

# *Minnesota Dairy Princess Handbook*

*An informational guide for dairy princess coordinators and county dairy princesses*



Revised January 2026

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## INTRODUCTION

There are two primary purposes for this handbook:

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

For over 70 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 can 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 in 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.

Information regarding the Princess Program in Minnesota can be found at: [MidwestDairy.com](http://MidwestDairy.com)  
>> Young Dairy Leaders >> Dairy Princesses >> Minnesota, or  
[www.midwestdairy.com/princesskay](http://www.midwestdairy.com/princesskay). Additionally, watch for communication from [princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com](mailto:princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com) and add it 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)
- Use social media to attract candidates (See sample content)
- Following the contest, schedule an evaluation meeting to discuss what worked and suggest plans for next year.
- **As a reminder, county crowns MUST BE UNDER four inches tall.**
- Keep a file of notes, correspondence, clippings, contacts, etc. that can be utilized for next year's planning.
- Visit MidwestDairy.com >> Young Dairy Leaders >> Dairy Princesses >> Minnesota or [www.midwestdairy.com/princesskay](http://www.midwestdairy.com/princesskay) for resources.
- Reach out to [princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com](mailto:princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com) for questions or guidance as you are planning your contest.

## 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).
- Use social media (see sample posts) to recruit candidates. Encourage your county dairy farmers and past princesses to share your posts 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 a 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.
- Share the recruiting flyer ([English](#)) ([Spanish](#)) with prospective candidates.

## (SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE)

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Date

### **CONTACT**

Name

Email

Phone

## **DAIRY PRINCESS CANDIDATES SOUGHT**

**City, Minn.**-- 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 \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_.

A candidate must be a high school graduate, and 18 years old by August 1, (year of contest) and not yet 24 years old by August 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 at the May Leadership Event 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 complete rules and application form, contact \_\_\_\_\_.

# # #

## (SAMPLE SOCIAL POSTS)

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

Are you a young woman who loves dairy? Become a county dairy princess today to share your love of dairy with others. Contact \_\_\_\_\_ name \_\_\_\_\_ 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 \_\_\_\_\_ name \_\_\_\_\_ to learn more!

Additional social media resources, including copy and graphics, are available at MidwestDairy.com >> Young Dairy Leaders >> Dairy Princesses >> Minnesota, or [www.midwestdairy.com/princesskay](http://www.midwestdairy.com/princesskay).

### Social Media Tips

- Less is more when it comes to social media; 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.
- Encourage current county princesses to create a post; create a testimonial/authentic.

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](mailto: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. 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. See the examples of how to reach out to invite judges to your contest.

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 process.

Before the contest, a princess committee member should meet with the judges to present them with an overview of the princess program. 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. Sample scoring sheets are provided as a resource. You may wish to use them or base your own scoring sheets on the examples. 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 also included in this handbook.

You will notice that there are no points for the judges to fill out. This helps move things along and provides good feedback to the candidates on what they can improve upon. It is recommended that each county assign a score for each column (i.e., good=3 points). 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 who are going to run for Princess Kay of the Milky Way. Practice judging is also a great life experience for those who aren't competing for Princess Kay of the Milky Way.

## (SAMPLE JUDGE INVITATION)

*Example to use in email or phone calls to guide your conversation.*

Hello name,

It's that time of year when dairy princesses are selected! I'm the County name County Princess Coordinator, and I'm looking for judges for our county's contest. Judging will be held at location on date. Judging runs from start to end. You would receive a stipend and mileage. Would you be interested and available? I can provide more information if this is something you'd consider. I look forward to hearing from you soon. Thank you.

## (SAMPLE JUDGE CONFIRMATION INFORMATION)

*Share with judges after they've agreed to participate.*

Dear Dairy Princess Judge,

Thank you for agreeing to judge the County name County dairy princess contest. 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 their ability to share them with consumers.

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

- Media interviews
- 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
- 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.

Sincerely,

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. See the sample scoring sheets for what judges should look for in each session.

### **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. Think of this as a job interview. Questions should be a mix of both dairy-related and general leadership questions. Googling professional interview questions is a good way to gain ideas for this section. Each contestant should be asked the same questions.

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

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

### **Session Two: Speech**

Each contestant gives a 4-6-minute oral presentation to the judging panel. The topic should be dairy-related with consumers as the main audience. 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

### **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 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 observing.

Timing: Typically takes 2-3 minutes per contestant.

