

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Western Regional Dairy Challenge deemed a success

More than 40 students from five different universities put their dairy knowledge to the test.

Newman, Calif. -- More than 40 students from four western universities and one Canadian university competed in the fifth annual Western Regional Dairy Challenge, March 4-6, 2010 in Twin Falls, Idaho.

Hosted by the University of Idaho-Twin Falls, the Western Regional Dairy Challenge is an innovative management analysis competition developed by industry and university professionals from across the U.S.

The Dairy Challenge bridges the gap between books, lectures and the real world, says Tami Tollenaar, 2010 Western Regional Dairy Challenge Chair.

A key objective of the dairy challenge is to present students with a real-life situation that stresses the importance of teamwork and professionalism.

Students from the different universities are partnered in teams of four or five. Each team conducts a comprehensive evaluation of a working dairy farm; evaluating everything from cow comfort and herd health to reproduction and finances looking for opportunities to improve efficiency and profitability. After the evaluation each team presents their analysis and prioritized opportunities for improvement to a panel of expert judges and dairy owners.

Participating universities at this year's competition included: the University of Alberta (Canada), University of Idaho, Washington State University, California Polytechnic State University, and the California State University at Fresno.

The host farm for this year's Western Regional Dairy Challenge was White Clover Dairy a 2,800-cow operation in Jerome, Idaho. White Clover Dairy is owned and operated by the Roth Family.

Receiving Platinum awards were:

Nicole Hurt, University of Alberta; Carl Betts, University of Idaho; Jennifer Trice, Washington State University; Robert Thommen, California Polytechnic State University; Brian Waymire, California Polytechnic State University;

Brian Medeiros, California Polytechnic State University; Jennifer Spencer, University of Idaho; Stewart Russell, University of Idaho; and Alex DeJager, California State University-Fresno.

Receiving Gold awards were:

Amanda McIntosh, University of Idaho; Micah Kuiper, California Polytechnic State University; Jennifer Onken, Washington State University; Jesse Ruvalcaba, California Polytechnic State University;

Jared Carmo, California Polytechnic State University; Crystal Burke, University of Idaho; Erin Fosler, Washington State University; Jami Lady, California State University-Fresno; Michael Stewart, California Polytechnic State University;

Andy Gray, Washington State University; Anthony Martin, California Polytechnic State University; Tyler Reynolds, University of Idaho; Meagan Kelm, University of Alberta; and Jackie Wuebben University of Idaho.

Receiving Silver awards were:

Wendy Hudson, University of Alberta; Chloe Dixon, Washington State University; Jeff Blickenstaff, University of Idaho; Megan Bettencourt, California State University-Fresno; Brian Schoch. Washington State University;

Torry Shepherd, Washington State University; Alexia Hoy, University of Alberta; Katherine Rector, California Polytechnic State University; Justin Nickerson, California State University-Fresno; Elizabeth Russell, University of Idaho;

Kelsey Blagg, California Polytechnic State University; Marissa Weleschuk, University of Alberta; Edward DeJager, California State University-Fresno; Ann Marie Stickney, Washington State University; Jeanene Russo, University of Idaho;

Michael Wesselink, California Polytechnic State University; Daric Ameye, California State University-Fresno; Carolyn Parsons, Washington State University; and Stephanie Dehner, California Polytechnic State University.

The North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge will take place April 8-10, 2010 in Visalia, Calif., and will be hosted by Cal Poly and the California State University-Fresno.

About Dairy Challenge

The Dairy Challenge is an innovative management analysis competition developed in 2002 by industry and university professionals from across the U.S. It strives to incorporate a higher-learning atmosphere with practical application, in turn generating highly qualified graduates to lead and further improve the dairy industry.

To date, more than 1,500 students have enhanced their dairy management, communication and business skills through the Dairy Challenge program.

Financial support for the North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge (NAIDC) comes from generous contributions from dairy industry companies, association and foundations, and dairy business owners. NAIDC is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit, tax-exempt organization. Contributions to Dairy Challenge are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. For more information on sponsorship support, visit www.dairychallenge.org or contact Executive Director Molly Kelley at (217) 684-3007 or email: naidcmjk@aol.com.

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Editors: Photos at http://www.dairychallenge.org/ws_event.php

Photo cutlines:

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More than 40 students from four western universities and one Canadian university competed in the fifth annual Western Regional Dairy Challenge, March 4-6, in Twin Falls, Idaho.

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Students met with White Clover Dairy prior to conducting a comprehensive evaluation of the farm; evaluating everything from cow comfort and herd health to reproduction and finances looking for opportunities to improve efficiency and profitability.

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Dr. Amin Ahmadzadeh, regional co-chair of the Western Regional Dairy Challenge, works with students as they prepare their analysis of the dairy.