

2021 STATE DAIRY PRINCESSES

Progressive Dairy Editor **Audrey Schmitz**

Dairy princess programs have been a highly visible and positive public relations initiative for our industry and provide young female dairy leaders an opportunity to serve as ambassadors for their state. These dairy princesses can be very effective at connecting with consumers about the dairy community and promoting the goodness of dairy products. Their yearlong commitment to the program also provides valuable professional development and communication skills that will benefit the young ladies for many years. Over the years, the program has built a favorable public image for milk and dairy products through dairy princess appearances at industry and agricultural functions, school groups and with the media.



California Dairy Princess – 1st Alternate District 6
Lauryn Knott
Merced, California
2021-2022

How your reign started

Becoming a dairy princess was a goal I put in place years ago for myself. The selection/crowning process consisted of an application each contestant submitted online, followed by an interview including questions about our knowledge, intentions and goals. Then we presented a presentation geared toward exposing elementary-aged children to the dairy industry. The coronation may not have been traditional, due to extenuating circumstances, but was made enjoyable by all of the California Milk Advisory Board's (CMAB) efforts.

What you think it takes to be successful at promoting dairy

Each and every dairy princess I've met or worked with through CMAB's program legitimately loves attending promotional events and possesses a genuine passion for the industry. I believe our eagerness and willingness to invest time, energy and effort into providing insight extends a necessary olive branch between promoters and the young public.



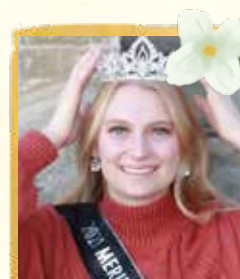
Delaware State Dairy Princess
Bethany Knutsen
Harrington, Delaware
2020-2022

Summary of yourself and your ag/dairy background

I am a senior at Woodbridge High School, where I am involved in hockey, soccer, FFA and Honors Society. I live on a dairy farm in Harrington, Delaware, where we show cows at the Delaware State Fair. I hope to become an agronomist and eventually own my own business.

Your promotion activities over the past year

This past year, I have visited several different Delaware creameries. I did a homemade ice cream demonstration and participated in Governor's Day at the Delaware State Fair. I also made several promotional videos, and rode in a Christmas parade and attended different camps and schools to educate younger kids.



Meridian Dairy Princess – Idaho
Kata Ruff
Meridian, Idaho
2021-2022

How your reign started

My reign started in June of 2021. Prior to that, I had seen the opportunity to become a princess through my FFA chapter and was interested in the opportunity to promote our local and statewide agriculture while also developing my leadership skills. The selection and crowning process consisted of an application and short essay question as well as delivering a speech about the benefits of dairy on the night of the pageant. We also had interviews with our judges that allowed them to get to know our goals and what we were striving to do if crowned as princess.

What you think it takes to be successful at promoting dairy

To be able to promote dairy successfully, I believe it takes a passion for the dairy and agricultural industry. I believe this because when you're passionate about something, you enjoy promoting it, and I think the biggest part of promoting something successfully is having fun while doing it.



Iowa State Dairy Princess
Hillary Burken
Clinton, Iowa
2021-2022

Summary of yourself and your ag/dairy background

I am the 18-year-old daughter of Marty Burken, Susan O'Neil and Lisa Lofquist. My family farm, Blue Hyll Dairy, is a 1,150-head operation based out of Clinton, Iowa. I have worked on the farm my entire life as well as showed dairy cattle for the past eight years at the Clinton County and Mississippi Valley Fairs.

Specific promotion activity you are most proud of from your reign

The activity I am most proud of from my reign was talking with elementary students from my hometown. They are always so excited to learn about the dairy industry, as well as ask some of the best questions such as, "Do you live in a castle? Are you married to a prince?"



Maryland State Dairy Princess
Elizabeth Karides
Severna Park, Maryland
2021-2022

Your promotion activities over the past year

My promotional events have consisted of giving presentations at pre-kindergarten and elementary schools, presentations for civic organizations like Lions Clubs and Toastmasters, conducting radio interviews and submitting articles about milk's nutritional value to numerous newspapers all over Maryland.

What you think it takes to be successful at promoting dairy

To be a successful dairy promoter, one should be skilled in public speaking and be able to converse with people of all ages and backgrounds. It is also great to be creative when figuring out new ways to share the dairy story and having an open mind when taking on new experiences.



Minnesota State Dairy Princess – Princess Kay of the Milky Way
Anna Euerle
Litchfield, Minnesota
2021-2022

How your reign started

I was named one of 10 finalists in May. We had a multi-portion interview process with seven parts, as well as judging on our formal dinner etiquette and interaction with anyone we encountered during judging. The final judging was held in August, and I was crowned the evening before the Minnesota State Fair.

