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Collegiate Dairy Students Gives Back to the Community while Competing – Western Regional Dairy Challenge

Tulare, CA, February 17, 2016 – Analyzing a situation, strategizing the fix, and convincing the powers that be – it’s an exercise putting everything college dairy students are taught into one competition - Western Regional Dairy Challenge. This year the contest will also be donating assembled wagons to the local community, the result of a team building exercise. Fifty-nine dairy students from eight universities representing six states and one Canadian province will participate February 25 - 27, 2016 in Tulare, California. Headquarters for the event is the College of the Sequoias, Tulare. The regional event leads to the national contest of the same format, held April 7 – 9, 2016, in Syracuse, NY.

Registered students and coaches hail from California Polytechnic State University-San Luis Obispo, , California State University-Fresno, Oregon State University, Texas A & M University, University of Alberta, University of Idaho, Utah State University, and Washington State University.

In addition to the competition, students have the opportunity for networking and education. Thursday evening activities feature a presentation by Farm Credit West’s David Hill and Landon Fernandes - “Understanding Balance Sheets and Income & Expense Statements.” Students will also participate in a team building exercise. Teams will race to assemble a child’s wagon and after finished, will donate them to local children’s charities through the Visalia Rescue Mission and the Lighthouse Rescue Mission of Tulare.

At Dairy Challenge, each team of students puts textbook knowledge to practical use. Teams inspect an operating dairy, analyze farm data and conduct a question and answer session with farm owners. Then each team develops recommendations for nutrition, reproduction, milking procedures, animal health, housing and financial management. Teams present their recommendations to farm owners, while being evaluated by a panel of five judges – including dairy producers, veterinarians, farm finance specialists and industry personnel. Western Regional Dairy Challenge is organized and administered by a volunteer committee of allied dairy industry.

North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge® (NAIDC), with one national and four regional contests, is fully funded through generous support by 125 agribusinesses and dairy producers, and programs are coordinated by a volunteer board of directors. Over its 14-year national history, Dairy Challenge has helped prepare over 5,000 students for careers in the dairy industry, dairy farm management, graduate programs and veterinary medicine.

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