

DAIRY PRODUCTS
Competition Superintendent Valerie
Catlin

GENERAL INFORMATION

This department functions to advance the dairy industry, the leading agricultural industry in New York State.

Only products made in New York State licensed plants are eligible to compete in these contests.

Displays of dairy products, equipment, supplies and other educational features will be presented.

Dairy products judging will start on Monday, June 15, 2026, and be completed by June 17, 2026. All judging will be done at Cornell University, Ithaca, NY. Winners will be notified by close of business on **July 31, 2026**. The notification will be emailed to the email address identified in the NOTIFICATION block on the submission form.

All entries will be disposed of by this department upon completion of the judging.

This department, at the discretion of the judges, may submit any entry to the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets Food Laboratory for chemical analysis to verify that the products meet required standards of identity. Products failing to meet required standards will be disqualified.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

- Fee \$15.00 Exhibitor Fee
 \$5.00 per entry. \$5.00 entitles exhibitor to one entry in one class
- Each exhibitor will receive one admission ticket good for one day.
- Entries close **May 21, 2026, for ALL ENTRIES Dairy Products and Ice Cream.**
- **Entry blanks and fees** for all Divisions are Online at <https://nysfair.ny.gov/competitions/>
- Exhibitor will be provided with a tag(s) printed with an official entry number. **These entry number tags are to be placed on the products prior to shipment and are necessary for the identification of each entry during the official judging.** Express charges must be fully pre-paid.

- Entry products for **all non-ice cream** classes are to be sent to: Attn: Beth Chapin, Dept. of Food Science, Cornell University, 411 Tower Road – Stocking Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853.
- Entry products for **Ice Cream** classes are to be sent to: Attn: Dr. Nicole Martin Dept. of Food Science, Cornell University, 411 Tower Road – Stocking Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853.
- Entries must **arrive** at Cornell University between Monday, June 8, 2026, through Friday, June 12, 2026, **no later than 2:30 p.m.**
- Entries for **ice cream** must arrive at Cornell University by June 25, 2025, **no later than 2:30 pm.**
- Non-Ice cream entries that will be hand delivered **must be prior arranged** with Beth Chapin through email at brm4@cornell.edu.
- Ice Cream entries that will be hand delivered **must be prior arranged** with Dr. Nicole Martin through email at nicole.martin@cornell.edu.
- Entries must be shipped in a manner that will ensure arrival at Cornell University **before** 2:30 p.m. daily (Monday-Friday).
- The Dairy Products Specialist who visits your plant will be glad to discuss entry details with you.
- Entries in all classes must have been manufactured by an individual, a firm or the employees of the firm in whose name they are exhibited.
- Each entry application must bear the name of an individual, group or a firm.
- In no case shall there be more than **four** entries in any single class which have been manufactured in a single manufacturing plant. **Except that no more than two entries from a single manufacturing plant will be accepted in classes 4, 5, 6, 21 and 22. IN THE CASE OF MULTIPLE ENTRIES IN A SINGLE CLASS, EACH ENTRY FROM A SINGLE FIRM MUST BE IDENTIFIED WITH A DIFFERENT INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP'S NAME.**
- You cannot enter the same cheese in two separate classes. You must enter a cheese in the class most appropriate for its characterization. For example, if you are a farmstead producer and make cheddar, a cheddar entry would go in the appropriate cheddar class for the cheese (class 1, 2 or 3).
- The open class 14 are solely for cheeses that do not fit into any other category.
- All entries must be submitted with a brief description of cheese type/flavor on the entry form.
- Cheese made from unpasteurized milk must be aged at least 60 days prior to the contest. If you are entering an unpasteurized cheese, the make date must be on the entry form.
- Contest judges reserve the right to place entries into the class deemed most appropriate. If the number of entries in a class is insufficient for competition, existing entries will be placed in the open class.
- Exhibitor assumes risk associated with, resulting from or arising in connection with Exhibitor's participation or presence at the New York State Fair, including, risks of theft, loss, harm or injury to the person, property, whether caused by negligence, intentional act, accident, Act of God or

otherwise. Exhibitor has sole responsibility for its property or any theft, damage or other loss to such property, whether or not stored in any courtesy storage areas. The New York State Fair, nor any of their respective officers, directors, employees, representatives or assigns, shall be liable for, and Exhibitor hereby releases all of them from, and covenants not to sue any of them with respect to, risks, damages and liability described in this paragraph.

- Medallions and ribbons will be awarded. First and second place winners for each class will be recognized during the State Fair's Dairy Day Awards Reception on Thursday, September 3, 2026.

CLASSES

DIVISION A – AMERICAN STYLE CHEESE

1. **Cheddar cheese at least 90 days old, but less than six (6) months old**, white or colored, of not less than 5 lbs. or larger than 45 lbs. Entries which have been cut from a larger cheese may not have more than *three* cut surfaces. Cheese must be made in a NYS plant.
2. **Cheddar cheese at least six (6) months old but less than eighteen (18) months old**, white or colored, of not less than 5 lbs. or larger than 45 lbs. Entries which have been cut from a larger cheese may not have more than *three* cut surfaces. Cheese must be made in a NYS plant.
3. **Cheddar cheese at least eighteen (18) months old**, white or colored, of not less than 5 lbs. or larger than 45 lbs. Entries which have been cut from a larger cheese may not have more than three cut surfaces. Cheese must be made in a NYS plant.

