- Princesses are paid the approved IRS rate for mileage for all appearances scheduled by their county.
- Counties should pay their princess a per diem per appearance or a stipend at the end of her reign.

Midwest Dairy provides Princess Kay of the Milky Way with a stipend for each official appearance and reimburses her for related expenses (mileage, lodging, meals, etc.). She also receives a cash award at the end of her reign.

Princess Kay Request Form

Counties are encouraged to request Princess Kay of the Milky Way to attend their consumer-facing events. Remember, consumers are the ultimate audience for princess requests. Princess Kay does not attend local princess coronations or banquets. If you wish to request Princess Kay of the Milky Way please complete and submit the [Princess Kay Appearance Request Form](#) found on the Midwest Dairy website Young Dairy Leaders >> Dairy Princesses >> Minnesota >> Request a Princess

Section 2: Dairy Promotion and Leadership Event

Your new county dairy princesses are invited and encouraged to attend a statewide dairy promotion and leadership event held in May.

During this event, they will be provided with valuable information to help them better understand and perform their role in the dairy industry's public relations program. It will also help them develop life skills useful to being students and developing their careers. Here's just a sampling of what may be presented:

- How to interact with consumers
- Skills on media relations and public speaking
- Classroom presentation tips
- Issues in agriculture; and
- Ideas and resources to promote dairy.

These educational sessions will help build their confidence and knowledge as dairy ambassadors and young women.

Your county dairy princesses also have the option of applying to compete as a finalist for the Princess Kay of the Milky Way competition. During the event in May, special judging sessions will be held to select 10 finalists who will advance to the Princess Kay contest held in August.

2022 Dairy Promotion and Leadership Event

The May Leadership and Promotion Event will be held on Friday, May 13, and conclude on Saturday, May 14, 2022. Judging will be held in-person, potentially beginning on Friday evening. Any candidate wishing to enter the Princess Kay finalist selection judging must be in attendance from 5 p.m. Friday through 5 p.m. Saturday of the event.

Leadership Sessions

Virtual leadership sessions will continue to be offered prior to the event. These sessions will be recorded via Zoom and shared with registered participants after each session. All county princesses and coordinators are encouraged to participate in these virtual sessions. Watch for more communication from princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com for specific dates and speakers.

Additional leadership sessions will be offered at the event.

Number of Princesses a County May Send to Compete to be a Finalist for Princess Kay of the Milky Way

Counties are encouraged to send all eligible representatives to attend the statewide Promotion and Leadership Event. **There is no longer a restriction on the number of candidates per county.**

Attendees have three options when attending the statewide event:

- **Sessions only.** Attend the sessions and do **NOT** participate in any judging
- **Not considered.** Participate in the judging process, but **NOT** be considered as a 2022 Princess Kay finalist.
- **Fully considered.** Participate in the judging process and be a candidate for the 2022 Princess Kay finalist competition.

All participants in the Princess Kay of the Milky Way finalist selection (judging) **MUST MEET THE STATE PRINCESS PROGRAM RULES and SIGN the Dairy Princess Eligibility and Code of Conduct Form on page 22-23.**

Additional princesses or attendants, those who may be promoting locally but do not meet state princess eligibility rules or female ambassadors *who are at least seniors in high school*, are invited and encouraged to attend the event activities.

Dairy Princess Forms

Princesses wishing to compete for Princess Kay of the Milky Way will need to fill out the following forms by **April 15, 2022.**

- 1) [2022 May Event Registration form](#) (also at Midwest Dairy.com>>Young Dairy Leaders>>Dairy Princesses>>Minnesota); verifies attendance to the May Dairy Promotion and Leadership event
- 2) **Princess Eligibility and Code of Conduct Form** (found at the back of this handbook); certifies eligibility
 - a. Scan and email to princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com.

More information regarding judging will be sent out closer to the event to those who register to attend.

Section 3: Princess Kay of the Milky Way Competition

The Princess Kay of the Milky Way competition begins at the Leadership and Promotion Event held in May. In order to be eligible to compete for Princess Kay of the Milky Way, candidates must complete the Princess Eligibility and Code of Conduct Form (pages 22-23) and [register](#) to attend the Dairy Leadership and Promotion Event. Candidates vying for a top 10 finalist spot, will be judged on the following:

- Professional Interview
- Mock Media Interview
- Speech
- Application

Information on these activities can be found on page 15. In the event of a tie, it will be broken using the scores of the events in the following order: professional interview, mock media interview, speech and application.