## Professional Interview Score Sheet

Candidate's first name \_\_\_\_\_ Candidate's number \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Image and Communication Skills</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
Smiling and engaging demeanor				
Eye contact				
Hand and body movements				
Projects confidence				
<b>Comments:</b>				
<b>Responses to General Questions</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
Clear and concise responses				
Originality of responses				
Appropriate experiences shared				
<b>Responses to Dairy Questions</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Good</b>	<b>Fair</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
Clear and concise responses				
Quality of information shared				
Appropriate experiences shared				
Remains positive				
Includes personal connection to dairy industry				
Demonstrates awareness of current issues				
<b>Comments:</b>				

## Speech Score Sheet

Candidate's first name \_\_\_\_\_ Candidate's number \_\_\_\_\_

Speech time: _____	Within 4-6 minute timeframe? (circle selection)	Yes	No
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Image and Delivery	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
Engaging and enthusiastic				
Eye contact and not dependent on notes				
Hand and body movements				
Projects confidence				
Volume and tone variation				
Fresh and natural delivery rather than canned or scripted				
Pace of speaking				

**Comments:**

Speech Content	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
Captivating introduction				
Connected to audience				
Includes personal connection to dairy industry				
Shares key dairy messages clearly and positively				
Speech is easy to follow				
Strong conclusion that summarizes speech				

**Comments:**

## Mock Media Interview Score Sheet

Candidate's first name \_\_\_\_\_ Candidate's number \_\_\_\_\_

Image and Communication Skills	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
Smiling and engaging demeanor				
Eye contact				
Hand and body movements				
Projects confidence				
Proper grammar				
<b>Comments:</b>				
Responses to Questions	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
Projects intelligence and maturity				
Ability to think and respond quickly				
Convincing				
Clear and concise responses				
Responses delivered naturally; not rehearsed				
Demonstrates knowledge of dairy issues				
Shares key dairy messages clearly and positively				
Includes personal connection to dairy industry				
<b>Comments:</b>				

## Application Score Sheet

Candidate's first name \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate's number \_\_\_\_\_

Written Communication Skills	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
Correct grammar and punctuation				
Variety of sentence structures				
Expresses ideas clearly				
Responses to Application Questions	Excellent	Good	Fair	Needs Improvement
Response to question A				
Response to question B				
Responses include personal connection to dairy industry				
Responses demonstrate knowledge of dairy issues				
Responses share key dairy messages clearly and positively				
<b>Comments:</b>				

**Totals:** \_\_\_\_\_ Excellent    \_\_\_\_\_ Good    \_\_\_\_\_ Fair    \_\_\_\_\_ Needs Improvement

## **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 PRESS RELEASE)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date

### CONTACT

Name

Email

Phone

## COUNTY DAIRY PRINCESSES TO BE CROWNED

**City, Minn.**-- 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 American Dairy Association of County name County, which helps to build demand and sales for dairy products.

Judging and coronation activities will include \_\_\_\_\_.

Princess candidates are: name of candidate, daughter of parents' 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 the county contact person immediately after her coronation.

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

- Pay mileage at the approved IRS rate for any appearances scheduled by the county.
- Provide a per diem per appearance or 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.

## Wardrobe

It is important that Dairy Princesses appear in a professional manner during an appearance. While not required by counties, here are the suggested appearance wardrobe guidelines used by Princess Kay of the Milky Way and the Princess Kay finalists. These guidelines would be appropriate for your County Dairy Princess and are appropriate for the May Leadership Event.

When making an appearance, Princess Kay will wear business casual or business formal:

- A suit
- Blazer (jacket) with skirt or pants
- Business dress
- Professional top and pants (no jeans)
- Polo with dress pants or khakis (for more casual on-farm events)

Below are the wardrobe guidelines for Princess Kay and the Princess Kay finalists when making appearances at the Minnesota State Fair-

- Dresses and/or skirt outfits are to be worn at the state fair. Dresses should be at or near the knee. Short or tight apparel is neither comfortable nor appropriate. Many activities have you above the people (on a stage or parade float), so short skirts are embarrassingly inappropriate. Sleeveless dresses/tops are fine, but NO strapless. **Straps must be at least 1.5 inches wide, and bra straps must be hidden/covered.** No visible bra straps.

