



2026 World Dairy Expo Championship Dairy Product Contest Entry Information

Dairy Excellence and Innovation

The **World Dairy Expo Championship Dairy Product Contest** is the only national competition in the US that evaluates the full spectrum of dairy products. The contest includes an extensive range of categories such as cheese, butter, yogurt, milk, whipping cream, dairy dips, cottage cheese, ice cream, gelato, sherbet, custard, whey, and dry dairy ingredients. All dairy manufacturers worldwide are eligible to participate.

This contest provides an unparalleled platform for companies to showcase product excellence. Winners may promote their achievements and market their products as among the **highest-quality dairy items in the industry**. Certified dairy product judges evaluate all entries. Each participant receives detailed scoring feedback following the competition, offering valuable insights for product development and improvement.

Commitment to Education and Industry Advancement

Proceeds from the contest support WDPA's scholarship program, which assists students pursuing careers in the dairy industry.

Entry Information

Submit entries online at <https://wdpa.awardsplatform.com>. Participants will create a secure account to enter products and track submissions throughout the contest process.

Awards Presentation

Awards will be presented at World Dairy Expo on September 28, 2026. Each first, second and third place winner will receive:

- One 1st Place Trophy
- One 2nd Place Medal
- One 3rd Place Medal

Three Grand Champion Trophies will be awarded to the winning product of:

- Cheese and Butter
- Grade A
- Ice Cream

Contact Information

For questions or additional information, please contact:

Tammy Brereton

(608) 566-4271

tammybrereton@wdpa.net

Key Dates

Entry Opens
Friday, Jun 6, 2026

Final Entry Deadline
Friday, Jul 24, 2026
(NO LATE ENTRIES
ACCEPTED)

Shipping Deadline
Shipped Product MUST
be received no later than
Aug 10-14, 2026

Contest Judging
Aug 18-20, 2026
Madison College

Auction and Awards
World Dairy Expo -
Tanbark:
Monday, Sep 28, 2026

How We Judge Our Contest

Judging Process Overview

A skilled panel of technical judges evaluate entries. For each class, a pair of expert judges examine, sniff, and taste every product entry.

Judging begins with a maximum possible score of 100 points, from which deductions are made for any defects identified by the judges. Each product that scores as first place is entered into the grand champion round.

Grand Champion Judging Process

Our expert panel of judges evaluates all first-place winners from each category in a final round of judging to determine the Grand Champion Dairy Product for Cheese and Butter, Grade A, and Ice Cream.

Each first-place product is thoroughly examined by the full judging panel. During this championship round, every judge independently scores each finalist. These scores are then averaged to produce a final score for each product. The entry with the highest average score is named the Grand Champion Winner for its category class.

Earning a Grand Champion title is more than an honor — it's a powerful marketing asset. Many past winners have leveraged their success to build impactful promotional campaigns, strengthen brand recognition, and expand their presence in the marketplace.

Entry Eligibility and Submission

- Contest entries can be submitted by any cheese, butter, yogurt, ice cream, gelato, sour cream, whey, cottage cheese, fluid milk, dry milk, buttermilk, sherbet, dairy based dips and cream manufacturing plant in North America. International processors are also eligible to enter the contest.
- Manufacturers with multiple plant locations may enter/ship as many entries as they wish from each separate plant location.
- There are no restrictions on the number of entries a manufacturer may submit to be judged.
- A single product can only be entered one time per company location.
- The Head Judge has the authority to move any entry to the most appropriate class or another class if there are not enough entries in the first class submitted.
- A class has sufficient entries for competition if there are entries from a MINIMUM of three different companies. If a class does not meet this requirement, the entries will be moved to an alternative, appropriate class by the Head Judge.
- For all contest categories, the contest's head judge reserves the right to move any product that appears to be misclassified into the appropriate product class. Products may be moved to another class if there are less than 6 entries for a particular class.
- All products entered must conform to their respective standards of identity and contain a minimum of 25% dairy.
- The final judging results listing the top 3 winners of each class will be posted on the Wisconsin Dairy Products Association's website.
- All product entries will become the property of Wisconsin Dairy Products Association and will be used for educational, promotional, charitable and miscellaneous purposes.
- Products with labels promoting success in other contests will not be accepted for competition.



