

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Raechel K. Sattazahn
Northeast NAIDC Publicity Chair
(717) 796-9372 ext. 6016
(717) 796-9830 (fax)
rsattazahn@agchoice.com

105 Students from 11 Colleges Participate in 10th Annual Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge

University of Maine hosted a successful Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge that drew 105 students from nine northeast colleges and two Canadian universities to Waterville, Maine on November 1-3, 2012. This event marked the tenth annual Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge which is an innovative, three-day educational competition designed to prepare students for careers in the dairy industry.

Working in mixed-university teams of four or five students, contestants assessed all aspects of a working dairy farm, including facilities, nutrition, financials, reproduction, animal health and much more. Students collaborated on a 20-minute team presentation that detailed their observations and suggestions to a panel of judges and participating farm families. Teams were ranked as platinum, gold or silver based on how well their evaluations matched the judges' evaluations of the dairy operation.

The objective of this evaluation process is to create a real-life situation that stresses the importance of teamwork and professionalism. Industry chair Brett Denny of Vermont DHIA explained, "Not only does the Dairy Challenge teach technical knowledge, it excels in helping students to develop people skills."

Maine farms evaluated at the 2012 competition included Stonyvale Farm, The Wright Place and Piper Hill Farm. All teams also participated in educational workshops at Flood Brothers dairy farm and attended an industry career fair. Team-building and fun activities were held throughout the weekend to encourage networking among students and sponsors.

Teams, which were named after top sponsors of the Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge, were ranked as follows:

- ***Don Rogers Platinum (highest honors)*** – Merck and Farm Credit System.
- ***Platinum*** – Cargill, Northeast Ag and Feed Alliance, Shur-Gain USA, APC, Inc. and Novartis Animal Health
- ***Gold*** – Farm Credit Northeast Ag Enhancement Program, Farm Credit of Maine, Holtz-Nelson Dairy Consultants, New England Jersey Breeders Association and Phoenix Feeds & Nutrition
- ***Silver*** – Elanco Animal Health, AgChoice & MidAtlantic Farm Credit, Select Sires, ABS Global, Alltech, CIDEC, Dairy One, Genex, IDEXX Laboratories, Northeast Ag Education Foundation, Pfizer Animal Health and Prince Agriproducts.

In addition to the student competition, a Technology Seminar for area dairy producers was also held, offering an outstanding educational opportunity and networking event. Featured speakers included Dr. Mike Van Amburgh, Associate Professor in the Department of Animal Science at Cornell University, who spoke on Early Life Nutrition and Management Impacts Long-Term Productivity of Calves and Tom Kilcer, owner of Advanced Ag Systems, who spoke on Forage Management and Alternative Forages to Enhance Quality and Reduce Purchased Feed Costs.

The 2013 Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge will be hosted by the Miner Institute in Plattsburgh, New York. For more information about next year's contest, please contact Wanda Emerich of Miner Institute at emerich@whminer.com.

To become a sponsor, contact Jan Bitter of Farm Credit East at 800-392-3276 or jan.bitter@farmcrediteast.com. All contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. Contributing sponsor listings are available on the website.

The Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge is under the guidance and support of the North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge (NAIDC) which was established in April 2002 as a management contest to incorporate evaluation of all aspects of a specific dairy business. For more information, visit www.dairychallenge.org.

###

Photo caption 1: Participants, sponsors and planning committee members of the 2012 Northeast Regional Dairy Challenge.

Photo caption 2: Rene Boardman (left) of SUNY Cobleskill and Hannah Wentworth (right) of Penn State University review farm information.

Photo caption 3: Laura Livingston (left) of SUNY Cobleskill and Christopher O'Connor (right) of Morrisville State College assess feed samples.

Photo caption 4: Members of the Shur-Gain Team evaluate heifer facilities at Stonyvale Farm. From the left: Sheldon Grant of McGill University, Dakota Grove of Penn State University, Mackenzie Reynolds of Cornell University and Mary Collins of SUNY Cobleskill

Photo caption 5: Students on the Merck Team earning Don Rogers Platinum honors (from the left), front row: Elizabeth Racine, University of New Hampshire; Anne Davison, SUNY Cobleskill; back row: Paul Stewart, University of Guelph; Patrick McNamara, Cornell University; Connor Killigrew, Vermont Technical College

Photo caption 6: Students on the Farm Credit System Team earning Don Rogers Platinum honors (from the left), front row: Rene Boardman, SUNY Cobleskill; Hannah Wentworth, Penn State University; back row: Lewis Fox, Vermont Technical College; Matthew Sharpe, Cornell University; David Johnson, Morrisville State College