



For Immediate Release

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May 3, 2023

“ADOPT A COW” PROGRAM BRINGS AGRICULTURE TO THE CLASSROOM, OPENED FOR ENROLLMENT ON MAY 1

The Interactive Lesson Series Can Be Incorporated Into Both In-Person and Virtual Instruction

Harrisburg, Pa. – Discover Dairy’s “Adopt a Cow” program opened for enrollment for the 2023-24 school year on May 1. The free program, which impacted 1.2 million students worldwide last year, is a year-long, interactive learning opportunity that gives students an inside look at a dairy farm in the United States. Students participate in hands-on, educational activities featuring the calves on the farm and the dairy farmers who manage the operation.

Discover Dairy is a learning series managed by the Center for Dairy Excellence Foundation of Pennsylvania in partnership with American Dairy Association Northeast, American Dairy Association Indiana, Midwest Dairy, The Dairy Alliance, Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, Dairy Council of Arizona and Nevada, Dairy West, New England Dairy, Dairy Farmers of Washington, American Dairy Association Midwest, Dairy Council of Florida, United Dairy Industry of Michigan, Maine Dairy and Nutrition Council, and Oregon Dairy and Nutrition Council.

“The Adopt a Cow program continues to grow every year, and we love seeing the impact it’s making on students, classrooms and families across the globe,” said Brittany Snyder, Dairy Education Program Manager at the Dairy Excellence Foundation. “At the heart of the program is the ability for students to watch a baby calf grow in front of their eyes throughout the school year. It’s a memorable experience that allows students to build connections to their health, where their food comes from, the dairy farms in their community, and so much more.”

Each classroom that enrolls in the Adopt a Cow program is paired with a calf from a dairy farm. Teachers and students receive photos, video updates, and activity sheets throughout the school year that allow them to watch their calf grow. Through immersive, hands-on learning activities and free curriculum provided by Discover Dairy, students gain a deeper understanding of the dairy industry and where their food comes from. Several of the lessons in the curriculum follow Common CORE standards in Math, Reading, and Science.

The Adopt a Cow program also offers live virtual chats and farm tours. These chats allow students to talk directly with a dairy farmer, meet their calves, tour the farm, and ask questions about milk production.

“I would encourage other teachers to take advantage of all the Adopt a Cow resources, because it’s free to us as teachers. The program makes such great connections,” said Anna Breitbach, a first-grade teacher in South Florida. “Students learn to appreciate where their food comes from and are able to put a ‘face’ to the milk at the grocery store. It’s giving kids those opportunities to connect what they’re learning in school to what’s actually going on in the community.”

Last year, more than 40,000 elementary and middle school classrooms, home school families, library groups, and other organizations participated in the program. Classrooms from all 50 states participated in the program along with a total of 50 countries. Schools from both rural and urban areas can enroll, bringing dairy farming to life for students of all ages and demographics.

“Students can definitely relate to the fact that water is so important and food is so important to taking care of cows. The farmer who is taking care of the cows is also important. The Adopt a Cow program really sets a solid foundation for all that it takes to care for these animals. It’s really growing that appreciation,” said Jayne Black, a pre-school teacher from De Pere, Wisconsin. “I talk to the kids a lot about how we share the air that we breathe and how that’s important for cows, too. They need fresh, clean air and places to roam. I think they’re really getting the bigger picture.”

Teachers who enroll in the Adopt a Cow program will receive an introductory update in the fall with details about their calf. Classrooms will receive bi-monthly updates, including suggestions on components of the Discover Dairy curriculum that teachers can incorporate into their virtual or in-person lesson plans.

The sign-up period opened on May 1 and closes on September 15, 2023. To enroll in the Adopt a Cow program, visit www.discoverdairy.com/adopt or contact the Dairy Excellence Foundation at 717-346-0849 for more information about how to share this program with your community.

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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/.

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