Wardrobe styles for your reference:



## Code of Conduct

Although it is not the purpose or intent of the program (at any level) to restrict or infringe upon personal freedoms of the dairy princesses, all dairy princesses should adhere to the Code of Conduct to uphold the integrity and success of the Minnesota Dairy Princess Program. Conduct must be exemplary at all times in accordance with the proper image of a dairy princess. A candidate must adhere to the following Code of Conduct:

- Project and deliver dairy messages with enthusiasm and a positive attitude.
- Be considerate and respectful of other princesses, county ADA members, and other dairy industry leaders.
- Communicate with the princess coordinator(s) in a timely manner.
- Be on time to all scheduled appearances and activities requested.
- Must not have been, and will not receive a conviction, or be on probation for any offenses involving the use or possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco.
- Must not have been, and will not receive, or be on probation for any felony offense involving conduct that is considered contrary to community standards of justice, honesty, or good morals.
- Will refrain from using alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, or legalized cannabis during a princess event.
- Social media activity must include respectable speech and appropriate photos at all times as you are representing the dairy industry to others.
- All body piercings (excluding earrings) and tattoos must be covered during appearances as a dairy princess.
- Clothing should be appropriate and professional for public appearances.

## SECTION 2: RESOURCES FOR YOUR PRINCESS PROGRAM

### Learning Sessions

Midwest Dairy has archived presentations online at <https://www.midwestdairy.com/young-dairy-leaders/dairy-princesses/minnesota-princess-kay-of-the-milky-way/>. These are a resource that can be reviewed by candidates to learn more about a variety of topics.

### Princess Kay Request Form

Counties are encouraged to request Princess Kay of the Milky Way to attend their consumer-facing events. **Princess Kay does not attend local princess coronations or banquets.** Remember, consumers are the ultimate audience for princess requests. 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 under Young Dairy Leaders >> Dairy Princesses >> Minnesota >> Request a Princess.

### Undeniably Dairy Grants

These competitive grants are for local promotion efforts to showcase that dairy is good for people, the planet, and our communities. Grants are available to dairy farmers, county dairy groups, and farm groups. Funding is subject to availability. Learn more about funding timeline and eligibility at <https://www.midwestdairy.com/farmers/undeniably-dairy-funding/>

### Midwest Dairy Promo Center

Looking for tools to help share your dairy story? Dairy farmers who provide funding to Midwest Dairy are encouraged to take advantage of a wide variety of promotional materials. Please allow two weeks for shipping. Order here: <https://www.midwestdairy.com/farmers/producer-service-center/>

## SECTION 3: MAY LEADERSHIP EVENT

Counties are encouraged to send all eligible representatives (a senior in high school at minimum) to attend the statewide May Leadership Event. **The event includes leadership sessions AND judging opportunities to compete for Princess Kay of the Milky Way finalists. There is no restriction on the number of candidates per county.** 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.

**County Coordinators:** It is your responsibility to inform all eligible attendees within your county about the event. Remember, candidates competing for Princess Kay must complete the 2026 Dairy Princess Eligibility form and Code of Conduct form which requires multiple signatures. It is your responsibility to follow up with all potential attendees to ensure the forms have been completed.

**Candidates:** It's your responsibility to register for the May Leadership Event and submit the required forms. It's recommended that attendees register for themselves to avoid duplication and clarity on attending.

During this event, attendees 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.

Our 2025 finalists reflected on their May Leadership Event experience:

- *"May Event is an amazing opportunity that allows you to connect with other Dairy Princesses from across the state to share ideas and expand your network. It also allows you to grow your knowledge of dairy, leadership, and professionalism through the educational sessions." – Natalie*
- *"My experience this year was incredible. It was amazing to meet other like-minded girls who are just as passionate about the dairy community. The sessions were great, and I learned a lot. I would definitely encourage others to go as it was such a great experience and it was a unique opportunity for someone like myself who didn't grow up on a dairy farm." – Nicole*

- “*May Event was not only educational when it comes to dairy, but also in life skills! We were able to communicate with many other girls who share common interests and hear interesting speakers share about day-to-day skills we can use in both our roles as dairy princesses and throughout our entire lives.*” – Heidi

## Register for the 2026 May Leadership Event

The May Leadership Event will be held on Friday, May 15, and conclude on Saturday, May 16, 2026, in the Twin Cities. It is free to attend, and registration includes lodging and meals.

Attendees can participate in one of three ways at 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 2026 Princess Kay finalist.
- **Fully considered.** Participate in the judging process and be a candidate for the 2026 Princess Kay finalist competition.
  - All participants in the Princess Kay of the Milky Way finalist selection (fully considered) **MUST MEET THE STATE PRINCESS PROGRAM RULES and COMPLETE AND SIGN the Dairy Princess Eligibility Form and Code of Conduct Form** found at the back of this handbook.
  - Email a scan or photo of the completed forms to [princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com](mailto:princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com).

