CFAES COLLEGE of FOOD, AGRICULTURAL and ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Purchasing Your Clark Co. Jr. Fair Dairy Feeder

Note: The list provided by the Clark County 4-H & FFA Dairy Committee is for your assistance in purchasing a dairy feeder project animal. This list is not an endorsement.

- Assin Dairy – 740-606-0460 – Peter
- Twin Oaks Dairy – 740-837-0359 – Tunes
- Erica Massie – 740-853-3562
- Lizzie Cauley – Message on Facebook

Fair or Acceptable Price: Consider current market value of the animal plus a premium for good conformation, healthy, productive, and high-quality animal. The older the calf the more you will pay, but there is a tradeoff in overall feeding costs and health risks.

2026 Estimated Price for 4-H dairy feeder calves: $1100+ for 3-to-7-day old calf or $1800+ for 6-week-old weaned calf.

Market Selections:

➔ Select an animal that is the right size and weight for the project and target finish or weigh date at the Fair. Selecting the appropriate beginning weight will help avoid "holding" an animal to make Fair weight which is an unacceptable animal care practice. **Dairy feeders must weigh <u>350 to 650 pounds</u> to show and be eligible to sell as part of the exhibitor's experience unit in the Clark Co. Jr. Fair Auction. 300-to-349-pound dairy feeders may show in an underweight class, showmanship and go on the packer truck. Under 300-pound dairy feeders must leave the fairgrounds by 8 AM, Saturday, July 25.**

➔ **<u>Start by buying a purebred, single dairy bull calf</u>** (**<u>HOLSTEIN or BROWN SWISS ONLY</u>**) in February to Mid-March (80 to 120 lb. calf/few days old up to a week old) to meet ideal dairy feeder weight at July Fair Weigh-In (400 to 600 pounds). Weaned calves purchased in April should weigh 300 lbs. Purchasing older calves enables youth to reduce the health risks associated with bottle feeding calves that are just a few days old. Weaned calves should be on full feed at time of purchase. **NO AYRSHIRE, GUERNSEY, JERSEY, or MILKING SHORTHORN CALVES ALLOWED at the Clark Co. Fair!**

➔ At the May weigh-in, a third-party dairy evaluator hired by the Fair Board will inspect every dairy feeder to determine if it is a **<u>qualified single dairy breed castrated male using breed standard color markings as described in the attachment.</u>** In addition, calves evaluated for absence of severe abnormalities (i.e. Hernias) and desirable dairy confirmation traits. Any decision made by the dairy evaluator on a dairy feeder's qualification as a single dairy breed of Holstein or Brown Swiss is FINAL! **<u>Feeders must be castrated and dehorned by the May weigh-in! No Exceptions!</u>**

Average Daily Gain: 2.0 to 2.3 lbs. per day gain up to 13 weeks, 3.0 lbs. gain after that until Fair. If buying a 100 lb. calf to make a minimum of 400 lbs. at Fair Weigh-In in July – feed for 150 days.

- $100 – 50 lb. bag of milk replacer, $8 to $10 for a bottle. Feed approximately 2 quarts, 2 times a day, at the proper temperature. Be consistent with the amount and blend of the milk replacer. If the weather changes and the temperature drops below 32 F., you may need to feed 3 times a day to supply your calf with additional energy to stay warm.
- Roughly ½ ton of feed will be fed to the calf during a 150-day period. Approximately $500-$700 cost in grain for the project. Calf starter - $20 per 50 lb. (100 lbs. of starter), 650 lbs. – Steer Stuffer 14% - $14 per 50 lb. Feeding on average 15 lbs. per day (45 bags of feed). ***(All costs are subject to change.)***
- Put feed in front of them on day one. Wean off milk re-placer when calf is eating 4 lb. of grain a day.
- Feed "handful" of hay each day to help keep the rumen operating. Feed good quality grass hay. Don't feed high quality legume hay (alfalfa, clovers) or feed free choice, the calf will eat hay instead of the grain. 5 to 7 bales of hay (50 to 60 lb. bales) during the project will be needed.

Prepared by Patty House, OSU Clark Co. Ext Educator, 4-H Youth Development & Dairy Committee Members
2026 Clark County Dairy Clinic

Water: Provide plenty of clean, fresh water daily. Move the water around in the pen to encourage the calf to move around and seek water. Keep water buckets, tanks, and containers CLEAN!

Shelter: Keep calf out of the weather. Protect from wind, rain, sun, and cold. Avoid drafty areas that will lead to respiratory problems in calves. However, make sure the calf's stall or pen is not stuffy – some air movement provides good ventilation and a healthier environment for your calf. Pen space should allow 25 to 30 sq. ft. per animal. Check Dairy Res. for Calf Hutch recommendations.

Bedding: Keep as dry as possible. Use shavings, straw, or mulch.