Princess Kay of the Milky Way Finalists

Finalists continue to serve as a county dairy princess until the August judging event.

The **top 10 finalists are required to participate** in the following:

- Virtual informational session following the event in May
- July Workshop, scheduled for July 7-9, 2022
- Princess Kay Judging scheduled August 22-24, 2022
- Minnesota State Fair
 - Finalists will spend at least four days promoting dairy at the fair.
 - Princess Kay of the Milky Way will be required to spend the entire 12 days at the Minnesota State Fair. Princess Kay of the Milky Way is expected to be available **only** for dairy promotion through Midwest Dairy.

Each finalist will have the opportunity, along with Princess Kay of the Milky Way, to have her likeness sculpted out of butter at the Minnesota State Fair.

The candidate that is selected as Princess Kay of the Milky Way must not hold any other state titles or state leadership positions including Midwest Dairy Ambassador. Therefore, if you are chosen, as a Princess Kay Finalist, you agree to step down from any state titles immediately after being named Princess Kay.

2022 Dairy Princess Eligibility Form

Name of Candidate: _____ County: _____

Address: _____ Town: _____

Cell Phone number: _____ Email address: _____

Birth Date: _____ Names of Parent or Guardian: _____

Eligibility

Individuals are eligible to compete in the Minnesota Dairy Princess Program based on meeting one of the following four criteria. Select which one of the criteria qualifies you as a candidate.

1. _____ Either you, your parents, or guardians must be actively engaged in the production of milk for sale to a licensed plant at some time during the current year prior to the local contest. You still qualify if a brother or sister has taken over the family farm. The farm must contribute to the Minnesota dairy promotion checkoff.
2. _____ Either you, your parents or guardians are employed part time or full time on a dairy farm in a dairy-related capacity. The farm must contribute to the Minnesota dairy promotion checkoff. Your county ADA board has determined you demonstrate reasonable commitment throughout the year. If requested, you could provide verification of this employment.
3. _____ Either you, your parents or guardians care for/and or custom raise dairy cattle that will return to farms who contribute to the Minnesota dairy promotion checkoff.
4. _____ Either you, your parents or guardians own or lease a dairy animal or more that are housed on another dairy farm. You participate on that farm without pay in exchange for the care and housing of those animals. The county ADA board must determine that you demonstrate a reasonable commitment throughout the year and could provide verification of such if requested.

For all of the options above, please provide the following:

Name of the farm that contributes to checkoff: _____

Farm phone number: _____

Name of plant to which farm sells milk to: _____

Signature of farmer that contributes to checkoff: _____

If your family farm or place of employment is in a county different than where your home is based, you may choose to compete in either county, but must choose only one county.

General Candidate Eligibility Checklist (must meet all of the following items)

1. _____ Must be a female U.S. citizen¹ or female Permanent U.S. Resident². _____ (County Coordinator initials)
2. _____ Must not have been Princess Kay or a Princess Kay Finalist in any previous year.
3. _____ Must be single, never been married.
4. _____ Must not be pregnant or have had any children at any time prior to the contest or during your reign.
5. _____ Must be a high school graduate and not yet 24 years old on July 1 of the year of the contest. A GED is acceptable.
6. _____ Must not have been convicted of a felony offense involving crimes of moral turpitude (conduct that is considered contrary to community standards of justice, honesty or good morals); be on probation; or any offenses involving the use or possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco.
7. _____ Must be a genuine user of dairy products and a passionate supporter of the dairy industry.
8. _____ Must not participate or be associated with the sale of raw milk directly to consumers.

¹ Must show MN Driver's license or neighboring state* driver's license and MN high school transcript, plus U.S. Passport or Birth Certificate or Certificate of Naturalization. *Only Midwest Dairy states without an active Princess Program.

² Must show MN Driver's license or neighboring state* driver's license and MN high school transcript, plus unexpired Permanent Resident Card (also called Form I-551 or Green Card). *Only Midwest Dairy states without an active Princess Program.

Statement of Disclosure

1. _____ I hold no other state titles (i.e. FFA officer, livestock royalty, etc.) (Yes/No)
 - a. If yes, list all titles: _____
2. _____ If selected as a top 10 finalist and named Princess Kay, I agree to give up my other positions immediately. (Yes/No)