Judging will be held in-person, potentially beginning on Friday evening. Fully Considered Candidates must be in attendance from 7 p.m. Friday through the conclusion of the event on Saturday (approximately 5 p.m. Saturday).

## Deadlines and Forms

**All attendees must complete an online registration by April 17, 2026, and submit the appropriate forms by this date.**

- [2026 May Leadership Event Registration Form](#) (link is also available at Midwest Dairy.com>>Young Dairy Leaders>>Dairy Princesses>>Minnesota or [www.midwestdairy.com/princesskay](http://www.midwestdairy.com/princesskay));
  - Registration verifies attendance to the May Leadership Event
  - All participants attending May Leadership Event must complete this online form.
- **Dairy Princess Eligibility Form**
  - Participants who register as “fully considered” as a Princess Kay candidate must complete this form.
    - Note: multiple signatures are required.
    - Forms are due April 17, 2026, and can be emailed to [princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com](mailto:princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com)
  - This form is optional for May Leadership Event “Sessions only” or “Not Considered” attendees.
- **Code of Conduct Form**
  - All participants must sign and return this form by April 17, 2026, to [princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com](mailto:princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com)

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

## **SECTION 4: PRINCESS KAY OF THE MILKY WAY COMPETITION**

The Princess Kay of the Milky Way competition begins at the May Leadership Event. To be eligible to compete for Princess Kay of the Milky Way, candidates must complete the Princess Eligibility and Code of Conduct Forms (found at the back of this book) and register to attend the May Leadership 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 throughout the handbook. 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 May Leadership Event
- July Workshop, scheduled for July 9-10, 2026
- Princess Kay Judging scheduled August 24-26, 2026
- 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 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.

### **Expectations for Princess Kay of the Milky Way Finalists**

The role of a finalist is an honor and privilege. You will be asked to represent the dairy community in a professional manner. Dress for respect. The dress code for official finalists' appearances ranges from business casual to business formal, depending on the event. Descriptions of professional attire include:

- Business Casual: casual dresses or skirts (knee length), pants, blouses, polos
- Business Formal: business suits or business dresses
- Footwear should be comfortable with heels or flats as appropriate.
- Piercings (excluding pierced ears) should be removed during official event appearances.
- Visible tattoos should be covered with opaque clothing or makeup during appearances.

## **Insurance**

Midwest Dairy provides insurance coverage to Princess Kay in their independent contractor role as Princess Kay for the state of Minnesota. Activities covered include speaking events, banquets, parades, or other organizational activities they are attending in the capacity of Princess Kay, approved by the Minnesota Dairy Princess Coordinator. Insurance coverage is not applicable for chaperones or vehicles used to transport the Princess to, for, or in these various activities.

## **Photo and Video Consent**

We encourage you to obtain consent before sharing photos or videos from events or of your princesses. This ensures you have permission to share someone's likeness. If you have questions on how to obtain consent, please don't hesitate to reach out to Midwest Dairy staff.

# 2026 Dairy Princess Eligibility Form

## Candidate Information

Name of Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_ County\*: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Birth Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Names of Parent or Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

## Minnesota Dairy Farm Information

For eligibility options below, please provide the following:

Minnesota Farm that contributes to checkoff: \_\_\_\_\_  
Farm Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact phone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of plant to which farm sells milk to: \_\_\_\_\_

*\*You can run for county princess in a neighboring county as long as the county's board has been notified and approves your participation in that county's program.*

## 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 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.

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

Please initial each of the following statements regarding eligibility:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I am a female U.S. citizen<sup>1</sup> or female Permanent U.S. Resident<sup>2</sup>. \_\_\_\_\_ (County Coordinator initials)
2. \_\_\_\_\_ I have not been Princess Kay or a Princess Kay Finalist in any previous year.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ I am single, never been married.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ I am not pregnant or have not had any children at any time prior to the contest or during my reign.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ I am a high school graduate and 18 years old, but not yet 24 years old on August 1 of the year of the contest. A GED is acceptable.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ I have not, and will not receive a conviction, or be on probation for any offenses involving the use or possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ I have not, and will not receive a conviction, or be on probation for any felony offense involving conduct that is considered contrary to community standards of justice, honesty or good morals.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ I am a genuine user of dairy products and a passionate supporter of the dairy industry.
9. \_\_\_\_\_ I do not participate in or am not associated with the sale of raw milk directly to consumers.

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

If you have any questions regarding eligibility, please reach out to Janet Bremer at [princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com](mailto:princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com).