Health:

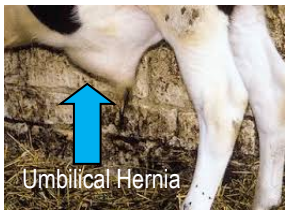
☑ Take your calf's temperature (rectally) twice a day for two weeks after purchase. Record rectal temperature in the morning and again in the afternoon or evening. The average temperature should be 100 to 101.5F. The temperature may be slightly higher in the afternoon/evening.

☑ Visually inspect your calf daily and check for the following:

- ☺ Calf appears alert and active.
- ☺ Nose is clear and free of mucus.
- ☺ Tail is dry with no signs of diarrhea.
- ☺ Environment appears clean, dry and ventilated.
- ☺ Ears are not droopy.
- ☺ Breathing appears to be normal.
- ☺ Feces in pen appear light brown in color, pasty, and void of blood.
- ☺ Naval area is dry and free of swelling.

☑ **Feeders must be castrated and dehorned by the May weigh-in.** No Exceptions! Your calf will not be tagged or weighed in without meeting this requirement and it will not be done at the May weigh-in! If not done by the dairy producer at time of purchase, expect to pay $5 to $10 for castration & $10 to $20 for dehorning plus vet trip charge. Castrate dairy feeders at less than 10 weeks of age and dehorn at one month of age or just as soon as the horn buttons can be felt. **You may not show or sell any dairy feeder with any retained testicular tissue or visible horn tissue. The fair vet will examine any calf in question and make a ruling for qualification.**

☑ **The Dairy Com. will not tag or weigh in any dairy feeder that has an umbilical hernia at the May Tag-In. Feeders with an umbilical hernia or unsightly repairs may not show or sell at the Fair.**



☑ If a tagged feeder dies between the May Tag-In day and **June 1 or is ruled unqualified or has an umbilical hernia**, the exhibitor may replace the feeder with another feeder after receiving approval from the Dairy Committee. The replacement calf will not be eligible for Rate of Gain.

☑ If a dairy feeder dies after June 1 up until the first day of the Fair, an exhibitor may exhibit, show & sell a tagged dairy feeder of a sibling from the same household. Household means the permanent residence address of the exhibitor.

Ask the dairy producer what vaccinations were given, if none have been given, contact your local veterinarian for recommendations. All dairy feeder calves will be vaccinated at the May 9, 2026, Tag-In, 8 AM-10:30 AM, Clark Co. Fairgrounds, Cattle Arena and must be vaccinated again by a licensed veterinarian no later than July 1, 2026. Feeders will not be weighed in at the Fair if 2nd vaccinations are not given by July 1 by a veterinarian and you must provide proof at weigh-in f you do not attend one of the scheduled ones below.

☑ **2nd Vaccination by Northside Vet Clinic or Noll Veterinary Clinic Depending Upon Site**

- ☞ Tuesday, June 2, 6 PM -7 PM, Greenon High School behind Vo-Ag Dept.
- ☞ Wednesday, June 3, 6 PM – 7 PM, Northwestern Bus Barn
- ☞ Saturday, June 6, 7:30 AM – 9 AM, Clark County Fairgrounds

☑ **Watch for common health related illnesses. Take Action!**

- ☹ **Scours (Diarrhea) Symptoms:** looseness of bowels and thin feces that are foul-smelling. Look for a wet tail and tail head.
- ☹ **Pneumonia Symptoms:** High temperature, coughing, rapid breathing, and generally slow animal actions. Observe daily, record symptoms, take calf's temperature to be able to answer your veterinarian questions if you need to contact.

Pre-Tag Entry: You must complete the Clark County Jr. Fair Dairy Feeder Exhibitor On-line Registration by midnight on May 1, 2026, listing all the dairy feeders you plan to bring to tag-in. Scan QR Code or Go to https://go.osu.edu/2026clarkcojrfairdairyfeederexhibitorreg

Tag-In & Weigh-In: You must tag & weigh in your dairy feeder on **Sat., May 9, 8 AM -10:30 AM, Cattle Arena, Clark Co. Fairgrounds**. Cost is **$10.00/feeder** includes req. vaccinations, de-wormer, implant, and tag. **Tag a max 5 calves, show 2.** Calves brought to the Tag-In not castrated and/or dehorned will not be tagged or weighed in but will be photographed. Youth will have until June 1st to have the calf properly castrated and/or dehorned, get 1st vaccinations, and contact the dairy committee chair. The exhibitor will need to bring the calf to the June 6, 2nd Vaccination date at the Clark Co. Fairgrounds to be tagged by the committee. The calf is not eligible for Rate of Gain and the youth will need to make sure the calf receives 2nd vaccinations by July 1, if not on Jun 6.

Resources to Help You: Dairy & Beef Resource Handbooks, Dairy Feeder Project Book – Available at the Extension Office

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