



## Iowa Dairy Princess Program 2025-26 State Contest Overview

### 2025 Dates to Remember

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**July 1** Application Materials Due  
**July 15** References Due

**August 5-6** Contest Judging, Ankeny  
**August 6** Coronation, Des Moines  
**September 1** New State Princess and Alternate Reigns Begin

### Contest Basics & Overview

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Contest judging will be held at the Courtyard by Marriott, 2405 SE Creekview Dr., Ankeny, Iowa (hotel is just off I-35 at the Oralabor Road Exit).

Contest Coronation will be held at the Multi-Media Room of the Cattle Barn at the Iowa State Fairgrounds. Detailed directions, parking passes and other information will be provided to all candidates.

Midwest Dairy will cover the costs of all meals and hotel lodging on August 5 for the candidate and one chaperone.

- Candidates and families are welcome to stay additional nights at your own cost.
- Additional family members or friends are invited to attend the contest banquet on Tuesday evening for \$30 each.
- Additional family members can also join other meals at their own expense. A list of meals and costs will be provided to candidates in the final contest details.

Times and schedules for all contest activities will be finalized by July 31. A package of materials will be sent to candidates following that date. Princess contest check-in for candidates will be at 11:15 a.m. on August 5 at the hotel.

**Professional attire** (suit, dress, skirt and blouse, etc.) is expected for interviews and presentations on both days. **Formal attire is expected for the photos and dinner on August 5 and the coronation ceremony on August 6.** Most candidates wear the same gown both evenings – no need to bring two gowns.

The names and contact information for all candidates will be provided to editorial staff at *Dairy Star* for profiles in contest special issues. All candidates are expected to respond in a timely and professional way to editorial requests and deadlines from these publications. Midwest Dairy will also send a news release announcing the contest and candidates to state and local newspapers, so you may receive interview requests from local reporters.

Candidates will be provided with a nametag, so do not wear your county/breed association tiara or sash during the contest.

Salon I will be used for most candidate meals and will be available for candidates to socialize in between interviews and other contest activities.

## Contest Overview

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### *Tuesday, August 5*

|                                 |  |                        |                 |                                |                             |                     |                     |                |                      |                     |   |
|---------------------------------|--|------------------------|-----------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------|----------------------|---------------------|---|
| <b>Contest Check In</b>         | <p>Candidates should arrive at hotel and check in outside Salon I in the Courtyard by Marriott conference center.</p> <p>Hotel rooms are not guaranteed to be ready for check-in until mid-afternoon, so arrive dressed in <b>professional attire</b> appropriate for interviews and presentations. The hotel does try to accommodate early check-in requests, but we won't know room availability in advance.</p>   |                        |                 |                                |                             |                     |                     |                |                      |                     |   |
| <b>Welcome Lunch</b>            | <p>The welcome lunch provides an informal opportunity to meet and socialize with other contestants and chaperones before the contest begins. The program coordinator will also review the schedule and answer any questions from candidates or chaperones.</p> <p>Judges will be at the hotel but eat separately. This will be their opportunity to socialize and prepare for the contest as well.</p>   |                        |                 |                                |                             |                     |                     |                |                      |                     |   |
| <b>Introductions</b>            | <p>The judges will join the candidates. Each candidate will have a chance to introduce herself, her chaperone and the association she represents.</p> <p>This is the official launch of the contest and the judges' first impression of each candidate.</p>  |                        |                 |                                |                             |                     |                     |                |                      |                     |   |
| <b>Group Interviews</b>         | <p>Groups of 3-5 candidates will meet with the judges for 15-20 minutes.</p> <p>The judges will be observing how well you communicate, think on your toes, and how well you present yourself. Remember that you will be judged not only on your answers, but also your interaction with other candidates and allowing everyone to participate.</p>   |                        |                 |                                |                             |                     |                     |                |                      |                     |   |
| <b>Dairy Knowledge</b>          | <p>While group interviews are taking place, candidates will be asked to fill out a dairy knowledge questionnaire. Questionnaires will be scored and shared with the judges to inform them of the candidates' level of knowledge regarding questions a consumer may ask during the princess' reign.</p>   |                        |                 |                                |                             |                     |                     |                |                      |                     |   |
| <b>Prepared Public Speaking</b> | <p>Each speech is to be between 4 and 6 minutes and address a topic from the following list related to the dairy industry or dairy farming:</p> <table><tbody><tr><td>Animal well-being/care</td><td>Dairy nutrition</td></tr><tr><td>Chocolate milk/school programs</td><td>Dairy imitators/substitutes</td></tr><tr><td>Lactose intolerance</td><td>Organic/local foods</td></tr><tr><td>Sustainability</td><td>Antibiotics/hormones</td></tr><tr><td>Milk quality/safety</td><td>Role of dairy industry in local economies</td></tr></tbody></table> <p>At the beginning of each speech, the candidate should introduce herself, explain who her audience is and the communications goal. (Example: I am speaking to a local Kiwanis Club meeting about how dairy farmers care for their animals and the land. My goal is that they understand that dairy farming is an important part of rural economies</p> | Animal well-being/care | Dairy nutrition | Chocolate milk/school programs | Dairy imitators/substitutes | Lactose intolerance | Organic/local foods | Sustainability | Antibiotics/hormones | Milk quality/safety | Role of dairy industry in local economies |
| Animal well-being/care          | Dairy nutrition  |                        |                 |                                |                             |                     |                     |                |                      |                     |   |
| Chocolate milk/school programs  | Dairy imitators/substitutes  |                        |                 |                                |                             |                     |                     |                |                      |                     |   |
| Lactose intolerance             | Organic/local foods  |                        |                 |                                |                             |                     |                     |                |                      |                     |   |
| Sustainability                  | Antibiotics/hormones   |                        |                 |                                |                             |                     |                     |                |                      |                     |   |
| Milk quality/safety             | Role of dairy industry in local economies  |                        |                 |                                |                             |                     |                     |                |                      |                     |   |