## Statement of Disclosure

Princess Kay may not hold any other state titles of state leadership positions. Please disclose the following:

1. Do you currently hold other state titles (i.e. State FFA office, livestock royalty, etc.)  Yes  No
  - a. If yes, list all titles: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. If selected as a top 10 finalist and named Princess Kay, I agree to resign my other state leadership positions immediately upon coronation  Yes  No

*IF selected as a Princess Kay Finalist*

- ✓ You are eligible to compete for a \$1,000 scholarship to the college of your choice.
- ✓ You will attend a two-day development session on **July 9-10, 2026**
- ✓ You will advance to the Princess Kay Judging Competition on **August 24-26, 2026**
- ✓ You will be scheduled to appear in a public relations capacity for at least four days of the 2026 Minnesota State Fair whether or not you win the Princess Kay title.
  - You will **not** be able to participate in other activities during this time such as FFA and 4-H activities, showing cattle, queen activities for other pageants, or a job which could prohibit you from serving your time during the fair, etc.
- ✓ Princess Kay does sign a contract which states that she will be available for the entire twelve (12) days of the fair and other appearances throughout the year.

**The eligibility rules apply to those competing for Princess Kay of the Milky Way. The county ADA board, and when applicable, the Princess Kay Committee, reserves the right to dismiss a dairy princess at their discretion. If there is any question regarding any of the eligibility rules, the dairy princess candidate or dairy princess should bring that forward to their county coordinator.**

I have read and agree to the above eligibility requirements which apply beginning at my county coronation through the end of my reign as a dairy princess. I understand that falsification of any responses could result in my dismissal if selected as a dairy princess.

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Dairy Princess Candidate Name	<b>Candidate Signature</b>	Date
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Optional if candidate is over 18 Parent/Guardian Name	<b>Parent/Guardian Signature</b>	Date
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Farmer contributing to checkoff Name	<b>Farmer Signature</b>	Date
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I have reviewed the eligibility requirements of this candidate and confirm that she meets these requirements.

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County ADA Chair Name	<b>County ADA Chair Signature</b>	Date
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*(Or other officer if chair is parent, guardian, or employer of candidate. If a county ADA board does NOT exist, then and only then a processor representative of a dairy co-op where a candidate's milk is marketed may sign.)*

**Please scan and email this form, with appropriate signatures, to  
princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com by April 17, 2026**

## Dairy Princess Code of Conduct Form

Although it is not the purpose or intent of the princess program to restrict or infringe upon personal freedoms of the dairy princesses, the following Code of Conduct is established to uphold the integrity and success of the Minnesota Dairy Princess Program. Your conduct must be exemplary at all times in accordance with the proper image of a dairy princess. In the event that the Princess Kay Committee determines, at its sole discretion, that your conduct is not in accordance with the foregoing standards, the Committee reserves the right to remove you at any time from your position, whether it be as a candidate or as a dairy princess.

Each candidate must adhere to the following Code of Conduct if selected as a dairy princess. Please initial the following statements:

1.  Project and deliver dairy messages with enthusiasm and positive attitude.
2.  Be considerate and respectful of other princesses, county ADA members, and other dairy industry leaders.
3.  Communicate with princess coordinator(s) in a timely manner.
4.  Be on time to all scheduled appearances and activities requested.
5.  Must not have been, and will not receive a conviction, or be on probation for any offenses involving the use or possession of alcohol, illegal drugs, or tobacco.
6.  Must not have been, and will not receive a conviction, or be on probation for any Felony offense involving conduct that is considered contrary to community standards of justice, honesty, or good morals.
7.  Will refrain from using alcohol, tobacco, vaping products, or legalized cannabis during a princess event.
8.  Social media activity must include respectable speech and appropriate photos at all times as you are representing the dairy industry to others.
9.  All body piercings (excluding earrings) and tattoos must be covered during appearances as a dairy princess.
10.  Clothing should be appropriate and professional for public appearances.

**This code of conduct is applicable at all levels of competition. The county ADA board, and when applicable, the Princess Kay Committee, reserves the right to dismiss a dairy princess at their discretion. If there is any question regarding code of conduct, the dairy princess should bring that forward to their county coordinator.**

I have read and agree to the above code of conduct, which applies beginning at my county coronation through the end of my reign as a dairy princess. I understand that my failure to comply with them or falsification of any responses could result in my dismissal if selected as a dairy princess.

Dairy Princess Candidate Name Print

**Candidate Signature**

Date

County

**Please scan and email this form, with appropriate signatures, to  
princesskaycoordinator@midwestdairy.com by April 17, 2026**