Entry Instructions

All participants must complete an official entry form for each product entered into the World Dairy Expo Championship Dairy Product Contest. Entry forms are submitted online at: <https://wdpa.awardsplatform.com>

A \$75 entry fee is required for every product entered. Once your entries are submitted, an invoice will be automatically generated. Payment must be received before your entry is accepted, unless prior approval has been granted by Tammy Brereton.

You will receive detailed instructions for submitting payment via: Credit Card, ACH, or Invoice paid by check. Please note: All entry fees are non-refundable.

Special Offer: For every five paid entries, you will receive a sixth entry FREE. This offer is automatically applied based on the number of paid entries submitted.



Shipping Requirements

- All entries must be shipped PREPAID. C.O.D. shipments will not be accepted.
- **Entries must arrive between August 10–14, 2026. Please plan shipping carefully to ensure timely delivery and proper temperature control.**
- Each entry must be shipped in its own separate box or be clearly and individually identifiable within a shared shipping container. When shipping multiple products, keep each entry's products together in their own box or cooler, along with the appropriate entry form, to prevent mix-ups during receiving.
- All boxes must be: Securely sealed, packaged in a sanitary manner, free of loose packing peanuts (not permitted).
- **Overnight shipping is highly recommended for all entries and required for any products shipped with actual ice.**
- If using wet ice, all ice must be bagged or sealed to prevent leakage.
- Place shipping tags and paperwork inside a sealed Ziploc bag to protect them from moisture.
- Before shipping, ensure all lids—especially for yogurt, cottage cheese, sour cream, dips, and other Grade A products
 - -are tightly secured so they do not pop off or leak during transit.
- Every year, some entries arrive with inadequate cooling or insulation. Please take extra care to include: Sufficient ice or gel packs. Proper insulation. Secure product protection. Leak-proof packaging.
- Proper preparation ensures your products arrive in excellent condition for judging.

Shipping Tags

- A separate shipping tag must be used for each entry, both inside and outside of every box.
- Place one tag inside the shipping container.
- Attach one tag securely to the outside of the box.

This ensures accurate identification and prevents delays during check-in.

Cheese, Butter & Grade A Products

(Butter, Cheese, Yogurt, Cottage Cheese, Fluid Milk, Dairy-Based Dips, Whipping Cream, Sour Cream)

Midwest Refrigerated Services

Attn: Joe Kong
3201 Progress Road
Madison, WI 53716
Phone: (608) 838-5550 ext. 8792

Ice Cream, Frozen & Dry Products

(Ice Cream, Sherbet, Gelato, Whey Products, Nonfat Dry Milk, Innovative Products)

