Living up to its clever title, the 2014 DairyPalooza was quite the experience for dairy 4-H club members. On May 3, over 350 participants from 27 counties traveled to the Wayne County fairgrounds for our fourth annual program!

After registration, where participants collected their resource packets and free weigh tapes, everyone had the opportunity to walk through our Career Expo, which included table displays of dairy and agricultural businesses. After some group orientation, participants headed off to morning sessions – youth to Quality Assurance training, and adults and Cloverbuds to special sessions created just for them.

4-Hers participating in Quality Assurance rotated between four sessions focusing on three Good Production Practices (GPPs) with activities specific to dairy: hands-on activities such as injection practice using fruit, skits, case scenarios, and a relay review.

Adults not chaperoning their children to Quality Assurance had six session options from which to choose. Participants could choose between sessions about bovine hoof care, making dairy products from scratch at home, EASE training, Checkoff programs, Ohio State’s College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences, and learning about the new dairy project record books in their Microsoft Excel format.

Cloverbuds (youth under 9 years old) were led through sessions created to teach them the basics of dairy projects, led by Brandi Schlauch. These youth learned the different breeds of dairy cattle, anatomical parts of the cow, the 4-H pledge, and farm safety, and had the opportunity to create their own drawstring bag to carry their materials.
After a pizza lunch sponsored by Land O’Lakes, all participants had a chance to pick up their DairyPalooza t-shirts before taking a group photo. Youth participants were then dismissed to more youth sessions, while Cloverbuds split off into their afternoon sessions. In the afternoon, youth had three session blocks lasting 45 minutes each, and could attend one session from each of those blocks.

In one area, actual reproductive tracts were used to teach anatomy and artificial insemination techniques, while another aisle of the barn featured demonstrations on advanced clipping and fitting. Participants in the main arena learned showmanship tricks and tips, and the Hawvermale family set up a show display complete with a bedded pack and fitted cattle to teach herdsmanship.

An annual favorite at our event, Dr. Bob Horton taught three sessions on creating ice cream using liquid nitrogen and showing how the popular Dippin’ Dots ice creams are made. Participants were able to learn about the bovine digestive system using visuals and an activity that built a replica of the stomachs using sports balls. A session teaching youth and adults the proper way to raise, feed, fit and show dairy feeder calves was also offered, to prepare participants for the Ohio State Fair’s first dairy feeder show.

The program concluded around 3 p.m. with program evaluations, a drawing for two $200 certificates for semen from Genex Cooperative and Taurus Service, Inc., and door prizes – one lucky youth went home with a custom show box!

Eileen Gress, a fourth-year agricultural communication major at Ohio State, capably and efficiently manages the design and content of our website, as well as creating all print content for
the event. This year’s schedule, presenter biographies, and sponsor addresses, as well as news about the 2015 DairyPalooza can be found on our website, www.ohiodairypalooza.com.

Months of planning are packed into DairyPalooza, Ohio 4-H Dairy’s signature event. However, many sponsors help us maintain the program by minimizing costs for both attendees and the planning committee. We appreciate the assistance of our sponsors, as well as our presenters who donate their time and efforts to teach the next generation of dairy enthusiasts the skills they will need to succeed. We appreciate all of our sponsors, and would like to thank the Ohio 4-H Foundation for a grant that provided us with new teaching supplies and equipment for this year’s event. We hope to make the DairyPalooza program even better for 2015!

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PLEASE NOTE: DairyPalooza is spelled without the use of a space between the two capitalized words. Incorrect spellings such as Dairy-Palooza or Dairy Palooza are unacceptable.

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