



For Immediate Release

Media Contact: Emily Barge, 717-346-0849; ebarge@centerfordairyexcellence.org

Photo caption: Nick Isenberg, an agriculture educator from Milton Hershey School, was one of the recipients of the back-to-school boxes.

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AGRICULTURE EDUCATORS IN PENNSYLVANIA AND BEYOND RECEIVE BACK-TO-SCHOOL BOXES FROM DAIRY LEADERS OF TOMORROW AND INDUSTRY SPONSORS

Close To 300 Back-to-School Boxes Were Sent to Ag Educators With Personal Messages

Harrisburg, Pa. – Thanks to support from industry sponsors and individual donors, the Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow (DLT) program sent almost 300 back-to-school boxes to agriculture educators this August. The boxes were part of an initiative to share positivity, encouragement and support to agriculture educators in Pennsylvania and beyond at the start of the school year. The DLT Program is managed by the Dairy Excellence Foundation to help prepare high school students to work in the dairy industry through industry-recognized courses, scholarship opportunities, and on-farm experiences.

“Agriculture teachers are laying the foundation for the next generation to learn about the role farmers have in our communities. We feel it’s important to show our appreciation for agriculture educators all year long, but especially at the start of the school year, and share some positivity and words of encouragement for all they do,” said Michelle Shearer, Workforce Development Manager at the Dairy Excellence Foundation. “We are amazed at the generosity and support from both our sponsors and the individuals across the agriculture and dairy industries who helped us send almost 300 boxes to kick off the school year.”

The back-to-school boxes included office supplies, a poster, gift cards, candy, and personal messages from the individuals and businesses that donated to send boxes to educators. Many dairy producers sent boxes to agriculture educators in a nearby district, thanking them for their work and encouraging them to reach out if they want to tour or connect with a working dairy farm. Many parents and neighbors sent boxes to their adult children or friends who are ag educators to share positivity at the start of the school year.

Several businesses and organizations participated by making a donation and asking the Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow team to choose teachers in their county to receive boxes as a way to express their appreciation.

“The opportunity to partner with Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow to acknowledge our ag teachers is a very natural fit for the Berks County Department of Agriculture. The end result goes a long way in acknowledging the effort that these professionals put into sustaining the ag industry,” said Kimberly Fies from the Berks County Department of Agriculture, one of the sponsors for the boxes. “The students who they are instructing and exposing to all things agriculture are the key to a successful future for one of

the leading industries in the county and state. Our hope is that we will continue to build our collaborations with [agriculture educators] going forward, and these boxes are a great gesture.”

In addition to the Berks County Department of Agriculture, sponsors for the back-to-school boxes included American Dairy Association North East, Allied Milk Producers, Hershey Company, Hooper Inc., Horizon Farm Credit, Keystone Boumatic, Lancaster Ag Council, Land O Lakes, New Holland Agriculture, PA Beef Council, PA FFA Foundation, PA Friends of Ag Foundation, PA Pork, Penn Ag Industries, Penn State Extension, Pennian Bank, Schreiber Foods, Thaddeus Stevens College, Versant Strategies, and more than 200 individuals who made a donation to send boxes to educators in their community.

“We just received our Back-to-School kits. They were full of materials to help us get back into school mode. Our colleagues are always amazed by the support we give and receive in the agriculture industry. We feel fortunate to be part of such a great community. Thanks for your support,” shared John Seifert and Adam Serfass, two agriculture educators who received a box.

All proceeds from the campaign benefited agriculture educators and the Dairy Excellence Foundation, which manages the Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow program. The DLT curriculum is available at no cost to high school educators thanks to support from sponsors and donors. Scholarship opportunities and on-farm learning experiences are also available to teachers and students who are enrolled in the program.

“What an awesome surprise on my first day of school! I love everything, especially the personalization. The creative thinking is absolutely amazing. I appreciate everything,” shared Sherry, another educator who received a box.

To learn more about the back-to-school box campaign and how to get involved next year, visit www.dairyleadersoftomorrow.com/send-a-box.

To share the Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow program with an agriculture educator you know, visit www.dairyleadersoftomorrow.com. If you have questions about the program, contact Michelle Shearer at mshearer@centerfordairyexcellence.org or by phone at 570-768-8316.

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The Center for Dairy Excellence Foundation of Pennsylvania is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax deductible organization that is Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) approved. Established in 2010, the foundation’s mission is to build and invest in programs that cultivate and empower the next generation of producers, consumers, and advocates for the Pennsylvania dairy industry. Learn more at centerfordairyexcellence.org/our-foundation/.

Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow (DLT) is a program designed specifically to prepare high school students to work in the dairy industry. A three-part model program, Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow offers classroom instruction, on-farm experiences and scholarship opportunities. The DLT curriculum includes four main courses: Introduction to Dairy, Introduction to Dairy Herd Management, Introduction to Dairy Business Management, and Introduction to Dairy Technologies. The program is managed by the Center for Dairy Excellence Foundation of Pennsylvania, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax deductible organization that is Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) approved. Learn more about the program at www.dairyleadersoftomorrow.com.

Center for Dairy Excellence Foundation ▼ 2301 North Cameron St., Harrisburg, PA 17110

▼ 717-346-0849 ▼

www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/our-foundation/