Madison College

Attn: Kevin McGuinnis
1701 Wright Street
Madison, WI 53704
Phone: (608) 246-6707



2026 World Dairy Expo Championship Dairy Product Contest

List of Class Numbers

Cheese

- **Class 101:** Cheddar Cheese (Aged 0-6 months)
- **Class 102:** Sharp Cheddar (Aged 6-12 months)
- **Class 103 -** Aged Cheddar (Aged 12+ months)
- **Class 104:** Colby/Monterey Jack Cheese (includes Colby/Jack blends)
- **Class 105:** Swiss Styles (Swiss and Baby Swiss cheeses)
- **Class 106:** Havarti
- **Class 107:** Mozzarella (low moisture, low moisture part skim, part skim, and whole)
- **Class 108:** Fresh Mozzarella
- **Class 109:** String Cheese
- **Class 110:** Provolone
- **Class 111:** Hard Italian Cheeses (Parmesan, Romano, Asiago)
- **Class 112:** Blue Veined Cheeses (e.g. Blue (incl. crumbles), Gorgonzola, Stilton)
- **Class 113:** Smoked Flavored Natural Cheese
- **Class 114:** Pepper Flavored Natural Cheese
- **Class 115:** Flavored Natural Cheeses (all flavored cheeses except pepper and smoked)
- **Class 116:** Cold Pack Cheese, Cheese Food, Cheese Spread (flavored or unflavored)
- **Class 117:** Reduced Fat Cheese (Flavored or unflavored. Minimum 33% reduction in fat per serving. Max 33% increase in moisture compared to standard cheese)
- **Class 118:** Gouda
- **Class 119:** Ricotta
- **Class 120:** Open Class Soft Cheeses (Natural, flavored and unflavored cheese with 51% or higher moisture. May be unrinded, rinded, surface, or white mold ripened. Includes Quark, Crescenza, Mascarpone, Paneer, Feta, Brie, or Camembert).
- **Class 121:** Open Class Semi-Soft Cheese (Natural, flavored and unflavored. Cheese with 40% to 50% moisture. May include surface ripened cheese such as Raclette, Smearred Brick, or cheeses such as Fontina, Farmers, Bel Paese, Butterkase, etc.)
- **Class 122:** Open Class Hard Cheese (Natural, flavored, and unflavored with 39% moisture or less. For example, Alpine Styles, Bandaged or Cave Aged Cheddars, etc.)
- **Class 123:** Flavored Pasteurized Process Cheese (Loaf entries must be unsliced)
- **Class 124:** Latin American Cheese (Queso Oaxaca, Manchego, and Queso Chihuahua. It is any melting cheese which would also include Asadero.)
- **Class 125:** Latin American Cheese (Queso Fresco, Queso Blanco, Panela, Queso Fresco Cremoso, Queso Fresco Casero.)
- **Class 126:** Latin American Hard Grated (Queso Cotija, Queso Duro, Queso Seco or others.)
- **Class 127:** Goat, Sheep, Mixed Milk Cheese
- **Class 128:** Plain Cream Cheese (including Neufchatel)
- **Class 129:** Flavored Cream Cheese
- **Class 130:** Plain Cheese Curds
- **Class 131:** Flavored Cheese Curds
- **Class 132:** Natural Cheese Snacks, Shreds or Converted Natural Cheese (Natural cheese which has been cut into cubes, sticks, shreds. Also includes cheeses which have been baked into crisps or other cheese for snacking. Product must be 100% cheese)
- **Class 133:** Processed Cheese Snack (Processed cheese which has been cut into cubes, sticks, shreds or slices. Also includes processed cheeses which have been formed into other cheese for snacking. Product must not contain vegetable oils making it an imitation cheese product.)
- **Class 134:** Open Class Cheese (for any cheese product that does not fall under one of the other classes.)



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List of Class Numbers

Butter Classes

- **Class 201:** Salted Butter (Creamery Butter, salted. Minimum 80% milk fat. May include added cultures (starter or starter distillate) as allowed in 58 CFR 330, 331)
- **Class 202:** Unsalted Butter (Creamery Butter, unsalted. Minimum 80% milk fat)
- **Class 203:** Flavored Butter (Salted or Unsalted. Minimum 80% milk fat)
- **Class 204:** Open Class Butter (For any type of butter that does not fit into one of the other classes)

Fluid Milk Classes

- **Class 301:** White Milk 2%
- **Class 302:** Whole Chocolate Milk
- **Class 303:** Low Fat Chocolate Milk: 1%
- **Class 304:** Low Fat Chocolate Milk: 2%
- **Class 305:** Fat Free Chocolate Milk
- **Class 306:** Strawberry Milk
- **Class 307:** Cultured Butter Milk (Any Fat Level)
- **Class 308:** UHT Milk and Aseptic Milk (White)
- **Class 309:** UHT Milk and Aseptic Milk (Flavored)
- **Class 310:** Lactose Free Milk (White)
- **Class 311:** Lactose Free Milk (Flavored)
- **Class 312:** Open Class Pasteurized Milk (Any type of milk that does not fit into one of the other classes)
- **Class 313:** Open Class Flavored Milk (Non-Chocolate, Non-Strawberry)
- **Class 314:** Half and Half
- **Class 315:** Open Class Dairy Based Creamers (includes flavored Half and Half)

Whipping Cream Class

- **Class 316:** Whipping Cream and Heavy Whipping Cream

Yogurt Classes

- **Class 317:** Plain Greek Yogurt (any fat level of sweetener source)
- **Class 318:** Flavored Greek Yogurt (non-fat, any flavor)
- **Class 319:** Flavored Greek Yogurt (1% or greater milk fat, any flavor, any sweetener source)
- **Class 320:** Vanilla Yogurt (any sweetener source and fat level allowed)
- **Class 321:** Strawberry Yogurt (any form of sweetener source and fat level allowed)
- **Class 322:** Blueberry Yogurt (any fat level and sweetener form allowed)
- **Class 323:** Open Class Yogurts (any other flavor, any form of sweetener source and fat level allowed)
- **Class 324:** Tropical Flavored Drinkable Yogurts (mango, pina colada, guava, etc.)
- **Class 325:** Open Class Drinkable Yogurts (any other flavor, including kefir)

