

## Minnesota State Fair Dairy Product Contest Product Judging Outline

Contestants may enter as many products as they want. Entries will receive a randomized number after submitting their entry forms. **Each product entered must be labeled with their randomized judging number when being shipped or dropped off. No names or logos should be visible on the products.**

All contestants will receive copies of their scores, judges' comments and contest results following judging. Below are the details for each product and their subcategories (if applicable).

### Butter

#### **Evaluation of Butter:**

A perfect score is 100 points. Points are deducted based on observed defects. Entries will be judged based on flavor, body, color, salt, and finish.

#### **Submission Information:**

Entries should be at least 20 pounds. Entries may be shipped to Bongards, or delivered to U of M Food Science Building.

### Cheese

#### **Evaluation of Cheese:**

A perfect score is 100 points. Points are deducted based on observed defects.

#### **Submission Information:**

Please see each category for specific submission details. Entries may be shipped to Bongards, or delivered to U of M Food Science Building.

## **Categories:**

There are five contest categories:

Cheddar Block, Cheddar Barrel, Artisan, Miscellaneous, and Cheese Curd (new in 2026).

### **Cheddar Block:**

All blocks submitted shall weigh at least 40 pounds. Blocks will be judged based on flavor, body and texture, make up and appearance, color, and rind development.

### **Cheddar Barrel:**

Contestants shall submit four (4) plugs taken at random, wrapped individually in aluminum foil and placed in an air tight plastic bag. Barrels will be judged based on flavor, body and texture, make up and appearance, color, and rind development.

### **Artisan:**

This category applies to cheese produced primarily by hand, made in small batches with as little mechanization as possible in the production of the cheese. These cheeses are also aged in natural environments with unique flavoring. The artisan entry will be one unit conforming to the standard commercial size for the specific variety and preferably not less than three (3) pounds. Cheeses in this category will be judged based on flavor, body and texture, make up and appearance, and color.

### **Cheese Curd:**

Each entry is required to send at least two (2) total pounds of curd. May be plain or flavored. Cheeses in this category will be judged based on flavor, body and texture, make up and appearance, and color.

### **Miscellaneous:**

This category consists of cheese that is not specified in any of the other categories (mozzarella cheese is included in this category). Cheese submitted must be one unit conforming to the standard commercial size for the specific variety and preferably not less than five (5) pounds. Cheeses in this category will be judged based on flavor, body and texture, make up and appearance, and color.

## Ice Cream, Custard, and Gelato

### **Evaluation of Ice Cream:**

A perfect score is 100 points. Points are deducted based on observed defects. Entries must comply with federal compositional standards and contain a minimum of 25% dairy. Entries will be judged based on flavor, body, texture, color, and appearance.

### **Submission Information:**

Each entry must submit four (4) pints or half gallons (whichever you produce). Entries may be shipped to Bongards, or delivered to U of M Food Science Building.

***If shipping, ice cream products must be shipped frozen on dry ice.***

### **Categories:**

There are two contest categories:

Vanilla and Open.

#### **Vanilla:**

Vanilla flavors submitted must be an original creation (not pre-made/purchased mix).

#### **Open:**

The Open category can be any flavor of entrants choice.