



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Molly Kelley

Executive Director

mollyk@dairychallenge.org

Release date:

July 29, 2026

NAIDC Elects New Leadership for 2026-2027

North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge® (NAIDC) recently elected new leadership, including one new board member and the 2026 – 2027 Executive Committee. As stated in the NAIDC mission statement, the organization strives to “Develop tomorrow’s dairy leaders and enhance the progress of the dairy industry, by providing education, communication and networking among students, producers, and agribusiness and university personnel.”

In its 24-year history, Dairy Challenge has evolved significantly to meet the ever changing needs of the dairy industry. The Program originally began in 2002 with 56 students from 13 colleges competing in one national event. Today there are more than 500 dairy students participating annually throughout the national competition, Dairy Challenge Academy and four regional events. The volunteer Board of Directors represents the many university professionals, dairy producers, and industry sponsors who contribute to these opportunities.

Newly elected to the 15-person volunteer NAIDC Board of Directors is:

- **Brian Waymire, Nedap Livestock, CA.** – Brian Waymire serves as a Large Herd Specialist for Nedap Livestock, working with dairy producers throughout the Western United States to implement technology-driven management solutions that improve dairy performance, labor efficiency, and animal health. A graduate of California Polytechnic State University, Waymire began his career in dairy management in 2010 and has managed dairies ranging from 400 to 7,000 milking cows. His previous management experience includes Giacomini Dairy in Petaluma, Tony De Groot Dairies in Hanford, Alhem Family Partnership in Hilmar, and Jones Farms in Stevinson. He later served as a Premier Account Manager with Alta Genetics before joining Nedap. A proud alumnus of the Western Regional Dairy Challenge, Waymire has remained actively involved with the program by hosting Dairy Challenge practices, mentoring students at regional contests and Dairy Challenge Academy, judging both regional and national competitions, and serving on the Western Regional Planning Committee. He credits Dairy Challenge with providing foundational skills that continue to shape his professional career and values the program's ability to bridge classroom learning with real-world dairy management.

The NAIDC Executive Committee for 2026–2027 includes:

- Chair: **Ted Halbach, University of Wisconsin–Madison, Madison, WI.**
- Vice Chair: **Gail Carpenter, Iowa State University, Ames, IA.**

- Associate Vice Chair: **Erin Spangler, Riverview, LLP, Morris, MN.**
- Promotions & Engagement Chair: **Elizabeth Eckelkamp, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN.**
- Finance Chair: **Heather Weeks, Farm Credit East, Bedford, NH.**
- Program Committee Chair: **Trevor DeVries, University of Guelph, Guelph, ON, Canada.**

Continuing their terms on the board are:

- **Doug DeGroff, Progressive Dairy Solutions, Tulare, CA.**
- **Jeff Elliott, Balchem, Amarillo, TX.**
- **Jordan Fisher, Mapleview Dairy, Madrid, NY.**
- **Matt Groen, Cargill, Guelph, ON, Canada.**
- **Jen Lane, Cargill, Hanford, CA.**
- **Lauren Mayo, North Carolina A&T University, Greensboro, NC.**
- **Linda Parreira, Farm Credit West, Tulare, CA.**
- **Craig Walter, Valley Ag Software, Poynette, WI.**

The Board also recognizes the service of retiring board member **Megan Mouw, Elanco Animal Health, Riverdale, California.** Throughout her tenure, Mouw contributed her leadership and expertise in support of Dairy Challenge's mission to prepare the next generation of dairy industry professionals. The organization extends its appreciation for her years of volunteer service and dedication to Dairy Challenge.

About Dairy Challenge

NAIDC is an innovative educational 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. Over its 24-year history, Dairy Challenge has helped prepare more than 11,000 students for careers as farm owners and managers, consultants, researchers, veterinarians or other dairy professionals. In addition to the national competition and Dairy Challenge Academy held each spring, four regional contests take place in late fall and winter. Learn more at www.dairychallenge.org.

###

PHOTO CAPTIONS:



Brian Waymire, Nedap Livestock, CA