

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The State University of New York at Cobleskill to host Seventh Annual Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge

The seventh annual Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge will be held November 5th through November 7th, 2009 in Glens Falls, New York. Jenny Mills of Elanco Animal Health and Dayton Maxwell from the SUNY Cobleskill College of Agriculture and Technology are leading this year's Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge.

The duo indicates there are already more than 100 students from 14 universities committed to the 2009 Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge. They expect a total of 120 students from colleges and universities across the Northeast and Canada to participate in the three-day program.

The Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge is designed to create an educational environment and facilitate a real-world dairy team situation. To accomplish this, students are placed on mixed-university teams. The Dairy Challenge strives to incorporate a higher-learning atmosphere with practical application to help prepare students for careers in the dairy industry.

“Putting students with different skills from different schools on a team to work together in finding solutions is a very important learning experience,” said judge selection committee chair John Lehr of First Pioneer Farm Credit. “On today's dairies it takes a team of outside professionals working together to make a difference. Students need to practice teamwork.”

“The Dairy Challenge is a tremendous opportunity for participating dairy farms to receive consulting advice,” Lehr continued, “and for agribusiness sponsors and students to meet and discuss prospective working relationships.”

Collaboration with other agribusiness professionals helped Mills and Maxwell secure three host farms located in or near Saratoga County, New York. Students will arrive on the afternoon of November 5th and participate in event orientation and team-building activities. Day two begins with each five-person team receiving information about a real-life dairy, including production and farm management data. Following an operation evaluation, teams develop a comprehensive program including recommendations for nutrition, reproduction, milking procedures, animal health, housing and financial management. The second day concludes with an informal dinner attended by sponsors, students and advisers. Day three is presentation day and team members

present recommendations to a panel of judges. Participant knowledge is tested as they field questions from judges. Presentations are evaluated based on student analysis and recommendations. The evening of day three concludes with a reception and awards banquet.

The North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge (NAIDC) and its regional contests have become the premier programs for promoting the future of dairy business through college and industry partnerships.

NAIDC and the Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge are fully funded through the monetary and/or in-kind sponsorship support of agribusiness and dairy producers. Contributions may be made in any amount. Defined recognition levels are \$500 for Bronze, \$1,000 for Silver, \$2,500 for Gold and \$5,000 or more for Platinum. To become a sponsor contact Jan Bitter of First Pioneer Farm Credit at 800-392-3276 or jan.bitter@firstpioneer.com. All contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

The Northeast Regional program is under the guidance and support of the North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge, established in April of 2002 as a management contest to incorporate all phases of a specific dairy business. For more information, visit www.dairychallenge.org or contact Molly J. Kelley, NAIDC Executive Director, at naidc@wdexpo.com.

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