Specific promotion activity you are most proud of from your reign:

I was able to make butter with a group of 5- to 7-year-olds. I used different containers that were harder to open to try to limit the number of spills, and it went perfectly. Everyone shook their butter until it was ready to be eaten, and we were all very proud of the final product. I really enjoy sharing with young audiences.



Nebraska State Dairy Princess
Lindsey Marotz
Hoskins, Nebraska
2021-2022

Summary of yourself and your ag/dairy background

I grew up on a small family dairy farm near Hoskins, Nebraska. I showed in 4-H from age 9 to 18, and

I was an active participant in FFA during high school, taking the role of president my senior year.

Specific promotion activity you are most proud of from your reign

My favorite event this past year was helping with the Midwest Dairy booth at the College World Series in the Omaha Baseball Village. This event felt unique because of the range of consumers I was able to speak to. There were people from all walks of life, from all over the country, with all levels of knowledge about the dairy industry.



New Jersey State Dairy Princess
Brittany Smith
Oxford, New Jersey
2020-2021

Specific promotion activity you are most proud of from your reign

Since my reign was during the COVID-19 shutdown, I am most proud of being able to adapt to the new ways of interacting with the youth through a virtual platform and adapting programs for those platforms.

What you think it takes to be successful at promoting dairy

To be outgoing, very well spoken and knowledgeable of the dairy industry as well as the importance of dairy in your diet.



New York State Dairy Princess
Shelby Benjamin
Norwich, New York
2021-2022

How your reign started

The way I became state princess was different than others in the past. I was crowned county princess during the height of COVID-19. However, I still got to participate in a few school programs and farmers' meetings while also having a social media presence. At the state pageant, we competed in dairy product knowledge, an interview, written communication, and impromptu and prepared speeches. My prepared speech was about the benefits chocolate milk had on student athletes.

Your promotion activities over the past year

Throughout the year, my team and I had plans to keep a strong online presence. Together, we did videos on how to make grilled cheese and butter. I also personally went to a few different school events, such as a food drive where they had

a variety of different dairy products. There, I got to answer questions they had about dairy and what they could make with the products they received. Any promotion where I got to go out and make personal connections and answer questions, I enjoyed a lot.



Oregon State Dairy Princess Ambassador
Gracie Krabn
Albany, Oregon
2021-2022

Summary of yourself and your ag/dairy background

As a sixth-generation dairy farmer, my passion for the industry is as natural to me as the air I breathe. My family owns and operates Royal Riverside Farm, a vertically integrated farmstead creamery where we milk 20 Jerseys and coffee shops across the state of Oregon. Aside from the bottling business, I have actively shown Jersey dairy cows on the local, state and national levels. As I look forward to a professional career, I am confident I want to spend the rest of my days dedicated to advocating for the industry that built me.

Your promotion activities over the past year

Since being crowned in May 2021, my days have been filled with presentations, conventions and expositions. Through classroom presentations, I have connected with students ranging from kindergartners to seniors in high school. Reaching students from all four corners of Oregon, I have effectively shared the story of the hardworking men and women in the Oregon dairy industry and brought clarity to the process of how milk goes from the farm to the consumer's table.



Pennsylvania State Dairy Princess
Mikayla Davis
Leesport, Pennsylvania
2021-2022

How your reign started

In May, we held our county pageant, where I was crowned the Berks County Dairy Princess. I started my reign promoting the dairy industry in my county at the grassroots level. In September, at the state pageant, I competed against 23 other county dairy princesses. We competed in seven different categories, and the top three girls were chosen to be on the state

royalty team. I was honored to be chosen as the state princess, and I have two wonderful alternates who travel with me on a state level.

Specific promotion activity you are most proud of from your reign

The promotions I enjoy the most are elementary school programs. Going into their classrooms and seeing the looks on their faces when they see a "real" princess walk into the room is unforgettable. They are amazed to meet me and listen so well, and it is easy to teach them about the benefits of dairy products and the hard work farmers do. These younger children inspire me to be an advocate for the dairy industry.



Virginia State Dairy Princess
Mindi Freed
Timberville, Virginia
2021-2022

What you think it takes to be successful at promoting dairy

To be successful at promoting the dairy industry, you must be genuine. By being genuine and sharing personal experiences in the dairy industry, you can show people the truth of day-to-day life as a farmer. Being genuine is also important to yourself, as there is no one better to share your unique story.

Specific promotion activity you are most proud of from your reign

During my time as the Virginia Dairy Princess, I participated in a national Milk Toast video with around 25 other dairy princesses. We created this video to show consumers and farmers how, even in rough times, the dairy industry is still a nationwide and welcoming community dedicated to producing dairy products for the world. 🐄

To read more about each princess, visit our website progressivedairy.com.

If we missed you this year, please contact audrey@progressivepublish.com to be featured next year.