

For Immediate Release

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**Young Leaders of the Dairy Industry Compete at
2009 North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge**

Minnesota, Purdue, UW-Madison and Ohio State Take Top Honors

Syracuse, NY, March 31, 2009—Teams from the University of Minnesota, Purdue University, the University of Wisconsin–Madison and The Ohio State University earned the highest award—First Place Platinum—in the eighth annual North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge (NAIDC), held March 27 and 28 in the Syracuse, N.Y., area.

Organized by the Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge committee, NAIDC 2009 attracted teams from 31 universities located across the United States and Canada. Each team of four was challenged to put their textbook and practical knowledge to the ultimate test – analyzing dairies. The contest started with a walk-through at one of the four host dairies, followed by the opportunity to ask questions of the owners and analyze farm-specific data. Teams then used this information and their observations to develop management recommendations, and then presented their recommendations to the herd owners and a panel of five dairy industry judges.

This was the second consecutive year for teams from Purdue and Minnesota to earn the contest's highest ranking. Purdue's team, coached by Dr. Mike Schutz and Dr. Tamilee Nennich, consisted of Austin Deardorff, Macy, Ind.; Kurt Fischer, Attica, Ind.; Megan Kron, Evansville, Ind.; and Jared Roberts, Westfield, Ind. Members of the Minnesota team were Jennifer Becker, Eden Valley, Minn.; Brett Boyum, Battle Lake, Minn.; Adam Husfeldt, Gaylord, Minn.; and Amanda Rasmussen, Rothsay, Minn. They were coached by Dr. Marcia Endres.

The Ohio State team of Jordan Beck, Wauseon, Ohio; Paige Gott, Greenwich, Ohio; Renee Starkey, Spokane, Wash.; and Kyle Uhlenhake, Coldwater, Ohio; was coached by Dr. Maurice Eastridge. UW–Madison team members were Laura Bahn, Berlin, Wis.; Patrick Kusilek, Baldwin, Wis.; Phil Monson, Brodhead, Wis.; and Annette Zwald, Hammond, Wis. Team coach was Dr. Dave Combs.

Each of the First Place Platinum team members received \$200 scholarships. Scholarships of \$100 were presented to members of the Second Place Platinum teams:

- University of Guelph: Lori Pynenburg, St. Mary's, Ontario; Michael Schouten, Richmond, Ontario; Martin Snyder, New Hamburg, Ontario; and Matthew Walpole, Tiverton, Ontario; Dr. John Walton, coach.
- Cornell University: Chris Blauch, Annville, Pa.; Gwen "Libby" Gaige, Trumansburg, N.Y.; Betsey Howland, Candor, N.Y.; and Clayton Wood, Littlestown, Pa.; Dr. Mike Van Amburgh, coach.
- Penn State University: Amanda Koons, Waynesboro, Pa.; Michael Phelps, Caledonia, N.Y.; Jennifer Ressler, Kempton, Pa.; and David Wilson, Port Royal, Pa.; Dr. Lisa Holden and Dr. Chad Dechow, coaches.
- University of Wisconsin–River Falls: Jillian Becker, Turtle Lake, Wis.; Michael Johnson, Fountain, Minn.; Sam Kreidermacher, Rollingstone, Minn.; and Brianna Pfluger, Green Bay, Wis.; Dr. Dennis Cooper, coach.

Gold Awards were presented to teams from California Polytechnic State University; California State University, Fresno; Delaware Valley College; University of Illinois; Iowa State University; McGill University; Michigan State University; the University of Vermont; Virginia Tech; and the University of Wisconsin-Platteville.

Silver Awards were presented to teams from Alabama A&M University; Clemson University; University of Connecticut; University of Idaho; Kansas State University; University of Kentucky; University of Maine; University of Massachusetts; North Carolina State University; South Dakota State University; Texas A&M University; Utah State University; and West Virginia University.

Host dairies for the 2009 NAIDC were Elmer Richards and Sons, LLC, Skaneateles, N.Y.; Twin Birch Dairy, LLC, also at Skaneateles; Venture Farms, LLC, Tully; and Currie Valley Farms, Tully.

"The Dairy Challenge was a very satisfying experience that we would recommend to both the dairy student and farm owner," commented Dirk Young of Twin Birch Dairy. "As one of the host farms it was impressive and encouraging for us to see so many young people from the best agricultural universities around, interested and committed to the program. It was a complete, hands-on opportunity for all of the participants and a positive experience to be remembered for a lifetime."

2009 NAIDC coordinators were Mike Van Amburgh, associate professor at Cornell University, and Barry Putnam, district sales manager for Genex, Ithaca, N.Y. Said Putnam, "The industry as a whole has a great future with plenty of opportunity for the young leaders, all 124 that participated in this year's Dairy Challenge."

About Dairy Challenge

The mission of the North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge is to facilitate education, communication and an exchange of ideas among students, agribusiness,

dairy producers and universities that enhances the development of the dairy industry and its leaders.

The 2010 national contest will be held April 8 through 10 in Visalia, Calif., with four regional contests scheduled for late fall 2009 and winter 2010.

The program is fully funded through the generous support of companies and producer associations serving the dairy industry, as well as a growing number of individual dairy business owners. For more information or to become a sponsor of the Dairy Challenge program, visit www.dairychallenge.org or contact Molly J. Kelley, NAIDC Executive Director, at naidc@wdexpo.com.

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Note to Editors: Team photos with cutline at www.usjersey.com/images/09NAIDC/index.htm, or contact Lisa Behnke, WDE Management Inc., 3310 Latham Drive, Madison, WI 53713, phone: 608-224-0400, ext. 108, fax: 608-224-0300, or e-mail: lbehnke@wdexpo.com.

Releases for each participating university including names of team members and coaches are also posted at www.usjersey.com/images/09NAIDC/index.htm.