



# American Dairy Goat Association

*ADGA registry, based on original import records, is your warranty of good breeding and worldwide acceptance.*

## **PAUL J. PLUMMER**

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Dear Youth Participant,

It's time to start looking ahead to the **2026 ADGA National Show**, which will be held **June 27–July 3, 2026, in West Springfield, Massachusetts**. This letter outlines the current plans for youth activities, but all youth participants and families are strongly encouraged to watch the National Show website closely for updates, final schedules, entry information, and any changes.

The youth events are a wonderful opportunity to demonstrate your skills, learn something new, and connect with other youth from across the country who share your love of dairy goats. This packet includes important information, including youth event rules, frequently asked questions, and required forms.

Please remember that every youth participant under the age of 18 must have a consent form signed by a parent or legal guardian. The form must identify the responsible adult who will be in attendance at the show. Participants age 18 and older will be asked to sign the form confirming their willingness to follow the ADGA Youth Code of Conduct.

Please read the following highlights carefully.

### **Youth Event Highlights for 2026**

#### **1. Youth Social/Pizza Party**

We are planning to once again host a youth pizza party during the first weekend of National Show. This event is open to all youth, whether or not they are competing in youth events. Please listen for announcements during the show for the final time and location.

#### **2. Animal Quality Care Training Requirement**

Each youth participant must have completed some form of animal quality care training and provide documentation. For many youth involved in 4-H or FFA, this requirement may already be met through your state or local program.

There are two ways to meet this requirement:

- a. **Youth for the Quality Care of Animals (YQCA)** offers age-appropriate online training modules used by many 4-H and FFA programs. Youth may register at [yqcaprogram.org](http://yqcaprogram.org) and complete the appropriate training or valid test-out option. At the end of the course, participants will receive a certificate and certificate number, which may be required during registration.
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b. If your state 4-H or FFA program uses another approved animal quality care training, ADGA will accept that documentation. This may include a certificate of completion or a brief letter from your 4-H leader, FFA advisor, or county extension agent verifying that the training has been completed.

### 3. **Fitting Team Contest Animal Requirement**

As in previous years, each fitting team will be responsible for providing an animal for the fitting team event. A list of individuals who may be willing to loan animals may be available, but teams are responsible for making those arrangements directly.

Animals will be reviewed by the judges before the contest begins. A team member or parent/guardian should bring the animal to the ring approximately 15 minutes before the class starts. Judging will be based on the fitting completed during the contest, so please choose the animal carefully. An animal that is already nearly fully fitted may not allow your team to fully demonstrate its skills.

Animals used for the fitting team event must meet the following requirements:

- Must be does and not lactating.
- Should be approximately the size of senior kids for standard breeds or Nigerian junior/senior yearlings.
- Should have enough hair length to make new clipping visible to the judges.
- Feet may be trimmed prior to the class.

We are pleased to again offer youth events and an embedded youth show during the ADGA National Show week. These are two separate opportunities. Youth may choose to participate in one or both.

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## **Youth Events**

**Entry Deadline:** To be announced/confirmed

**Required Forms:** Youth Participation Permission Form and Youth Entry Form

**Registration:** Please watch the National Show website for the official registration link and current forms.

All forms should be submitted by the published deadline. Because registration is handled online, youth participants are strongly encouraged to complete all required information in advance.

Youth events are expected to take place during the first weekend of National Show. Final times and locations will be posted on the National Show website and announced at the show.

Tentative youth activities may include:

- Youth participant meeting
- Judging contest
- Management contest
- Youth pizza party/social
- Showmanship classes
- Fitting team contest

Showmanship classes may be held in multiple rings to help keep the schedule moving and allow events to be completed before breed shows begin. Please watch for the final schedule.

