

*Sent on behalf of NAIDC*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**127 Students, 30 Colleges Participate in 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dairy Challenge<sup>®</sup>**

HICKORY, N.C., April 2, 2011 – An innovative dairy educational program celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary March 31-April 2 in Hickory, N.C. Over 10 years, North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge<sup>®</sup> (NAIDC) has helped prepare over 3000 students for careers in the dairy industry.

The 10<sup>th</sup> annual contest attracted 127 college students from 30 schools across the United States and Canada. It was organized by North Carolina State University and Virginia Tech.

Each team of four students put their textbook knowledge to the ultimate test – actual consulting for dairies. The two-day contest started with a walk-through of an operating dairy, analysis of farm data and a question-answer session with owners. Then each team developed recommendations for nutrition, reproduction, milking procedures, animal health, housing and financial management. The teams presented recommendations to herd owners, while being evaluated by a panel of five judges including dairy producers, veterinarians and industry personnel.

In the 10<sup>th</sup> annual Dairy Challenge, the highest award of Platinum was earned by teams from California State University-Fresno, Cornell University, The Penn State University and University of Wisconsin-River Falls.

The team from California State University-Fresno was coached by Jon Robison and Neal Spiro, and consisted of Alex DeJager, Eddie DeJager, Justin Nickerson and John Roeloffs. Members of the Cornell team were Matthew Bull, Samuel Fessenden, Corey Kayhart and Jason McNamara, with coach Michael Van Amburgh. The Penn State team included Benjamin Cashell, Zachary Meyers, Natalie Niehls, Sarah Wickard and coach Gabriella Varga. The team from UW-River Falls included Alex Geiser, Paul Lippert, Leonard Polzin and Anne Spillman, coached by Sylvia Kehoe and Dennis Cooper.

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

- University of Alberta: Domonique Carson, Heather Fleck, Naomi Parmley and Keliesha Roth; Masahito Oba, coach.
- University of Idaho: Jeff Blickenstaff, Tyler Reynolds, Jennifer Spencer and Allen Willmore; Amin Ahmadzadeh and Mireillie Chahine, coaches.
- Michigan State University: Melissa Erdman, Sarah Fraley, Jillian Holdwick and Allan Mergener; Miriam Weber-Nielsen, coach.
- Washington State University: Phillip DeVries, Heather Hastings, Brian Schoch and Jennifer Trice; John Swain, coach.

Gold Awards were presented to teams from Berry College, Cal Poly, University of Guelph, University of Illinois, Iowa State University, Kansas State University, Louisiana State University, University of Minnesota, University of New Hampshire, The Ohio State University, University of Vermont, Virginia Tech and University of Wisconsin-Madison. In addition, one Gold Award team combined students from UW-Madison, Vermont and Michigan State.

Silver Awards went to teams from Alabama A&M University, Delaware Valley College, Eastern Kentucky University, University of Florida, University of Maine, Mississippi State University, North Carolina State University, South Dakota State University and University of Wisconsin-Platteville. Another Silver winner was an aggregate of students from Cal Poly, Iowa State, Penn State and Virginia Tech.

Host dairies for the 2011 NAIDC were Beams Dairy Farm, John Beam, III and John Beam, IV; Eaker Dairy Farm, Rusty and Cameron Eaker; Corey and Bridgette Lutz of Piedmont Jerseys; and Gar-Mac Farm, Inc., Gary and Sharon MacGibbon.

2011 NAIDC contest coordinators were Dr. Steve Washburn of North Carolina State University, David R. Winston, Virginia Tech and Johnny Bonnette, Genex Cooperative, Inc.

### *About Dairy Challenge*

NAIDC is an innovative two-day competition for students representing dairy science programs at North American universities. Its mission 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.

Hosted by Virginia Tech and North Carolina State University, the 2012 national contest will be March 29-31, 2012, in Roanoke, Va. Four regional contests are scheduled for late fall 2011 and winter 2012.

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 alumni and individual dairy farm owners. For more information or to become a sponsor of the Dairy Challenge program, visit [www.dairychallenge.org](http://www.dairychallenge.org) or contact Molly J. Kelley, NAIDC Executive Director, at [naidc@wdexpo.com](mailto:naidc@wdexpo.com).

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*Note to Editors: Contest photos will be posted soon on the NAIDC website:*  
[http://www.dairychallenge.org/national\\_contest.php](http://www.dairychallenge.org/national_contest.php)

*High-resolution team photos with identification are available upon request. Email*  
[lbehnke@wdexpo.com](mailto:lbehnke@wdexpo.com).

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