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14th annual Michigan Dairy Expo set for July 19–23 at MSU

EAST LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan dairy industry will take center stage July 19–23 during the 14th annual Michigan Dairy Expo at the Michigan State University (MSU) Pavilion for Agriculture and Livestock Education.

Dairy producers from across the state and visitors of all ages are invited to the expo to learn about Michigan’s dairy industry by visiting commercial exhibits and attending dairy management seminars and state breed shows. More than 400 dairy animals will be exhibited by more than 200 exhibitors during the five-day event.

“Visitors to the Michigan Dairy Expo will get to see some of Michigan’s finest dairy cattle exhibited by top breeders from across the state,” says Joe Domecq, MSU Extension dairy youth specialist and expo director. “More than 200 youth will also participate in various educational and leadership activities during the week. These youth represent the future of Michigan’s dairy industry.”

As part of the youth-centered portion of the event, 4-H Dairy Days, future dairy professionals and enthusiasts will have an opportunity to compete for premiums, ribbons and scholarships in various activities, including dairy quiz bowls, dairy management contests, dairy cattle judging competitions and the Dairy Days youth show. Winners may also go on to represent Michigan in national competitions.

For the second year, the Michigan Livestock Expo Sale-abration auction will be held July 20 at 6 p.m. in the sale arena. Champion and reserve champion winners from the second annual Michigan Livestock Expo, held the previous weekend at the MSU Pavilion, will be struck off to the highest bidder. A percentage of the proceeds from the sale of a gallon of milk, a pound of butter and a gallon of ice cream – representing the champion heifer, milking animal and showperson – will support the Michigan 4-H Dairy Youth Program.

July 21 marks the 12th annual Great Dairy Adventure consumer education day from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Here, children of all ages, parents and educators can learn about dairy cows and farming through hands-on activities and learning stations. Participants can pet calves, experiment with dairy recipes, sample ice cream and cheese, and milk a cow by hand.

Individual and team winners will be announced during the Michigan Dairy Expo Celebration Picnic and Dairy Youth and 4-H Recognition Program, the evening of July 22. At the conclusion of the awards program, the top two eligible junior and senior individuals will be presented with cash awards of \$1,000 and \$750, respectively. The evening will conclude with an

ice cream social.

The state's purebred dairy breed associations, with direction from the Michigan Purebred Dairy Cattle Association (PDCA), will also host their annual summer open and youth shows July 22-23, featuring Ayrshire, Brown Swiss, Guernsey, Holstein, Jersey and Red and White dairy cattle. The expo concludes with the selection of the breed show supreme champion.

"Dairy Expo offers an excellent venue for producers to network with friends and other producers from around the state, in addition to meeting and getting to know some of our future dairy producers and industry leaders through watching various 4-H events," says Carla McLachlan, expo event coordinator. "It also offers visitors a fun opportunity to see how the modern dairy industry operates and how it's advancing here in Michigan."

Admission to the Michigan Dairy Expo is free, and the public is invited to attend.

Michigan Dairy Expo is the largest annual dairy event in the state. Last year's event drew more than 400 dairy animals and more than 200 exhibitors. The mission of Michigan Dairy Expo is to encourage and promote youth involvement in dairy activities, showcase the Michigan dairy industry, and provide continuing education opportunities for the dairy industry in Michigan and neighboring states.

Premium books, event entry information and schedules are available at any MSU Extension county office or online at www.canr.msu.edu/anscikids/dairy.html <<http://www.canr.msu.edu/anscikids/dairy.html>> or www.michigandairyexpo.com. The registration deadline is June 25. For further information, contact the Michigan 4-H Dairy Office at 517-353-7855.

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