A few additional reminders:

- To be eligible for the **Premier Youth Exhibitor Awards**, youth must compete in all three youth contests: **showmanship, management, and judging**.
- Youth may bring a showmanship doe for use in youth events only, with dismissal after the youth events, if this option is offered in the 2026 rules. These animals must meet the same health requirements as open show animals and must be removed from the grounds according to the published rules.
- Youth who are entering animals in the open show or embedded youth show do not need to request a separate showmanship pen for those same animals.
- Space may be limited, and showmanship-only animals must be entered by the published deadline. After that deadline, pens may not be available.
- Tack pens may not be available. Tack and supplies should be stored neatly in front of the animal's pen or in the exhibitor's vehicle/trailer area, as allowed by show management.
- Animals owned by the same family may be housed together.

All participants are required to follow the ADGA Youth Code of Conduct. Any participant found violating the code of conduct may be disqualified from competition and may be asked to leave the fairgrounds for the remainder of the show. If state or federal laws are violated, authorities may be contacted. Awards previously won during the 2026 Youth Events may also be forfeited.

To have open show placings count toward Premier Youth Exhibitor points, the animal must list the youth, and only the youth, as the sole owner on the official ADGA registration paper. The animal may still be shown as part of a herd unit in the open show. Please note that placings in the embedded youth show do not count toward Premier Youth Exhibitor.

Please also review the proper attire requirements for showmanship as outlined in the youth rules. Judges and committee members will be aware of these rules. Participants who do not follow attire requirements may not be allowed in the show ring or may be penalized at the discretion of the committee and judge.

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## **Youth Embedded Show**

**Entry Deadline:** To be announced/confirmed

**Required Entry:** Animals must be entered in both the National Open Show and the Youth Embedded Show.

The Youth Embedded Show is held within the regular National Open Show classes. Animals entered in the embedded show will be identified before entering the ring. All animals will enter and be judged together in the open show class. After the judge places the class, a show volunteer will record the top two youth-owned animals and award the appropriate youth placings and participation recognition.

Following the selection of open show breed champions, the first and second place youth animals may be invited back into the ring for selection of the **Youth Premier Doe**, including one Junior/Dry Doe and one Senior/Milking Doe for each breed.

Please review the full embedded show rules carefully. Important reminders include:

1. Youth are not required to participate in the first-weekend youth events in order to participate in the embedded show. However, animals must be entered in the National Open Show to be eligible for the embedded show.
2. Embedded show animals must follow all National Show rules, health requirements, check-in times, and dismissal times. These animals may not be brought in only for the day of their class.
3. Entry is a two-step process. Exhibitors must first enter the animal in the open show and then complete the embedded youth show entry process by the published deadline.
4. ADGA asks that youth exhibitors use the correct award terminology when referencing embedded show placings online, in project workbooks, in press releases, or in advertising. Suggested terminology includes:
  - **1st or 2nd Place Embedded Youth [Class Name] Winner at the 2026 ADGA National Show**
  - **Youth Premier [Junior/Senior] [Breed] Doe at the 2026 ADGA National Show**
5. All embedded show animals must list the youth as the sole owner on the official ADGA registration paper.
6. The animal must be shown by the youth owner unless the youth is showing in another ring at the same time. In that case, a designated proxy may show the animal if the proper proxy form is on file.
7. Only one embedded show animal may be entered per age class. If the youth owns more than one animal in the same age class, the embedded animal must be selected in advance.
8. Youth showing in the embedded show must follow the open show attire guidelines, which may differ from youth showmanship attire. Please review the open show packet carefully. Exhibitors who are not dressed according to the guidelines may be denied entry to the show ring.
9. It is the youth exhibitor's responsibility to make sure the correct animal's ring card has been properly marked for the embedded youth show during check-in.

By signing the youth entry form and embedded show form, legal guardians give permission for the youth participant's name and photo to be used for ADGA promotional purposes.

Please continue to watch the National Show website for updates, final schedules, deadlines, and any rule changes. You are the future of the dairy goat industry, and we know you will make ADGA proud.

We look forward to seeing you in West Springfield!

Sincerely,

**Paul J. Plummer**

National Show Youth Activities Committee Chair

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