



For Immediate Release

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DISCOUNTS AVAILABLE FOR DAIRY PRODUCERS AND YOUNG PROFESSIONALS TO ATTEND PA DAIRY SUMMIT

Dairy Producers and Young Dairy Professionals Can Attend the PA Dairy Summit at Discount

Harrisburg, Pa. – Dairy producers, professionals, and young dairy leaders who are looking to commit to their passion and purpose, and hone in on their True North, won't want to miss the Pennsylvania Dairy Summit. Featuring more than 20 dynamic speakers, the 2026 event will take place on February 4-5 at the Holiday Inn Harrisburg – Hershey in Grantville, Pa. Thanks to grants and support from the Center for Dairy Excellence, Professional Dairy Managers of PA, and Summit sponsors, registration fees for dairy producers are set to be as affordable as possible. Dairy producers can attend the full, two-day Dairy Summit for \$100, with one-day rates available for \$50. Registration is open for the in-person event at www.padairysummit.org.

For young dairy professionals between the ages of 18 and 30, scholarships to attend the Dairy Summit are also available. Young professionals who receive the scholarship get a discounted rate of \$50 to attend the full Summit, a complimentary hotel room, access to a Young Professionals Opening Night Reception where they will hear from a group of three young dairy professionals, and an in-depth human resource panel discussion for young professionals.

"I found great value in my experience at the PA Dairy Summit. For young individuals, I think the variety of topics and discussions was important. There was a unique combination of dairy farmers and industry professionals who discussed both types of careers," shared Sara Kennedy, a student at The Pennsylvania State University and previous Young Dairy Professionals scholarship recipient. "There was great exposure to different types of farms, the future of dairy products, and the current topics in the industry. I would definitely encourage any young professional who wants to be involved in the dairy industry to attend – especially if they want to gain exposure to the industry from different perspectives."

Hosted by the Professional Dairy Managers of Pennsylvania and Center for Dairy Excellence, the 2026 Dairy Summit will feature keynote speakers who will lead timely sessions on a variety of topics, including owning your future, forging ahead with innovation, controlling your own destiny as a small business, finding pathways to profitability on the dairy farm, and more. Several dairy

producers from Pennsylvania and beyond will also lead breakout sessions focused on getting the most out of on-farm technology, boosting executive leadership skills, and more. There will be an entire track of discussion groups for additional farmer-to-farmer conversations. The following sessions will feature dairy producers:

- **Inspiring Pathways to Profitability: A Producer Panel with Jim Hertzler, Donny Bartch and Matt & Megan Fry, facilitated by Rob Goodling (Keynote Session).** There are a lot of factors that drive profitability on a dairy farm, so how can you rise to the top and stay there? The path to profitability is different for every single dairy farm family. Hear from three dairy producers from different sized dairies who will share their own unique approach to profitability and how they have remained focused on their goals for the farm, the family, and the business. Jim Hertzler is from Summit Level Dairy, a 100-cow dairy farm in Berks County, Pa. Donny Bartch is from Merrimart Farms, a 300-cow dairy farm in Perry County, Pa. Matt and Megan Fry are from Fair Hill Farms, a 500-cow organic dairy farm in Maryland.
- **Forging Ahead with Innovation: A Producer Showcase with Brody Stapel of Wisconsin (Keynote Session).** When brothers Brody and Jory returned to their family's farm, Farm Stapels in Howards Grove, WI, they were filled with enthusiasm and energy and had one thing in mind: opportunity. Opportunity to raise their families on a farm, opportunity to work for themselves and bring about their own success, and opportunity to be part of our country's food security. In 2025, exactly 430 days after returning home from a conference that inspired them to start bottling their own milk, they dug the foundation of their new creamery. As the 2024 Young Dairy Farmer of the Year, Brody Stapel will share how they have been forging ahead with innovation, rolling up their sleeves, and making their dreams a reality.
- **Step Up Your Game: Why Developing Your Executive Leadership Skills Is Critical to Your Business with PA dairy producers (Breakout Session).** With so much chaos and outside noise happening on dairy farms on a daily basis, how do you find the time to invest in executive leadership growth? Can executive leadership skills actually give you a return on your investment and boost the efficiency of your business? Get the answer from several PA dairy producers who have stepped up their game by committing the time to hone their executive leadership skills.
- **Drilling Into the ROI: Getting the Most Out of Your Technology with Dr. Melissa Cantor, Alan Waybright, Walt Moore and Alan Davis. (Breakout Session).** It's easy to get distracted by the volume of new technology and the sales pitches promising huge efficiency gains. This noise can obscure your real goal. The only way to find your True North is to hone in on the single, most critical metric you are trying to move on your farm. During this producer panel discussion, learn how to find the technology that leads to a return on investment (ROI) for your dairy. Hear from all perspectives, including a producer who uses robotic technology, a producer who decided robots weren't for him, and a producer who invested in cow collars to monitor health and activity.

“One of the best sayings I have read and keep in the back of my mind is: ‘People always think the grass is greener on the other side of the fence, but the truth is, the grass is greener where you water it.’ I think not just in business, but in life, it is easy to look around and feel like someone else's situation is more desirable, especially in challenging times. Taking time to attend a conference like the Dairy Summit is a great way to reinvigorate some energy into our purpose and ‘water our own grass,’” said Megan Fry of Fair Hill Farms, one of the keynote speakers at the 2026 PA Dairy Summit. “For Matt and I, a piece of this has been choosing a different path and diversifying with organic practices at scale. In the past five years, we have continued down the diversification path by integrating regenerative practices on our pasture and cropping side.”

Visit www.padairysummit.org to register today and view the full program. Producer discounts will automatically be applied during the registration process. To apply for the Young Dairy Professionals scholarship, applications must be submitted by January 15, 2026. Visit www.padairysummit.org and click on “Young Professionals” on the top right.

Contact the Pennsylvania Dairy Summit Business Office with questions or to learn more about sponsorship opportunities. Call 814-355-2467 or email info@padairysummit.org.

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PDMP is a not-for-profit, farmer-driven organization advancing the State’s dairy industry through improved productivity and economic viability with continued stewardship of our animals, environment, and community. Programs offered by PDMP are designed by dairy producers, for dairy producers. For more information on PDMP, visit their website at pdmp.org.

The Center for Dairy Excellence is a non-profit organization initiated by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture in 2004. Bringing together people from more than 40 different dairy organizations in Pennsylvania, the Center’s mission is to enhance the profitability of the dairy industry by empowering people, creating partnerships, and increasing the availability and use of resources. Learn more at centerfordairyexcellence.org.