DIVISION B – COTTAGE CHEESE

No more than **two** entries from a single manufacturing plant. Either small or large curd cottage cheese which meets the standards of identity set forth in 21CFR Part 133 may be entered. No flavored cottage cheeses are to be submitted, and entries are to be in exhibitor's own containers.

4. **Creamed cottage cheese** 4% B.F. - entry to consist of three (3) 1 lb. retail packages.
5. **Low fat cottage cheese** - entry to consist of three (3) 1 lb. retail packages.
6. **No fat or non-fat cottage cheese** - entry to consist of three (3) 1 lb. retail packages.

DIVISION C – CHEESE, OTHER VARIETIES

7. **Cream Cheese/Neufchatel** - regular, reduced fat and nonfat, with or without flavoring or condiments.
8. **Low moisture part skim mozzarella and low moisture whole milk mozzarella** - entries to consist of one approximately 5 lbs. of cheese of any shape. There **shall not be** more than *two* cut surfaces on any entry submitted. These cheeses are specifically judged for characteristics associated with pizza cheese.
9. **Mozzarella, non-pizza** – all forms of mozzarella that are distinctly not designed to be used on pizza. This class would include mozzarella sticks for snacking.

10. **Ricotta Cheese** – product must conform to standards of identity as set forth in 1 NYCRR Part 17, Section 17.3, 17.4, 17.5. Entry to consist of a retail container of one (1) lb. or larger.

11. **Provolone Cheese** – product must conform to the standards of identity set forth in 21CFR Section 133.181. Entries to consist of one (1) approximately 5 lb. cheese with not more than two cut surfaces. Provolone cheese may be smoked or unsmoked.

DIVISION D – PROCESSED CHEESE/FOODS OR COLD PACK CHEESE FOODS & NATURAL CHEESES WITH FLAVORING

Processed cheese/foods or cold pack cheese foods, with or without flavoring and/or condiments added. Natural cheeses with flavoring and/or condiments added and surface flavored natural cheese. Also included are cheese spreads and flavored cheese spreads.

*Write the correct cheese variety and flavoring on the entry tag.

12. **Processed cheese/foods or cold pack cheese food with or without flavoring and/or condiments** added. One (1) plastic container or unit of approximately 2 lbs. Container must not have any printed matter which would identify the manufacturer or exhibitor. Product must conform to the standards of identity as set forth in 21 CFR Part 133.

13. **Flavored Natural Cheese**. Entry to consist of not less than 1 lb. and not more than 40 lbs. and of any shape. Must be a natural cheese manufactured in NY State and may be flavored on the cheese surface or have condiments or flavorings added during the manufacturing process. The name of the natural cheese and the added flavoring must appear on the entry. Entries must meet the standards of identity for the natural cheese being represented.

DIVISION E – OPEN CLASS CHEESE

DIVISION E – OPEN CLASS CHEESE (Cont'd)

All entries in open class must meet the following criteria:

- A. Cheeses to be included in this class must be natural cheeses which have not been reprocessed or modified in any way after the original manufacturing process used to develop the basic cheese. Where five-pound samples are removed from a larger original cheese form, there shall not be more than *three* (3) cut surfaces on the sample entered, in order to allow for evaluation of the exterior surface of the original cheese.
- B. Entry to consist of not less than 1 lb. and not more than 40 lbs. and of any shape.
- C. Cheese must be identified as to the common name of the product.
- D. **Write the correct cheese variety name on the computer entry tag prior to submitting cheese.**
- E. All entries that are covered by a definition of standard as set forth in 1NYCRR Part 17 or in the Code of Federal Regulations must conform to such standards.
- F. Entries in this class shall also be limited to not more than four (4) entries from any single manufacturing facility.

CLASS NO.

14. **Open Class** - This is a class for all cheeses manufactured by companies that make cheese that do not fit into any other categories.

Mixed milk cheeses would be an example.

15. Goat/Sheep Hard/Soft Cheese - specify cheese variety and milk type. Entry to consist of at least one (1) lb.

16. Farmstead/Artisan Cows' Milk Soft Cheese – made by hand using traditional methods in small vats of no greater than 300 gal. capacity. Any variety. Entry to consist of at least one (1) lb. Entries which have been cut from a larger cheese may not have more than *three* cut surfaces.

17. Farmstead/Artisan Cows' Milk Hard Cheese – made by hand using traditional methods in small vats of no greater than 300 gal. capacity. Any variety. Entry to consist of at least one (1) lb. Entries which have been cut from a larger cheese may not have more than *three* cut surfaces.

DIVISION F – OTHER DAIRY PRODUCTS

CLASS NO.

