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67 Students from 10 Colleges Participate in 9th Annual Western Regional Dairy Challenge

Tulare, Calif., March 4, 2014 – Sixty-seven students from nine western U.S. colleges and one Canadian university traveled to Tulare, Calif., for the 9th annual Western Regional Dairy Challenge on February 28 – March 1, 2014. Headquarters for the contest was the College of the Sequoias (COS).



Sixty-seven students from 10 colleges participated in the 2014 Western Regional Dairy Challenge.

The Western Regional Dairy Challenge is an innovative, three-day educational competition designed to prepare students for dairy careers. Working in mixed-university teams of five or six students, participants assessed all aspects of a working dairy farm, including facilities, nutrition, financials, reproduction, and animal health. Students collaborated on a 20-minute team presentation that detailed their observations and suggestions to a panel of judges. Teams were ranked based on how well their evaluations matched the judges' evaluations of the dairy operation.

Along with the competition, students were treated on Thursday to a team building workshop led by Dr. Louann Waldner, Dean at COS, learning more about the students in their group, how to work with others and what factors play into group dynamics. Noel Rosa of Rosa Brothers Milk Company, Tulare, spoke about his family's business, entrepreneurship and dairy industry careers.

As host farm, Jeff and Lisa Wilbur welcomed the teams to study their farm on Friday and answered student questions. Dr. Larry Dutto, Provost at COS, welcomed the group and coordinated facility use. There were also several



Dr. Louann Waldner, Dean at College of Sequoias, leads a team-building workshop to help prepare students who would later break into mixed-university teams to analyze and provide recommendations for an operating dairy.

sponsors attending the event who were able to network with students throughout the weekend. Students made observations about the dairy and presented recommendations to a panel of judges made up of a nutritionist, veterinarian, financier and dairy producer.

The judge panel selected the following teams as top-performers, for developing the most applicable, profit-based recommendations for the host farm.

Three teams received Platinum recognition - Team 2 “China Peak,” Team 7 “Northstar,” and Team 11 “Tahoe.” Team members are listed with pictures on this page.

Gold placings were awarded to these three teams:

- Team 3 “Badger Pass”: Jessica Levy, Washington State University; Stephanie Nash, CSU Fresno; Katelyn O'Brien, Cal Poly- SLO; Andrea Smaciarz, Oregon State University; and Maaike VanKuilenburg, University of Alberta
- Team 8 “Shasta”: Domonic Assali, Cal Poly-SLO; Megan Cihak, Washington State University; Kira Macmillan, University of Alberta; Haley Peterson, University of Idaho and Lee Yantis, CSU Fresno
- Team 13 “Mammouth”: Darlene Idsinga, CSU Fresno; Kristin Kaste, Oregon State University; Hannah Symonds, Washington State University; Bernard teVelde, Texas A&M; and Kimberlee Wilcox, University of Idaho

A committee of dairy industry representatives organized the Challenge. A long list of volunteers was important to event success. To volunteer or sponsor, contact Shawna Martinho at shawna.martinho@churchdwright.com. All contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Contributing sponsor listings are available at www.dairychallenge.org.

The Western Regional Dairy Challenge is under the guidance and support of the North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge (NAIDC), established in April 2002 to incorporate evaluation of all aspects of a dairy farm. The national Dairy Challenge is slated for April 3-5, 2014, and will be hosted by Michigan State University, Ohio State University and Purdue University in Fort Wayne, IN.

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One of three Platinum winners at the Western Dairy Challenge was Team 2 “China Peak.” Team members included, from left to right: Justin Roeloffs, Cal Poly-SLO; Mary Lavendar, Texas A & M; Rebecca Thomas, Oregon State University; Tyson Grisenti, Utah State University; and Landon Macy, Washington State University.



Members of team 7 “Northstar” included, from left to right: Hudson Hanlon, Cal Poly-SLO; Rachael Ashley, University of Idaho; Caitlin Quesenberry, Washington State University; Emily Shifflett, UC Davis; and Jonathon Weststyn, CSU Fresno.



Team 11 “Tahoe” members included, from left to right: Case Vyfhuizen, Cal Poly-SLO; Brianna Williams, University of Idaho; Maaike Clapham, UC Davis; Ashley Smyk, CSU Fresno; and Kevin Gavin, Washington State University.