

NORTH AMERICAN INTERCOLLEGIATE
DAIRY CHALLENGE
TOMORROW'S DAIRY LEADERS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Manoella Alves, Publicity Chair
Western Regional Dairy Challenge
559- 260-2777
malves@alltech.com

Dairy Students compete in 4th Western Regional Dairy Challenge contest in Visalia, CA

Forty-two students from six universities competed in the western regional Dairy Challenge contest, February 27 and 28, 2009 at the Holiday Inn in Visalia, Calif. Participating students represented California Polytechnic State University, California State University–Fresno, University of Idaho, South Dakota State University, Texas A&M University and Washington State University.

Students were assigned to one of the 10 “aggregate” teams to observe the operation of Mineral King Dairy and ask questions of Neil Zwart. During the farm visit on February 27, teams analyzed the entire operation including the milking area, cow performance records and feeding protocols, along with other management practices. On Saturday morning, February 28, they presented their team analysis to an expert panel of industry judges, discussing the strengths of the operation and identifying opportunities for improvement.

Team Coronado was the Platinum-ranking team, composed of students Matt Strickland from Fresno State University, Samantha Wahls from South Dakota State University, Shane Smith from the University of Idaho, and Luke de Jong Cal Poly State University.

The three Gold award teams were:

Big Bar

Trent VanLeunen, University of Idaho
Andy Gray, Washington State University
Desiree McIntyre, Fresno State University

Amy Odens, Cal Poly State University
Conner Martin, Cal Poly State University

Indio

Lauren Reid, Fresno State University
Katie Maples, Texas A & M University
Jarred Mello, Cal Poly State University
Maci DePaoli, Cal Poly State University

Firebaugh

Kayla Machado, Cal Poly State University
Tim Korver, South Dakota State University
Megan Bettencourt, Fresno State University
II Hun Jeong, University of Idaho
Carrie Crane, Cal Poly State University

The six teams earning Silver awards were:

Stockton

Travis Kamper, Cal Poly State University
Chloe Dixon, Washington State University
Daric Ameye, Fresno State University
Courtney Curti, Cal Poly State University

Suttercreek

William Van Beek, Cal Poly State University
Kelsey Blagg, Fresno State University
Amelia Naher, University of Idaho
Kevin Hooley, Washington State University

Mendota

Luke Gallegos, Texas A & M University
Kassie Romero, Fresno State University
Eric Schultz, South Dakota State University
Susan Buttram, University of Idaho

Napa

Richard Mayo, Fresno State University
Neal Frerichs, Texas A & M University
Amber Terhaar, University of Idaho
Corey Zonneveld, Cal Poly State University

Gilroy

Abigail Wirt, South Dakota State University
Philip deVries, Washington State University
Joel Goedhart, Cal Poly State University

Jeanene Russo, University of Idaho

Morro Bay

Jordan VanGrouw, Cal Poly State University

Melody Jaime, Fresno State University

Shay McDonald, Texas A & M University

Andrew Nicholson, University of Idaho

After the contest, Dr. Stan Henderson of the Cal Poly dairy science faculty observed that Dairy Challenge is the “most significant effort in dairy education in the United States.”

Over the years the interest of students in the event has increased. “As soon as they find out what it is, they want to be involved with it,” says Dr. Henderson. “The Western Dairy Challenge is so important to the universities in the region that just two weeks ago, 30 students from Fresno State and Cal Poly got together to practice for the contest.”

The North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge was established as a management contest to incorporate all phases of a specific dairy business. It strives to incorporate a higher-learning atmosphere with practical application to help prepare students for careers in the dairy industry. Supported financially through generous donations by more than 135 agribusinesses and coordinated by a volunteer steering committee, the NAIDC has been held annually since 2002.

For more information, call (608) 224-0400 or visit www.dairychallenge.org

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Note: Photos available upon request to WDE Management, lbehnke@wdexpo.com.