



For Immediate Release

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

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CENTER FOR DAIRY EXCELLENCE HIRES NEW EMPLOYEE AND SUMMER INTERN *Mason-Faith and Hoover Join the Center's Team Supporting the Dairy Industry*

Harrisburg, Pa. – The Center for Dairy Excellence has named Valerie Mason-Faith as the Risk Education Program Manager to help Pennsylvania's dairy farm families better understand the risks that can affect their business and what they can do to protect their operation against those risks. The Center also named Hannah Hoover, a rising senior at Delaware Valley University, as the 2024 education and communications intern. They join a team of employees who provide resources and support to Pennsylvania dairy farms and develop dairy education programming for students of all ages.

Mason-Faith graduated from the University of Maryland with a Bachelor's degree in agricultural science and technology and a Master's degree in business management. She brings 5+ years of experience in agricultural program coordination and management, previously working at both Lanco-Pennland Dairy Cooperative and Washington County, Maryland Farm Service Agency

"Valerie brings a deep understanding of risk management to her position, having managed dairy programs, including the Dairy Margin Coverage Program, for the Washington County Farm Service Agency office," said Jayne Sebright, Executive Director of the Center for Dairy Excellence. "She also has a passion for continual learning and for helping dairy farm families thrive which will be beneficial in her role with the Center."

Mason-Faith grew up raising and showing beef cattle and meat goats, and she has been involved in communicating with dairy producers in her previous roles.

"I am incredibly passionate about doing meaningful and impactful work that truly makes a difference in the agricultural community. Joining the Center's dedicated team to serve Pennsylvania dairy farmers aligns perfectly with my values," Mason-Faith shared. "I am excited to be part of this purpose-driven organization and help provide valuable resources and programming to the dairy industry."

Hannah Hoover is a rising senior at Delaware Valley University where she studies dairy science. She grew up showing in her county's 4-H Fair and began working at Delaware Valley

University's dairy farm her freshman year. She is an active member of Dairy Society, A-Day, Farm Bureau, and Dairy Challenge at Delaware Valley University.

"Hannah has great ideas, tremendous energy, and a passion for problem solving that she brings to this intern experience," Sebright said. "These attributes along with her understanding and background in dairy make her a great addition to the team this summer."

Hoover plans to graduate from college in December 2024. She currently works on a dairy farm in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.

"I am incredibly excited for the opportunity to intern at the Center this summer. Having the opportunity to learn from professionals in the industry and build connections over the course of the summer is amazing," Hoover shared. "This is my first job in the industry off the farm, and I am excited to learn new skills from this team. They are so knowledgeable about what they do and how they contribute to the industry."

In addition to Mason-Faith and Hoover, eight other individuals serve the Center and the Foundation. Staff members include Sebright; Melissa Anderson, dairy programs and operations manager; Emily Barge, communications and marketing manager; Allen Hess, customer relations specialist; LeeAnn McLaughlin, dairy policy and industry relations manager; Karen Purnell, accounting manager; Michelle Shearer, workforce development manager; and Brittany Snyder, dairy education program manager. Dr. Charlie Gardner and Dr. Brian Reed also serve as contractors for the Center, supporting dairy transition and transformation teams coordinated through the Center.

For more information about the Center, the Foundation and its staff, visit 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.