



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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University of Alberta Western Regional Dairy Challenge® Event

Camrose, Alberta, Canada, March 5-7, 2026 – The 2026 Western Regional Dairy Challenge, hosted at the University of Alberta concluded March 7 in Camrose, Alberta, Canada. The event saw significant participation with 77 students from 15 schools, along with coaches and volunteers, for an immersive learning experience.

Upon arrival, students met with their teams and participated in a team building activity. They then had the opportunity to meet their mentors and eat dinner together. Afterwards, teams received farm information and began analyzing data in preparation for their farm visit on March 6th and their upcoming presentation.

On the second day, students toured and evaluated Vermeer Dairy Farm LTD. Guided by industry mentors, teams assessed various aspects of each facility at the dairy farm, including animal health, parlor management, transition pens, and feed management processes. Additionally, student teams conducted interviews with the producers to gain deeper insights into farm management practices and goals. In the afternoon, teams used the data collected to develop their presentations. After submitting their work, all attendants, volunteers, and coaches gathered for dinner and a networking event.

The final day of the contest featured team presentations, evaluated by a panel of judges. Each team delivered a 20-minute analysis outlining the strengths and areas of opportunity of the farm they had assessed. Additionally, students were able to attend a career and innovation fair. The event concluded with the presentation of student awards, marking the end of the successful 2026 Western Regional Dairy Challenge.

The judges awarded the following teams with the first and second place rankings.



Panel A

First Place: Team # 3; Front (L-R): Samantha Garcia (Cal Poly), Avere Silva (University of Idaho), Carmen Kulper (Oklahoma State University)

Back (L-R): Alyson Otten (Utah State University), Wyatt Linger (BYU-Idaho), Jack Mornarich (Oregon State University)



Second Place: Team # 5; Front (L-R): Kylee Chamberlain (BYU-Idaho), Jaleesa Sousa (Fresno State), Madeline Clifton (University of Idaho)

Back (L-R): Jace Robinson (Utah State University), Braden Borman (Texas Tech),





Panel B

First Place: Team # 10; Front (L-R): Alexis Jackson (Fresno State), Elizabeth Haugen (Texas A&M)
Back (L-R): Derek Gehin (University of Wisconsin-Madison), Derek DeGroot (Oklahoma State University)



Second Place: Team # 6; Front (L-R): Peyton Rawe (Oregon State University), Kailiokalani Lower (BYU-Idaho)
Back (L-R): Dieter Ally (Texas A&M), Rebecca Rand (University of Idaho), Anthony Gutierrez (Cal Poly)





Panel C

First Place: Team Number 11; Front (L-R): Drake Bair (Fresno State), Anthony Diniz (Cal Poly)
Back (L-R): Regina Frisle (University of Wisconsin-Madison), Estrella Farias (Texas A&M), Alexis Jongsma (College of the Sequoias)



Second Place: Team Number 12; Front (L-R): Emily Maners (Texas A&M), Lauren Breunig (University of Wisconsin - Madison)
Back (L-R): Jack Welps (Texas Tech University), Diego Olivares (Fresno State), Stephanie Soria (College of the Sequoias)





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The Western event is one of four regional contests sponsored each year by North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge® (NAIDC). These regional contests – plus a national event for nearly 300 dairy colleagues – are funded through generous support by more than 100 agribusinesses and dairy producers. Since its beginning, Dairy Challenge has helped prepare over 10,000 students for careers as dairy owners or managers, consultants, researchers, veterinarians or other dairy professionals.

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 the progress of the dairy industry, by providing education, communication and networking among students, dairy producers, agribusiness and university personnel. The 2026 National Dairy Challenge contest will be held in Sioux Falls, South Dakota from April 12th to April 14th; details are at www.dairychallenge.org.

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