



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dairy Students Compete in Western Regional Dairy Challenge for the 3rd Year

The Western Dairy Challenge contest took place between Feb. 28 and March 1, at the Holiday Inn Hotel in Visalia, Calif. Fifty-four students from seven universities were in attendance to compete in this educational event. Students represented Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, California State University-Fresno, Texas A&M University, Washington State University, University of Idaho, South Dakota State University and Utah State University.

The event kickoff took place on Thursday evening with a motivational speech on "Thinking about Leadership in the Dairy Industry" from Dan W. Block, sponsored by Western Milling. Kevin Kruse, Western Milling CEO and owner, attended the event and was enthusiastic about the students' participation. In addition to expressing his satisfaction about sponsoring the contest, he mentioned that he can't wait for his own children to participate at the regional and national levels.

Students were assigned to one of 11 aggregate teams and provided with financial information and management data on a local dairy, Rancho Teresita. There, they had the opportunity to observe the dairy operation and ask owners Cornell and Case Kasbergen questions.

Each team analyzed the entire dairy operation, including the milking area, cow performance, feeding protocols, along with other dairy practices, and came up with a report on Friday afternoon. On Saturday morning they presented their recommendations to an expert panel of industry judges – discussing the strengths of the operation and opportunities for improvement.

The first Platinum team was composed of the following students: Becky Wellnitz, Cal Poly; Craig Niemann, South Dakota State University; Trent Van Leuven, University of Idaho; and Andres Deanda, California State University-Fresno.

The second Platinum team was composed of Peter Beck, South Dakota State University; Kassie Romero, California State University-Fresno; Carrie Crane, Cal Poly; Oscar Sanchez, Washington State University; and Shay McDonald, Texas A&M University.

The third Platinum team was composed of the following students: Andrew Nicholson, University of Idaho; Jordan VanGrouw, Cal Poly; Stephanie Durfee, Utah State University; Matt Strickland, California State University-Fresno; and Amie Aguiar, Cal Poly.

Generous support from corporate sponsors makes the North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge (NAIDC) possible. NAIDC was established as a management contest to incorporate all phases of a specific dairy business. It strives to incorporate a higher-learning atmosphere with practical application to help prepare students for careers in the dairy industry. Supported financially through generous donations by agribusinesses and coordinated by a volunteer steering committee, the first NAIDC was held in April 2002.

For more information, call 608-224-0400 or visit www.dairychallenge.org.

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Note: Photos available upon request. Contact Manoella Alves.