



For Immediate Release

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

[Click here to download photos.](#)

June 26, 2026

FOUR STUDENTS BEGIN ON-FARM INTERNSHIPS ON PROGRESSIVE DAIRY FARMS

These Internships Provide Students With On-Farm Learning Experiences This Summer

Harrisburg, Pa. – Four college students who are pursuing careers in dairy production recently began on-farm summer internships on progressive dairy farms in Pennsylvania and New York. The Dairy Excellence Foundation, the Professional Dairy Managers of Pennsylvania, and the Pennsylvania Dairymen's Association created the program more than 10 years ago to provide hands-on, farm-based learning experiences to the next generation of dairy managers, producers, and professionals in Pennsylvania and beyond.

"Every year, we work to match students with dairy farms that align with their interests and career goals, push them out of their comfort zones, and give them hands-on experience in specific areas of dairy production throughout their internship," said Michelle Shearer, Workforce Development Manager at the Dairy Excellence Foundation. "Not only are these students building on skills they learned in the classroom, such as completing on-farm culturing for clinical mastitis treatment, but they are gaining direct experience on different types of operations and with different types of technology. We look forward to seeing what type of impact these interns make this summer."

For 10 to 12 weeks throughout the summer, on-farm interns gain hands-on experience and participate in virtual discussions with one another to network and share their experiences. The internships are designed to give students a full understanding of what it takes to run a successful dairy operation and provide dairy farms with the chance to mentor the next generation of dairy.

"When the internship program started, we saw the need to have students get out onto progressive dairy farms and apply the classroom skills they were acquiring. We also thought it would be a great way to enhance the labor pool for future employees we would need on our farms," said Walt Moore of Walmoore Holsteins, a PDMP member and former Dairy Excellence Foundation Board member who is hosting an on-farm intern this summer. "Through the program, the interns infuse a sense of enthusiasm to their host farms, and they bring their own unique interests and skills as well."

During the internship, students will conduct a research project that connects to their career interests and benefits their dairy farm's operation. After researching and analyzing various topics, they will present their findings in August at the conclusion of the program.

"I am so grateful and blessed to have the opportunity as an On-Farm Intern. It has allowed me to grow in confidence and gain greater knowledge and connections with those in the dairy industry," shared Malayna Barnhart who is interning at Smith-Ziegler Farm and Hideaway Dairy.

Congratulations to the following interns who are participating in the program this summer:

- Malayna Barnhart – Interning at Smith-Ziegler Farm and Hideaway Dairy in Lebanon, PA
- Eliana Koehler – Interning at Walmoore Holsteins in West Grove, PA
- Ainsley Sellers – Interning at Oakfield Corners Dairy in Oakfield, NY
- Jacob VanDoren – Interning at Zugstead Farm in Mifflintown, PA

"To me, being an On-Farm Intern is an incredible opportunity to broaden my skills. The skills I am learning here at Zugstead Farm are going to play a crucial role in my future in the dairy industry," shared Jacob VanDoren who is interning at Zugstead Farm.

Students who are accepted into the program must attend a Pennsylvania university, be a Pennsylvania resident attending an out-of-state school, or be a recently graduated Pennsylvania resident with an interest in dairy production. Host farms may be located within or outside of Pennsylvania, but producers must agree to provide the intern with exposure to all aspects of a successful, progressive dairy operation.

Online applications for host farms and on-farm interns will open on September 1 for the summer of 2027. To learn more, visit centerfordairyexcellence.org/internship or contact Michelle Shearer at 717-788-0298 or by email at mshearer@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 centerfordairyexcellence.org/our-foundation/.

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 Pennsylvania Dairymen's Association is the oldest dairy group in Pennsylvania. The Dairymen's Milkshake is the top-selling food item at the Food Court. The Pennsylvania Dairymen's Association has been supporting "Fill a Glass with Hope®" with agriculture partners, Feeding PA, American Dairy Association North East, corporate partners and food banks since 2015. Over the past three years, the PA Dairymen have donated more than \$1.4 million to programs including The Calving Corner; agricultural and educational projects; initiatives and scholarships; the Fill A Glass with Hope® fresh milk campaign for neighbors in need; the Choose PA Dairy consumer education and awareness campaign; the PA Farm Bureau Mobile Ag Education Lab that travels to schools; and the PA Dairy Princess and Promotion Program. Their philanthropic efforts build a brighter future for all Pennsylvanians. For more information, visit www.padairymens.com.

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

▼ 717-346-0849 ▼

www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/our-foundation/