18. Sour Cream – 18% B.F. – entry to consist of three (3) 1 lb. retail packages. No flavored sour creams are to be submitted, and entries are to be in exhibitor's own containers.

19. Buttermilk – full fat, reduced, low fat and non-fat - entries to consist of two (2) one-quart containers. No flavored buttermilks are to be submitted, and entries are to be in exhibitor's own containers.

20. Dairy Dips – made from dairy ingredients produced in New York State, of any flavor. Entries to consist of three (3) retail packages. **Cheese spreads are excluded from this class.**

21. Plain Yogurt – unflavored (plain) only; product must conform to standards in 21 CFR Part 131-203. All fat levels, all styles (traditional, Greek, etc.) are eligible. Entry to consist of three (3) or more retail packages. **No more than two (2) entries from a single manufacturing plant.**

22. Flavored Yogurt – flavored yogurt only; product must conform to standards in 21 CFR 131-203. All fat levels, all styles (traditional, Greek, fruit-on-the-bottom, blended, etc.) are eligible. Entry to consist of at least three (3) retail packages. **No more than two (2) entries from a single manufacturing plant.**

Awards of Excellence will be given to each 3rd place product in classes 1 – 24.

DIVISION G - FRESH FLUID MILK

22. Fluid Milk (Overall) - Awards will be made to the top NY State Fluid Milk Processors as determined by the results of the previous 12 months on samples of whole, reduced fat, low fat and skim milk evaluated by the NYS Milk Quality Improvement Program. Criteria will include composition; bacteria counts and flavor scores. All exhibitors in this class must have participated in the NYS Milk Quality Improvement Program during the previous 12-month period from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. 1st and 2nd place medallions will be awarded.

23. Fluid Milk (Small Processor) – Awards will be made to the top NY State Fluid Milk Processors as determined by the results of the previous 12 months on samples of milk evaluated by the NYS Milk Quality Improvement Program. Criteria will include bacteria counts and flavor scores. Small processors are defined as plants processing less than 10 million lbs. of milk per year. Qualified processors are required to submit a minimum of 6 samples within the relevant time period, there is no requirement to submit all four fat levels (i.e., whole, reduced fat, low fat and skim). All exhibitors in this class must have participated in the NYS Milk Quality Improvement Program during the previous 12-month period from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. A first-place medallion will be awarded.

24. Fluid Milk (Chocolate) - Awards will be made to the top NY State Fluid Milk Processors as determined by the results of the previous 12 months on samples of milk evaluated by the NYS Milk Quality Improvement Program. Criteria will include bacteria counts and flavor scores. Qualified processors are required to submit a minimum of 4 chocolate milk samples (any fat level) within the relevant time period. All exhibitors in this class must have participated in the NYS Milk Quality Improvement Program during the previous 12-month period from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. A first-place medallion will be awarded.

25. Fluid Milk (Flavored, excluding chocolate) - Awards will be made to the top NY State Fluid Milk Processors as determined by the results of the previous 12 months on samples of milk evaluated by the NYS Milk Quality Improvement Program. Criteria will include bacteria counts and flavor scores. Qualified processors are required to submit a minimum of 4 flavored milk samples (any fat level, any combination of non-chocolate flavors) within the relevant time period. All exhibitors in this class must have participated in the NYS Milk Quality Improvement Program during the previous 12-month period from July 1, 2023, through June 30, 2024. A first-place medallion will be awarded.

DIVISION H - ICE CREAM

26. Vanilla – all vanilla flavored ice cream (no variegates or inclusions); product must meet the ice cream standard of identify, with entries to consist of two (2) one-pint original containers (exhibitor’s own containers). No more than one (1) entry from a single manufacturing plant.

27. Chocolate – all chocolate flavored ice cream (no variegates or inclusions); product must meet the ice cream standard of identity with entries to consist of two (2) one-pint original containers (exhibitor’s own containers). No more than one (1) entry from a single manufacturing plant.

28. Open Class – flavors of ice cream other than vanilla and chocolate, may contain variegates or inclusions; product must meet the ice cream standard of identity with entries to consist of two (2) one-pint original containers (exhibitor’s own containers). No more than two (2) entries from a single manufacturing plant.

DIVISION I - MILK & RELATED PRODUCTS PROMOTION SPECIAL AWARDS

29. Fluid Milk and Related Products. Exhibit of promotional and educational activities featuring milk and milk products on a non-brand basis. To be creditable, exhibits must be of a character in keeping with the premiums offered. They must be generally attractive, show effective sales appeal for the product and particular interest for the consumer. Your local Dairy Products Specialist will be glad to provide further information in the event you have questions regarding the acceptability of specific products you may wish to enter in this class. 1st prize \$800.

For highest score in classes 1 through 24 -- Gold Medal; for second highest score in these classes a Silver Medal will be awarded. Awards of Excellence will be awarded to products that are worthy of recognition, even if they didn’t finish in the top 2. Not every category will receive an Award of Excellence.

