DAIRY CHALLENGE

EST. 2002

Inspiring Tomorrow's Dairy Leaders Today

Our mission is to develop tomorrow's dairy industry leaders to foster a sustainable future by providing educational, professional growth, and networking opportunities for students, dairy producers, agribusiness, and academic personnel.

Our events help students hone their skills in teamwork, leadership, critical thinking, and professional networking. We encourage students to think creatively to solve real world issues on actual dairy farms. These issues may be related to:

Animal welfare
cow comfort, nutrition, reproduction/genetics, and herd health

Labor management and organization

Production practices
milking procedures, feed storage & handling, and waste/ environmental management

Management structure and financial condition of the farm business.

National events attract students who have a strong desire to pursue careers in various aspects of the dairy industry.

The regional events get more students interested in the dairy industry, educate a more diverse population of students, and recruit students for the national events.

The Dairy Challenge Experience

Our national and regional events are 2-day educational experiences that are geared towards college students throughout North America who have a genuine interest in dairy.

EVENING OF DAY 1:

Networking

Analysis of farm production and financial records

DAY 2:

2-hour on-farm inspection

Develop recommendations for improving the farm

MORNING OF DAY 3:

Professional presentation of recommendations

Networking & educational events

Awards

www.dairychallenge.org

I think anytime we can support our youth in growing and understanding better the practical aspect of animal agriculture is very important. Dairy Challenge helps to shape lives of our future generation.

Dave Ellis, Biochem

Since 2002 Dairy Challenge has provided incalculable benefits to more than 7,300 students, as well as dairy farmers, agribusinesses, and schools across North America.

Our Desired Outcomes

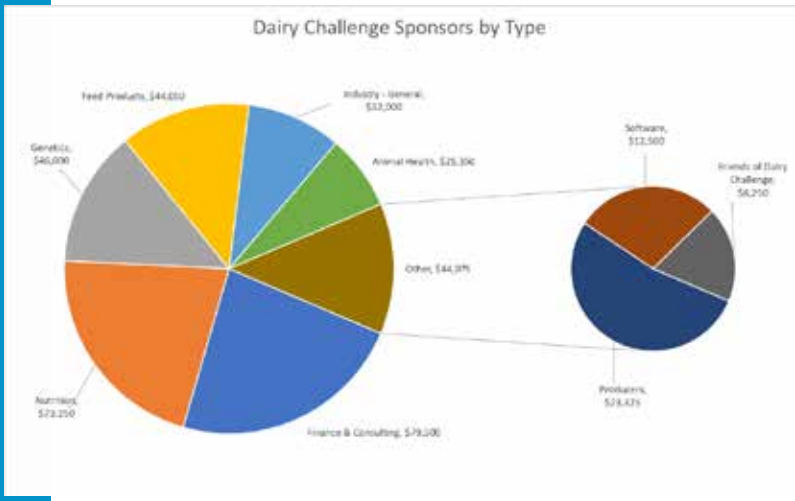
- Prepare students for productive careers in the industry by developing skills in critical thinking, teamwork, professionalism, networking, and leadership
- Provide an inclusive atmosphere that encourages participants to be more committed to the societal, environmental, and economic sustainability of the dairy sector
- Apply classroom knowledge to real-world issues encountered on dairy farms
- Enhance job placement for students through direct contact with potential employers
- Give sponsors opportunities to promote their services, network with, and recruit potential employees from our student base
- Provide dairy producers opportunities to improve their farms through access to the problem-solving skills of college students & industry mentors, and to introduce these producers to a strong pool of potential employees

Changing lives has been something that has been done for the last 20 years, for students, instructors, sponsors and also for volunteers. If we look at each of those categories, it has give the students better preparations for entering the dairy industry and enhancing their job careers and their life. The Dairy Challenge has grown from one contest with four teams to five contests with 4 regional contests, touching lives every step of the way.

Dave Thorban, Select Sires

Sponsor

With an annual budget approaching $500,000 to support 5 events, sponsors are the lifeblood of Dairy Challenge programming. We rely on contributions of financial assets, in-kind donations, and expertise in the form of judges, mentors, and volunteers to help with our events. We average 150 sponsors each year, with many at the Gold level and above. The following chart indicates the amount of sponsorships by type of sponsor.



In addition to the existing sponsorships the national and regional Dairy Challenge Finance Committees actively seek out potential sponsors from other sectors of the economy, including:

- Food companies that use dairy products
- Agricultural machinery manufacturing & sales
- Dairy Challenge alumni
- Foundations that support education and workforce preparation efforts

Our sponsors have the opportunity to meet potential employees and customers through educational presentations, career fairs, and by mentoring our students. Sponsors get to network with their peers throughout the dairy industry. Many of our sponsors are active board and committee members for Dairy Challenge working together to achieve our mission.

> *For me the real life application from the experience was the most impactful. The experience you gain from dairy challenge is what so many people in the industry is doing every day.*
>
> **Kristen Burkhardty, 2021 Alumni**

Legal & Executive Organization

We are a 501(c)(3) organization registered in Ohio (USA) and based in Madison, WI. Dairy Challenge is governed by a 15-person board of directors. We are a volunteer-based organization. The Executive Director is the only paid employee. The administrative responsibilities lie with the Executive Director and Secretary/Treasurer, with assistance from personnel from World Dairy Expo Management, Inc. World Dairy Expo Management, Inc., manages all Dairy Challenge funds.

I remember feeling very humbled and grateful to our host farms to let a bunch of college students walk through their farm, pick apart their records and critique their management strategies. Everyone was and still is enthusiastic about creating a quality learning experience for us. The encouragement from coaches, volunteers and organizers spoke volumes about their belief in us and our future in the industry.

Emily Klingbeil, 2002 Alumni

A lot of the concepts and work that we got exposed to in Dairy Challenge are still a lot of things I use on an every day basis. Truly understanding a real dairy farm, how it operates and how they are profitable is really important. I carried many of those questions with me and it helped prepare me along my path to where I am today.

Brandon Thesing, 2011 Alumni

I always struggled to understand the why. Of why I needed to learn things on a micro level. Dairy Challenge brought all of my whys together.

Jillian Green, 2011 Alumni

Industry-Wide Mission

Develop tomorrow's dairy leaders and enhance progress of the dairy industry, by providing education, communication and networking among students, producers, and agribusiness and university personnel.

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