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OHIO’S STATEWIDE 2012 DAIRY PALOOZA

Although the term “palooza” has not yet entered most dictionaries, it is a slang word referring to a multitude of events that are superior or unusual! If that is the definition, Ohio’s Dairy Palooza lived up to everyone’s expectations. Held on April 28th at the Wayne County Fairgrounds, nearly 275 attendees representing 30 Ohio counties traveled to this event hosted by a volunteer committee working with the 4-H dairy youth specialist, Bonnie Ayars. Although Mother Nature was having a mood swing outside with a variety of chilly weather, the atmosphere inside was filled with enthusiasm!

Dairy Palooza 2012 was a one day educational program for dairy youth enthusiasts and leaders interested in learning more about dairy projects with hands on activities that related to current topics of concern. Printed resources and informational items were carefully bound in notebooks and distributed at the registration table. These were connected to each of the workshop sessions. Pre-registered participants received more free items than an Oprah Winfrey show! There was a red bucket that became the tote for a rope halter, a feed scoop, the binder of resources, and all the items from the career fair.
The day included four separate sessions and within each of these, 4 workshops were offered with suggested level of experiences ranging from cloverbuds and beginners to intermediates and seniors. Demonstrations, skits, role playing, mock scenarios, live cattle, and hands on activities were methods used to teach. From bovine laundry to an actual herd display set up for viewing, from selecting projects on the hoof and on paper to communication techniques with consumers, from skillathon stations to showmanship best practices and a career fair ongoing, everyone left with improved skills and a broader base of knowledge.

The day was not without elegant “cow cuisine” and real dairy products. Cow cookies with all breeds represented set the pace at the registration table and there were cheesy pizzas accompanied by donated milk beverages. However, the specially designed and theme decorated cake with butter cream frosting was an absolute crowd pleaser as a sweet treat to the day’s conclusion. The ice cream bars and sandwiches were also welcome additions.

This remarkable event could not have taken place without an army of dedicated volunteers and presenters. Key sponsors donated more than their time, but other resources and financial support to enrich the program. It took weeks and months of planning and everyone listed deserves a round of applause for their efforts.

So if you are feeling remorse at missing our 2012 rendition, the good news is that there WILL be another version in 2013. The date is yet to be determined. New topics, new updates, and a promise of more to see and do will be the goals of the committee.

Sponsor Link: www.4hansci.osu.edu/dairy
Photos are posted on Facebook, Ohio 4-H Dairy Program