Cottage Cheese Classes

- **Class 326:** Regular Cottage Cheese (4% Fat Level)
- **Class 327:** Low-fat and No-fat Cottage Cheese (0-2% fat level)
- **Class 328:** Open Cottage Cheese Class (includes flavored cottage cheese)



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Sour Cream and Dairy Based Dips

- **Class 329:** Sour Cream (minimum 18% fat level)
- **Class 330:** Low Fat Sour Cream (9% or less fat)
- **Class 331:** Sour Cream Based Dips: Onion (French onion, bermuda, etc.)
- **Class 332:** Sour Cream Based Dips: Southwest (jalapeno, chipotle, bison, etc.)
- **Class 333:** Hispanic Plain Sour Cream (crema, etc)
- **Class 334:** Open Sour Cream Based Dips (any other flavor, including ranch)

Ice Cream, Sherbet, Frozen Yogurt and Gelato Classes

- **Class 401:** Regular Vanilla Ice Cream (any fat level)
- **Class 402:** French Vanilla Ice Cream
- **Class 403:** Philly Vanilla Ice Cream (made with vanilla bean seeds)
- **Class 404:** Regular Chocolate Ice Cream (any fat level)
- **Class 405:** Dark Chocolate Ice Cream
- **Class 406:** Cookies and Cookie Dough Ice Cream (any fat level)
- **Class 407:** Mint Ice Cream (any fat level)
- **Class 408:** Strawberry Ice Cream (any fat level)
- **Class 409:** Open Class with Fruit Ice Cream (any fat level)
- **Class 410:** Open Class Ice Cream with Nuts (any fat level)
- **Class 411:** Open Class Ice Cream with Peanut Butter (any fat level)
- **Class 412:** Open Class Ice Cream with Caramel (any fat level)
- **Class 413:** Open Class Ice Cream (for any product that does not fit in the other classes)
- **Class 414:** Ice Cream Novelties (includes ice cream sandwiches and bars: any fat level)
- **Class 415:** Open Class Sherbet
- **Class 416:** Frozen Yogurt
- **Class 417:** Gelato
- **Class 418:** Healthy Frozen Desserts (high protein, low sugar, low calorie, low carb)

Whey and Dairy Powder

- **Class 501:** Whey (Demineralized)
- **Class 502:** Whey Permeate (high lactose whey)
- **Class 503:** Whey Protein Concentrate: 34% Protein
- **Class 504:** Whey Protein Concentrate: 80% Protein
- **Class 505:** Whey Protein Isolates
- **Class 506:** Whey Based Sports/Energy Drinks
- **Class 507:** Nonfat Dried Milk & Buttermilk Powders
- **Class 508:** Milk Protein Concentrates/Caseinates
- **Class 509:** All Other Dairy Powders

Open Class for Creative & Innovative

- **Class 600:** Open Class for Creative & Innovative



Judging Criteria & Entry Rules

Cheese

- Cheese samples are judged by deducting points, based on observed defects, from a 100-point scale
- A class receiving less than six entries may be eliminated, with those entries being moved to an open class
- Each entry must be in its original form as hooped. Cheeses cannot be cut or sampled with a trier. Exceptions are as follows:
 - 40 lb. blocks cut from 640 lb. blocks will be allowed
 - Cheeses cut during manufacturing, such as Feta in brine or Swiss block, will be allowed
 - Swiss cheeses may have one trier hole
- Each cheese contest entry must consist of a minimum of 5 - 10 lbs. of product. Each cream cheese entry must consist of a minimum of 1 lb. An entry may be disqualified if the minimum amount is not submitted
- To ensure proper representation of your award-winning product, winning companies in these classes will be asked to
- ship fresh product to the winning bidders after the September 28 Awards Auction.

Butter

- All entries are creamery butter and must contain at least 80% milk fat.
- Butter Samples are judged by deducting points, based on observed defects from a 10- point scale.
- Each butter contest entry must consist of a minimum of 5-10 lbs of product. An entry may be disqualified if the minimum amount is not submitted.
- To ensure proper representation of your award-winning product, winning companies in these classes will be asked to
- ship fresh product to the winning bidders after the September 28 Awards Auction.

