



## For Immediate Release

**Media Contact:** Emily Barge, 717-346-0849; [ebarge@centerfordairyexcellence.org](mailto:ebarge@centerfordairyexcellence.org)

April 9, 2024

### **THREE DAIRY PROFESSIONALS JOIN CENTER FOR DAIRY EXCELLENCE AND FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

*Dotterer, Kurtz and Lackey Recently Filled Open Board Positions*

**Harrisburg, Pa.** – The Center for Dairy Excellence and Dairy Excellence Foundation recently welcomed three dairy professionals to the organizations’ Board of Directors. The Center for Dairy Excellence Board of Directors guide the work of the non-profit 501c6 organization, which fosters collaboration across the industry and provides resources to strengthen Pennsylvania dairy farms. The Dairy Excellence Foundation Board of Directors guide the work of the 501c3 charitable organization focused on cultivating and empowering dairy’s next generation.

Scott Lackey, a dairy producer from Bradford County, Pa., was elected to the Center for Dairy Excellence Board during the December 2023 Board meeting. Lackey filled an open position, which was vacated by Jessica Slaymaker who reached the two-consecutive term maximum set by the organization’s bylaws.

Lackey is a dairy producer and partner at Sugar Branch Farms LLC, a 900-cow dairy. Lackey is responsible for the management of their dairy herd, including youngstock, and the dairy operation’s employees. Scott was born and raised on a dairy in Mercer County, Pa. and is a graduate of Indiana University of Pennsylvania with a bachelor’s degree in Environmental Planning. Before choosing to become a dairy producer, Lackey served seven years in the Army as an infantryman and completed a 14-month tour of duty in the Kosovo/Balkan War in 2002-2003. Lackey has also worked as an Agribusiness Insurance Underwriter with Westfield Group and as a Nutrient Management Planner with the Chester County Conservation District. Lackey is married to Amy Van Blarcom-Lackey and has three children.

“I was excited to join the Center for Dairy Excellence Board of Directors because I have witnessed the beneficial programs and educational opportunities the Center brings to the dairy industry,” Lackey said. “I joined the Board to learn more of what the Center does and to help promote the mission. I look forward to helping the cause of growing Pennsylvania dairy forward.”

Jared Kurtz of Kurtland Farms in Southern Berks County, Pa. also joined the Center for Dairy Excellence Board during the December 2023 Board meeting as the Professional Dairy Managers of Pennsylvania (PDMP) representative. Kurtz filled an open PDMP representative position, which was vacated by Diane Hartman of Berks County, Pa. Kurtz owns and operates Kurtland Farms with his parents. His family’s dairy operation is over 100 years old, and Kurtz is the fourth generation. They milk 330 cows and farm 325 acres, double cropping corn and triticale. Kurtz is married to his wife, Marla, and they have five children.

“I am not sure there is an organization that does more for the dairy industry within the state of Pennsylvania than the Center for Dairy Excellence. From the professional development resources to grant programs, and through their Foundation, the Center is constantly exploring ways to ensure the

long-term viability of the dairy industry within Pennsylvania,” Kurtz said. “I am looking forward to working with the entire team that has already built an incredibly strong organization to continue to empower PA dairy families and businesses to thrive.”

The Center’s Board of Directors must agree to serve a three-year term and may be re-elected for an additional term. The Board was developed to represent multiple aspects of the dairy industry, with seats for dairy farmers, allied industry professionals, marketing cooperative employees, veterinarians, retail representatives, processor representatives, and members from the Pennsylvania General Assembly.

The new member elected to the Dairy Excellence Foundation’s Board of Directors is Katie Dotterer, owner of AgvoKate, an educational and advocacy business. Dotterer filled an open position vacated by Marcia Opp of Washington, Pa. Dotterer’s passion for agriculture and the Spanish language was developed through her upbringing as part of the third generation on her family’s dairy farm in Central Pennsylvania. Dotterer has degrees in Business Management and Marketing, Secondary Education, and Spanish, and is certified in ESL: English as a Second Language. Recognizing the need to bridge an industry-wide communication and cultural gap, she developed online Spanish and ESL Courses tailored specifically to agriculture through her business, AgvoKate. Dotterer helps host on-farm tours and participates in public speaking engagements, news segments, and social media content that shares the story of agriculture and dairy farming.

“I am excited to collaborate with like-minded people to continue to provide resources to farmers and support youth development by joining the Foundation’s Board of Directors,” Dotterer added. “Doing so is instrumental to ensure the longevity of the PA dairy industry for current and future generations. I’m grateful to have this opportunity to give back to an industry that has given me and my family so much.”

More information about both organizations’ Board of Directors can be found at [www.centerfordairyexcellence.org](http://www.centerfordairyexcellence.org).

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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](http://centerfordairyexcellence.org).

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 [www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/our-foundation](http://www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/our-foundation).

**Center for Dairy Excellence ▼ 2301 North Cameron St., Harrisburg, PA 17110 ▼ 717-346-0849 ▼**

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