and dairy farmers care for animals and environment.) This introduction will NOT count as part of the 4–6-minute presentation time.

Judges will be evaluating your speech for content, composition, and delivery. Most importantly, they will be evaluating how well you met your stated communications goal and audience needs.

**Public Speaking,  
continued**

Other guidelines:

- You will receive a signal at the 4-minute and 5-minute mark of your presentation, with the time called 6 minutes. At the 6-minute mark, you will be allowed to finish your sentence.
- Five minutes will be provided at the end of each presentation to allow the judges to ask questions.
- Candidates will not be permitted to use any costumes, props, gadgets, or audio-visuals of any sort. A podium will be available.
- Notes on 3x5 cards may be used during delivery, but excessive use will detract from speech effectiveness.
- Speeches should provide an adequate amount of information relating to the topic; information presented should be factual, understood and well-researched.

Once a candidate begins a speech, the door will be closed, and no one will be able to enter the room until after the presenter has completed her speech and judges have finished questions.

The Public Speaking winner will be announced at the banquet on Tuesday evening. The winner will give her speech at the coronation ceremony on Wednesday.

**Group and  
Individual Photos**

Candidates will have time to change into formal attire for professional photos.

Time and location will be provided in the letter to candidates before the contest. Group and individual photos will be taken by a professional photographer. Each candidate will receive a copy of the group photo, and additional photos can be purchased directly from the photographer.

**Banquet**

The banquet will be held at a location in the Ankeny area. Specific details to be provided to candidates prior to Contest Judging.

Candidate groups will dine with an assigned judge. Candidates and chaperones and guests will be at separate tables.

Meal costs for each candidate and one chaperone will be covered. Additional family members or guests are welcome to attend for \$30.00 each.

**Princess Reception**

Following the banquet, candidates will return to the hotel and change into casual attire for a group activity planned by the current princess and alternate.

## ***Wednesday, August 6***

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|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Breakfast</b>            | All candidates are expected to be dressed in <b><u>professional attire</u></b> and in time for breakfast. Candidate groups will dine with an assigned judge.   |
| <b>Personal Interview</b>   | <p>Each candidate will have a 15-minute individual interview with the judges.</p> <p>The judges will be observing how well you communicate, think on your toes, and how well you present yourself.</p>   |
| <b>Essay Questions</b>      | Following breakfast, each candidate will have 15 minutes to write answers to 2-3 dairy-related essay questions. These answers will be reviewed by the judges in case of a tie-breaker situation.   |
| <b>Candidate Activities</b> | During personal interviews, candidates are encouraged to stay in Salon I for activities planned by the current state princess and alternate.   |
| <b>Lunch</b>                | <p>This is the final meal before the contest judging adjourns. Candidate groups will dine with an assigned judge.</p> <p>Miss Congeniality ballots should be turned in by the end of lunch.</p>  |
| <b>Contest Adjourns</b>     | After lunch, you are free to participate in the other dairy events at the state fairgrounds.   |
| <b>Coronation Ceremony</b>  | <p>Be at Multimedia Center of Cattle Barn NO LATER THAN 7:00 P.M. dressed in formal attire.</p> <p>The ceremony will begin at 7:30 p.m., typically lasting one hour. Candidates will each have an opportunity to introduce themselves and the association she represents. The Presentation Winner will give her presentation and Miss Congeniality will be announced.</p> <p>All candidates will be recognized and then the State Alternate and State Princess will be named.</p> <p>The new Princess and Alternate will represent the dairy industry from September 1, 2025 through the 2026 Iowa State Fair.</p> <p>Following the coronation ceremony, the Program Coordinator will schedule an orientation session with the new Princess and Alternate.</p> |

**Questions? Please Contact Heidi Lantzky.**

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