Fluid Milk

- Fluid Milk Samples are judged by awarding points from 100-point scale for flavor, container and seal, and deducting points for various defects
- Each entry must consist of a minimum of two (2) half gallons. Please DO NOT submit bags of milk

Whipping Cream

- Cream Samples are judged by awarding points from a 100-point scale for flavor, body and texture, appearance and color, packaging and deducting points for various defects.
- Whipping Cream - 30% minimum milk fat
- Heavy Whipping Cream - Minimum of 36% milk fat
- Please submit a minimum of two (2) quarts. No aerosol containers. An entry may be disqualified if the minimum amount is not submitted.
- *This class does NOT include pre-whipped cream.*

Yogurt

- Judging Criteria: Yogurt samples are judged on a 100-point scale. Points are awarded for flavor, body and texture, appearance, and color, with deductions made for various defects.
- Each entry must consist of a minimum of 64 ounces of product. Entries may be disqualified if the minimum is not met.
- Entries may contain any type of sweetener.
- There are no restrictions on the fat content of entries.
- *To ensure proper representation of award-winning products, companies will be required to ship fresh products to the winning bidders after the September 28 Awards Auction.*



Judging Criteria & Entry Rules

Cottage Cheese

- Cottage Cheese Samples are judged by awarding points from a 100-point scale for flavor, body and texture, appearance and color.
- Each entry must consist of a minimum of two 24 oz. containers. An entry may be disqualified if the minimum amount is not submitted.
- Any curd size is acceptable.
- *To ensure proper representation of award-winning products, companies will be required to ship fresh products to the winning bidders after the September 28 Awards Auction.*

Sour Dairy Based Dips

- Sour Cream samples are judged by awarding points from a 100-point scale for flavor, body, texture, appearance, color, packaging and deducting points for various defects.
- Each sour cream and sour cream-based dip entry must consist of a minimum of two, 16 oz. containers or equivalent. An entry may be disqualified if the minimum amount is not submitted.
- *To ensure proper representation of your award-winning product, winning companies will be asked to ship fresh products to the winning bidders after the September 28 Awards Auction.*

Ice Cream, Sherbet, Frozen Yogurt, and Gelato Entries

- Judging Criteria: Entries are judged on a 100-point scale. Points are awarded for flavor, body, texture, color and appearance, with points deducted from a total 100-point possible score.
- Minimum Submission: Each entry must minimally consist of a one-gallon container or an equivalent amount. For ice cream sandwiches or other novelties, please submit a minimum of 12 samples. Entries may be disqualified if the minimum amount is not met.
- Compliance: Entries must comply with all state federal manufacturing, labeling and compositional standards.
- SOP for shipping: freeze products as cold as possible before shipping. Ship overnight using 3-4 pounds of dry ice per gallon of product. Federal Express ships packages with dry ice. Do not apply tape to or seal the inner Styrofoam container. Pack shipping container with materials to limit product movement. WDPA cannot return shipping containers or materials.
- *To ensure proper representation of award-winning products, winning companies will be required to ship fresh products to the winning bidders after the September 28 Awards Auction.*

Whey and Dairy Powders

- Each entry must consist of a minimum of 1/2 lb container, except for whey-based sports/energy drinks which must be a minimum of six 8 oz. containers or equivalent.
- Each whey entry must be shipped in laminated paper/plastic bags or in a screw cap plastic container.
- Only flavor and color will be judged.
- All whey entries will be judged utilizing uniform concentration and source of water.

Creative and Innovative Products

- This is an open category for highlighting creative uses of dairy products. Any product not listed under another category should be submitted under this category. Some examples are smoothies, probiotic products, dairy based beverages, puddings and desserts, novelty cheese products, frappuccino's, calcium-fortified products, liqueurs, cheesecakes, etc. The product can be for retail or non-commercial use.
- The submitted product must contain a minimum of 25% dairy
- Each entry must consist of a minimum of six 16oz. containers or equivalent volume or weight. An entry may be disqualified if the minimum amount is not submitted.
- If your product needs freezer storage, please indicate this on the outside of the mailing box.



Contest Logo and Seals for Winning Products



Winners of first, second and third place can choose between the black and parchment seal; the place, year and winning class will be modified for each winner to use.