

Sent on behalf of NAIDC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Cathy Williams Contest Chair, Southern Regional Dairy Challenge

Phone: (225) 578-4574

Email: CWilliams@agcenter.lsu.edu

Southern Regional Dairy Challenge draws 60 students to Newberry, South Carolina.

The seventh Annual Southern Regional Dairy Challenge, which ran November 8-10, 2012, attracted 60 students from 11 universities and colleges to the event hosted by the Clemson University.

“The Southern Regional Dairy Challenge exposes undergraduate students to dairying in the Southeastern United States and the unique complexities producers and industry professionals face in this part of the country. The students visit a typical dairy, then have the opportunity to apply the skills they have learned in the classroom to make practical recommendations,” says contest planning committee chair Cathy Williams of Louisiana State University.

Dairy Challenge is an innovative competition developed by industry and university professionals, which exposes students to opportunities in a vibrant dairy industry. Working in four- or five-person, mixed-university teams, students at the Southern Regional Dairy Challenge assessed all aspects of a working dairy farm and presented recommendations to judges and participating farm families.

This year’s contest in Clemson, S.C., drew students from Alabama A&M, Berry College, Clemson University, University of Florida, Eastern Kentucky, Louisiana State University, Mississippi State University, North Carolina State University, University of Kentucky, Virginia Tech and West Virginia University.

After they arrived, students joined their new teammates and had the opportunity to learn more about one another in a fun team building activity. They then began learning about the dairy they would be analyzing.

The next day, students had an in-depth walk-through of their assigned dairy. Host farms for the competition were Kevin and Wayne Satterwhite of Satterwhite Farms, LLC, Newberry, S.C.; and Ed and Cheryl Ettinger of Will Do Jerseys, Kinards, S.C.

Following the farm visit, students met as teams and developed questions for the herd owners. After the question-and-answer session, teams developed recommendations for nutrition, reproduction, milking procedures, animal health, housing and financial management. The next day, each team gave a 20-minute presentation of their recommendations to farm owners and a panel of judges - dairy producers, veterinarians, farm finance specialists and industry personnel.

Judges ranked the teams, choosing two teams as 1st Place winners. The individuals who comprised these teams are: Alli Davis-Virginia Tech, Nakia Hancock-Alabama A&M University, Holly Whetsell-University of Florida, Robin Nolan-Berry College, Alexis Thompson-University of Kentucky, Colton Turner-Alabama A&M University, Roxanne Seltzer-Virginia Tech, and Kaitlin MaGill-Berry College.

Throughout the event, student participants had several opportunities to network with industry professionals. Several agribusiness sponsors joined in an Innovation Fair, showcasing their products,

services, full-time jobs and internships. All students also participated in educational workshops at Bush River Jerseys near Newberry, S.C.

Southern Dairy Challenge students, coaches, volunteers, and sponsors donated \$220 to the **American Red Cross for Hurricane Sandy Relief Efforts**. The Southern Region would like to thank Genex Cooperative, Inc. for their portion of the donation as they matched the funds provided by the group.

About Dairy Challenge

NAIDC is an innovative two-day competition for students representing dairy science programs at North American universities. Its mission is to facilitate education, communication and an exchange of ideas among students, agribusiness, dairy producers and universities that enhances the development of the dairy industry and its leaders.

The 2013 national contest – and the 1st annual Dairy Challenge Academy - will be April 4-6 in Fort Wayne, IN. In addition, four regional events are held each year. Find details at www.dairychallenge.org.

###



Photo caption 1: *Southern Regional Dairy Challenge participants group picture prior to visiting farms.*



Photo caption 2: *Students on the Novartis team earning First Place honors: Alli Davis-Virginia Tech, Nakia Hancock-Alabama A&M University, Holly Whetsell-University of Florida, Robin Nolan-Berry College.*



Photo caption 3: *Students on the Renaissance Nutrition earning First Place honors: Alexis Thompson - University of Kentucky, Colton Turner - Alabama A&M University, Roxanne Seltzer -Virginia Tech, and Kaitlin MaGill -Berry College.*