



Florida 4-H Dairy Heifer Chain

Purpose

4-H Youth Development

The Florida 4-H Dairy Heifer Chain will be an educational teaching program and facilitate more Florida youth participating in the 4-H dairy cattle project by providing them with a high-quality, registered dairy heifer. The selected 4-H member will be the owner of either a registered Jersey heifer provided to Florida 4-H courtesy of Irish Oaks Farms, a registered Brown Swiss heifer provided to Florida 4-H courtesy of Family Tree Enterprises, a registered Holstein heifer provided by North Florida Holstein, or is the offspring of an animal previously part of the heifer chain. The 4-H member will provide all the needs of this animal and care for the animal as part of his or her 4-H project. The 4-H member will complete a record book on the project animal, and show the animal in at least two local, regional, or state-level 4-H shows. When the heifer is of proper age, the 4-H member will facilitate breeding the animal to produce a registered calf. The 1st heifer calf will then be used to provide a dairy project animal for another 4-H member, thus adding another 'link to the chain'. Any calves born to the original animal after the 1st heifer will be the property of the 4-H member.

How it Works

The 4-Her will complete and turn in a cover letter, a resumé of 4-H participation, application, an attestation of proper care, an essay, and a letter of recommendation from a 4-H club leader or county agent. The selected participant will be determined by a panel of judges appointed by the 4-H Dairy/Animal Science State Specialized Agent. The 4-H member selected for the program will be the owner of a registered Jersey Heifer granted by Irish Oaks Farms, a registered Brown Swiss heifer granted by Family Tree Enterprises, a registered Holstein heifer donated by North Florida Holstein, or is the offspring of an animal donated by one of these farms to another youth in the chain. The registration will be transferred into the selected 4-H member's name, solely for purpose of participation in this educational youth program. The selected 4-H member will work with the 4-H Dairy/Animal Science State Specialized Agent (SSA), their local 4-H agent(s), and club leader(s), and a local veterinarian to ensure the project animal is receiving proper care, housing, and training. The selected 4-H member will then be eligible to show this animal in local, regional, state, and national dairy shows and fairs. The 4-H member will be required to show in at least two shows the first year of owning the animal. The 4-H member will be responsible for daily care, feeding, health care, and training the animal, including training the animal to lead, set up in a show, and other training to ensure a quality dairy animal. The 4-H member will be responsible for having the heifer bred at the appropriate time (as determined by the 4-H Dairy/Animal Science SSA) by artificial insemination to sexed semen to a registered bull (selected with input from the 4-H Dairy/Animal Science SSA) with the goal of producing a registered heifer calf; it will be the responsibility of the 4-H member to register this calf with the prefix designated by the 4-H Dairy/Animal Science SSA. This calf will be cared for by the 4-H member for three months after birth; and then the process will start over for another 4-H member who will win this calf, and the process will continue as a chain. After the first heifer calf, any future calves that the animal has will be the property of the 4-H member who owns the animal, with written permission from the 4-H member's parent/guardian.

Rules

- This opportunity is open to all 4-H members ages 8-13 as of September 1, 2020, who are members in good standing of a Florida 4-H community club.
- The 4-H member must sign an attestation that they will properly care for the animal, which will include proper nutrition, housing (including fencing, other facilities, and protection from potential predators), training, routine health care, and other care.
- Applicants must fill out the attached application and return to Dr. Chris DeCubellis, 4-H Dairy/Animal Science SSA, along with a cover letter, letter of recommendation from a 4-H club leader or county agent, a resume' that includes highlights of the member's 4-H experiences, an attestation of proper care, and an essay up to 500 words on the topic indicated in the application. This is due by August 1, 2021, submitted by email or mail (see application for address).
- One 4-H member for each donated heifer will be selected by a committee assembled by the 4-H Dairy/Animal Science SSA.
- The ownership of the heifer will be transferred into their name at their expense, with written permission from their parent/guardian.
- The selected 4-H member and his or her family will be the primary care giver for the animal.
- The selected 4-H member will keep a 4-H dairy record book on the animal.
- The first heifer calf born to this animal will be used to continue the 4-H dairy chain to another 4-H member, but the selected 4-H member will care for the calf for the first three months of its life, and will provide all vaccinations recommended by the 4-H Dairy/Animal Science SSA.
- The selected 4-H member will email a monthly report updating the 4-H Dairy/Animal Science SSA with information on the growth and development of the heifer and how they feel the project is progressing; this report will include dates the animal is observed in estrous (heat) to aid in breeding efforts, as well as at least one current photo of the animal.
- It is the responsibility of the 4-H member to have the heifer bred by artificial insemination with sexed semen from a registered bull with input with input from 4-H Dairy/Animal Science SSA. The 4-Her will need to keep track of animal growth/weight, heat cycles, and pay for AI service.
- While exhibiting the animal at fairs and other dairy shows, recognition will be given to the donating farm and the 4-H Dairy Heifer Chain program. The heifer's name, sire, and dam will be listed on the barn card or exhibit signage.
- The selected 4-H member is expected to exhibit this heifer in the State 4-H Dairy Show, and also compete in either 4-H dairy judging or 4-H dairy quiz bowl at the State 4-H Dairy Show.
- If for any reason during the project the selected 4-H member can no longer care for the animal, the donors will have first right of refusal to buy back the animal. If the donor is not interested in buying the animal, the selected 4-H member can place the animal with another 4-H member with help and approval from the 4-H Dairy/Animal Science SSA.

