



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Midwest Regional Dairy Challenge® Concludes Virtual Competition with Four First Place Teams

VIRTUAL, February 16-March 2, 2021 – In what can only be described as an historic year of an exclusively virtual competition via Zoom due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2021 Midwest Regional Dairy Challenge event concluded with much to celebrate, reflect, and remember for years to come. This year's competition welcomed 100 students and 15 schools, along with coaches and volunteers.

This year's event was hosted by The Ohio State University, Purdue University, and Michigan State University, with the schedule of virtual events including training seminars on dairy financials and benchmarks, reproduction, nutrition, milking procedures, and udder health. Team worked online with industry mentors to evaluate each part of the dairy operation. The event concluded with presentations by students to panels of judges and an award ceremony. This year's host farm was Walnutdale Farms in Wayland, Mich.

The judges awarded the following teams with the first and second place among the teams participating. This year, all teams were assigned to Walnutdale Farms.

Walnutdale Farms (Judged by Panel 1)

First Place: Team 5, University of Wisconsin-River Falls 2 - Emily Benrud, Kirsten Clark, Ethan Greden, Marie Haase, Megan Schuh, and Alyssa Seitz

Second Place: Team 4, The Ohio State University - Paul Bensman, Deanna Langenkamp, Sarah Lehner, and Robert Vance

Walnutdale Farms (Judged by Panel 2)

First Place: Team 10, Lakeshore Technical College – Kelsie Branstedt, Lily Charapata, Colin DeYoung, Alexis Doege, Ariel Johaneck, and Emily Kroll

Second Place: Team 6, University of Wisconsin-Madison 1 – Cassidy Dabbs, Emma Gwidt, Luke Kastenson, Caleb LaCount, Jessica Mehre, and Dawson Nickels



Walnutdale Farms (Judged by Panel 3)

First Place: Team 15, University of Wisconsin-Madison 2 – Gaelan Combs, Ryan Gehin, Josh Gerbitz, Marcus Schroepfe, Colin Uecker, and William Zeimet

Second Place: Team 13, University of Minnesota – Ellen Harth, Isabelle Lindahl, Kate Rechtzigel, and Jacob Twohey

Walnutdale Farms (Judged by Panel 4)

First Place: Team 16, University of Wisconsin-River Falls 1 – Elizabeth Bekkers, Brock Irwin, Taylor Rauenhorst, Cayley Vande Berg, and Kaylee Warner

Second Place: Team 19, University of Illinois – Justin Huff, Danielle Robbins, and Elisa Schwertfeger

The Midwest event is one of four regional contests sponsored each year by North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge® (NAIDC). These regional contests – plus a national event for up to 300 dairy collegiates – are funded through generous support by 130 agribusinesses and dairy producers. Dairy Challenge has helped prepare over 5,000 students for careers as dairy owners or managers, consultants, researchers, veterinarians or other dairy professionals.

About Dairy Challenge

NAIDC is an innovative event for students in dairy programs at North American post-secondary institutions. Its mission is to 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. The 2021 national event will be held virtually April 14-16, 2021; details are at www.dairychallenge.org.