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New York Brings Together Tomorrow's Dairy Leaders

Liverpool, NY, April 1, 2015 – More than 285 students will participate in the Dairy Challenge[®] and complementary Dairy Challenge Academy in Liverpool, NY, April 9-11, 2015. Students will come from 40 colleges from across the U.S. and two Canadian provinces to put their textbook knowledge to work by evaluating a dairy operation and developing recommendations to optimize success and animal care.

North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge[®] (NAIDC) is funded through the generous support of 120 agribusinesses and dairy farms. Dairy Challenge was started 14 years ago through cooperation between universities, dairy producers and agribusinesses. The event expanded in 2013 with the Dairy Challenge Academy, providing hands-on learning where teams of students evaluate a dairy operation with the help of dairy industry professionals serving as Academy Advisors.

This year about 130 students will compete in the national contest and 155 students will participate in the Academy. Between the national contest and Academy, collegiate participants will visit six dairy farms in the surrounding Syracuse area.

The event in April is hosted by the Northeast Dairy Challenge committee, a group of agribusiness professionals and university personnel. Each year, the Northeast committee also coordinates a regional Dairy Challenge. The national event will be hosted in 2015 and 2016 in Liverpool, NY, giving the Northeast an opportunity to showcase New York's thriving dairy industry.

“We are excited to have students and industry professionals from across the U.S. join us in New York to see what the dairy industry in the northeast has to offer,” said Barry Putnam of Cargill Animal Nutrition and the Northeast Dairy Challenge committee.

Contest participants will inspect an operating dairy farm, analyze farm data and ask questions of farm owners. Then each team develops recommendations, which will be presented to farm owners and a panel of five judges. At a concluding banquet, eight college teams will be announced as award winners, meaning their recommendations most closely match those of the official judges.

In addition to the national competition and Academy, students will also participate in other educational and networking activities such as interactive stations on a tour farm, participation in

panel discussions with young dairy producers and dairy processors, presentations on cutting-edge research and industry trends, and interaction with agribusinesses in a career fair.

Supporters can follow the student activity through posts and photos at www.facebook.com/DairyChallenge and @DairyChallenge on Twitter and Instagram.

“New York is blessed with a strong dairy industry including farms, processors and supporting agribusinesses,” continues Putnam. “Our area is pleased to host this event to secure a bright future for our industry by preparing tomorrow’s dairy leaders.”

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. Over its 14-year national history, Dairy Challenge has helped prepare more than 4,000 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 in April, four regional contests are held in late fall and winter; details are at www.dairychallenge.org.

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