Sponsors

Special thanks to our sponsors who are making this opportunity possible for Florida 4-H:

- Irish Oaks Farms, DJ and Robin McGlothorn
- Family Tree Enterprises, Woody and Grace Larson
- North Florida Holsteins
- Southeast Milk, Incorporated



Florida 4-H Dairy Heifer Chain Application

Please fill in this application completely; use additional paper if necessary.

Name: _____ County: _____ Age as of Sept 1: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email Address: _____

4-H Club Name: _____ 4-H Leader: _____

List all the 4-H projects you have completed up to this point (include previous years): _____

Preferred Breed (Jersey, Brown Swiss, Holstein, or Either Breed): _____

Explain your experience with large animals: _____

Describe the facilities/property where you will be able to keep this animal. _____

Why do you want to own and care for a dairy heifer? _____

How do you think you will use knowledge, information, and skills learned through raising this heifer?

In your opinion, what is a major issue facing Florida dairy producers? _____

As of right now, what are your career goals, and what education, training, or experiences will you need to achieve those goals? _____

Please submit this application, along with a cover letter, resume' (including 4-H highlights), letter of recommendation from your club leader or county agent, and an essay of up to 500 words on the topic 'What impact owning a registered dairy heifer will have on my life' to Dr. Chris DeCubellis, cdecube@ufl.edu or 2142 Shealy Drive, PO Box 110230, Gainesville, FL 32611 by August 1, 2021.

Florida 4-H Dairy Heifer Chain Participant Consent and Attestation of Proper Care

I, _____, who, as an applicant for consideration to receive a registered dairy heifer through the Florida 4-H Dairy Heifer Chain, I affirm and attest under penalty of perjury that I am a member in good standing of the _____ 4-H Club in _____ County, Florida; and that I have the financial needs, resources, and facilities to properly care for and house a dairy animal during all stages of her life from calf to adult. If I have any questions regarding the proper housing, feeding, or management of this animal, I will reach out to the 4-H Dairy/Animal Science SSA, my 4-H club leader, 4-H agent, extension specialists and other dairy resources for input and guidance.

I affirm and attest that I will work with a local veterinarian who works with large animals to provide for the routine health care and any medical emergencies that might arise with this calf at my expense.

I realize that there are no specified or implied guarantees as to the health or life expectancy of this calf.

I affirm and attest that I will work with the 4-H Dairy/Animal Science SSA, my 4-H club leader, 4-H agent, extension specialists and other dairy resources to help breed this animal, when the 4-H Dairy/Animal Science SSA determines the timing is right, to find a reputable artificial insemination service to breed my animal to a bull determined by the 4-H SSA to sexed semen, and that the resulting calf will belong to Florida 4-H at 3 months of age to place with another 4-H member in order to continue the dairy chain for a future generation as part of this educational program.

I affirm and attest that if, for any reason, I cannot take care of this animal, I will offer this animal to Irish Oaks Farms for purchase; if they are not interested in purchasing this animal for what both I and Irish Oaks Farms determines to be a fair price, I will work with the 4-H Dairy/Animal Science SSA to place this animal with another 4-H club member of the 4-H SSA's choosing.

I attest that I have read the above carefully and state that my attestation here is true and correct.

Signature: _____ Date _____

I acknowledge and agree to all of the above and give my consent for my child's participation.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____