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ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS TOUR U.S. DAIRY FARMS THROUGH FIELD TRIP GRANTS

A Total of 72 Grants Were Awarded to Classrooms Who Planned Field Trips to Dairy Farms

Harrisburg, Pa. – A group of more than 70 elementary and middle school teachers from Pennsylvania and beyond provided their students with hands-on learning experiences at local dairy farms this spring. The teachers, who are enrolled in the Dairy Excellence Foundation’s Discover Dairy program, received dairy farm field trip grants through the Dairy Excellence Foundation, PA Dairymen’s Association, Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, and New England Dairy. The grants, which amounted to more than \$30,000, allowed more than 2,600 students to tour dairy farms in their community and talk firsthand with dairy farmers and their families.

During the farm tours, students discovered how farmers care for their cows, conserve their natural resources, and produce nutritious dairy products. Teachers also used the farm tour field trip as an opportunity to build connections to their educational curriculum and local community.

“I have never seen my class so engaged and wanting to learn as much as they did. Our dairy farm was so efficient in their tour and answered all of my students’ questions. The hands-on experience with the calves is what my students are still talking about. We also walked to the milking parlor where the kids were able to see how the Holsteins were milked, we were able to see where the milk went, where it was tested and loaded on a truck,” said Katelynn, one agriculture teacher who received the farm tour field trip grant. “I am so thankful to have had this opportunity with my students. This is definitely one field trip I feel my students will always remember.”

For dairy farmers who open their doors to host students and teachers, the farm tour field trips allow them to share how dairy products are produced on the farm and eventually arrive at the grocery store—strengthening their connections with future consumers and the community at large.

“My students absolutely loved this trip and learned so much about dairy farms, the milking process and all about cows! The family farmers were knowledgeable, extremely friendly and hands-on in our learning. They were able to answer all of the questions the students asked and made the experience comfortable, safe and exciting,” shared Erika, another teacher who received the grant.

Funds from the dairy farm field trip grants can assist teachers in paying for busing, farm tours, lunch, or dairy treats. Any classroom currently enrolled in the Discover Dairy program is eligible to apply, with several grants designated specifically for Pennsylvania and Wisconsin classrooms.

“Our students and teachers learned about robotic milking, farm safety, the inner workings of a cow’s stomach, and the many careers influenced by agriculture. We even tasted ice cream made by college

students from the milk on the farm,” said Kris, a fourth-grade teacher and grant recipient. “Thank you for supplying the funds that made this trip possible for our fourth-grade students and staff.”

Discover Dairy, managed by the Dairy Excellence Foundation, is an engaging, interactive, multi-level educational series that shows upper elementary and middle school students where milk comes from and how dairy farmers contribute to our communities.

“These dairy farm field trips give students the opportunity to get on the farm and expand on what they’ve learned through their Discover Dairy lessons and activities. Nothing is more exciting and memorable than receiving an up-close, inside look at a dairy operation,” said Brittany Snyder, Dairy Education Program Manager at the Dairy Excellence Foundation. “Congratulations to these teachers for receiving grants that could help them plan hands-on learning experiences on local farms.”

Applications for upcoming dairy farm field trip grants will be available on September 1, 2023. Learn more about the program at www.discoverdairy.com/take-trip-dairy-farm. For more information, contact Brittany Snyder at bsnyder@centerfordairyexcellence.org or call 717-346-0849.

Discover Dairy is an educational 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 Mideast, Dairy Council of Florida, United Dairy Industry of Michigan, Maine Dairy and Nutrition Council, and Oregon Dairy and Nutrition Council.

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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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