

# Southeast Dairy Producer's Check-Off Program Research Summary

## Florida Youth Dairy Programs

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**Funding Year:** 2023

**Amount Awarded:** \$30,000



We had another strong year in our youth dairy program. In 4-H we actually experienced an increase in youth enrolled in the dairy project state-wide with 3,487 youth enrolled in the dairy project state-wide for the 2023-2024 4-H year. We had youth show at the North Florida Fair, South Florida Fair, Florida State Fair, Miami-Dade Fair, Greater Northeast Florida Fair, the State 4-H Dairy Show in Okeechobee, and other local fairs and shows. Once again Florida youth did well in dairy quiz bowl competitions and dairy judging competitions around the state and nationally. Florida also hosted the Southeast Dairy Youth Retreat in 2024

## Implications

Research shows that young people with activities related to their spark are more likely to be put on a trajectory to thrive as adults. For young people whose spark is a dairy project, we provide the framework, with much help from volunteers and producers, in which these young people can explore and fuel these sparks to intrinsically grow in knowledge and skill related to the dairy project. Some of these youths will pursue careers in or related to dairy science. Some will not; however, concepts and life skills learned through the dairy project will positively influence other aspects of their lives and will help them be informed consumers and supporters of animal agriculture in the future.



2024 Dairy Quiz Bowl Team Guernsey Convention



Avery Best 1st Place Public Speaking  
Holstein Convention

## Methods

We provide the framework for the youth dairy program in Florida. We provide curricula and record books and help organize shows and competitions for youth enrolled in dairy projects. We help at the Florida State Fair, North Florida Fair, South Florida Fair, and State 4-H Dairy Show. We support the Southeast Dairy Youth Retreat, held this year in Florida. We support the 4-H Dairy Heifer Chain which is in its 5th year and have placed 13 heifers through this program. We also support the National 4-H Dairy Conference and sent three youth to that annual event in Wisconsin. We competed in three national quiz bowl contests and three national dairy judging contests in 2023-24. We have an extremely dedicated network of local and state-wide volunteers who make all these programs possible and without which we could not have the level of impact we enjoy in the youth dairy program. We partner with producers whenever possible to ensure that our youth dairy educational activities are promoting concepts related to real-world agriculture and specifically the dairy industry in Florida.

## Results

Overall dairy enrollment state-wide is up with 3,487 youth in 2023-24. We had 133 youth exhibit dairy cattle at the Florida State Fair in Tampa (down 4 youth from 2023), and 48 youth at the State 4-H Dairy Show in Okeechobee (down by about 20 youth from 2023). We sent quiz bowl teams to the Guernsey Convention where our junior team won 1st place and our senior team won 3rd place, and several Florida youths won speaking and other contests. We send a quiz bowl team to the Holstein convention where the team placed 8th and had the first-place prepared public speech winner from Florida. Florida competed in judging contests in Louisville, Harrisburg, and Madison. The Madison. We placed 2 heifers through our dairy heifer chain in 2023-24 to youths in Sarasota and Pasco Counties. We hosted the 2024 Southeast Dairy Youth Retreat with 173 youth and adults from several southern states.



SEDYR 2024 Visiting North Florida Holstein



Making Cheese at the 2024 Southeast Dairy Youth Retreat