



For Immediate Release

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DAIRY LEADERS OF TOMORROW PROGRAM IMPACTS 40,000+ STUDENTS, FREE COURSES AND CURRICULUM AVAILABLE

The Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow Program is Free for High School Teachers and Students

Harrisburg, Pa. – To prepare high school students to pursue careers in the dairy industry, the Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow (DLT) program offers online courses and classroom curriculum, on-farm experience opportunities, and annual scholarships for both educators and students. Managed through the Dairy Excellence Foundation, the program is free for educators and students thanks to donors and partners. Last school year, a total of more than 40,649 high school students were impacted by the DLT program. Teachers can register for the free program this school year at www.dairyleadersoftomorrow.com.

“Last year we worked with close to 800 high school educators from Pennsylvania and across the United States to help prepare high school students for future careers in the dairy industry,” said Michelle Shearer, Workforce Development Manager at the Dairy Excellence Foundation. “Whether students grew up on a dairy farm or are discovering their passion for agriculture for the first time, the DLT courses are comprehensive, engaging and interactive. Our hands-on educational experiences take it a step further. These experiences allow students and teachers to step foot on a working dairy farm to make connections and explore different career options.”

The DLT curriculum includes four main courses that teachers can incorporate into their classroom instruction or assign to students to complete independently. The courses include:

- **Introduction to Dairy** – By the end of this course, students will be able to describe the economic impact of the dairy industry, know historic events that have impacted the industry, identify different types of housing facilities as well as have a basic understanding of marketing dairy products.
- **Introduction to Dairy Herd Management** – This course provides a broad overview of how to manage a dairy herd. By the end of this course, students will be able to identify important feed types for a cow’s diet, how to interpret DHIA records, and recognize diseases by symptoms and how to treat them.
- **Introduction to Dairy Business Management** – This course provides a broad overview of how to manage a dairy business. By the end of this course, students will be able to perform

a SWOT analysis, understand the factors that influence a farm's profitability, and properly write a business plan.

- **Introduction to Dairy Technologies** – This lesson provides a broad overview of the various technologies our dairy farms use today. By the end of this course, students will be able to identify and explain several types of technologies that farmers are utilizing in their day-to-day operations to enhance the care they provide for their animals.

Lesson plans and associated resources can be accessed online and downloaded at no cost once educators or students complete the DLT registration. Certificates of Achievement are awarded in Introduction to Dairy, Dairy Herd Management, Dairy Business Management, and Dairy Technologies to students who receive a minimum of 80% on all lesson quizzes and the end of course examinations.

"I like the DLT curriculum. I think it's simple to use, it's simple to follow, and it's just good information that matches a lot of what we're teaching here. It works nicely for us, and students get a completion certificate at the end of the DLT courses," shared Beth Evangelista, an agriculture teacher and DLT educator from Massachusetts. "Whether or not they choose to go into agriculture or dairy, I think it's extremely important to understand how much money is actually being generated by the agriculture industry – and how much it supports the local economy and how important it actually is to them."

Student scholarship opportunities and on-farm experiences, including Farm Tour days and hands-on Exploration Experiences, are also available throughout the school year. These on-farm events give students direct exposure to the wide range of careers in the dairy industry, often solidifying their career goals or narrowing down the career path they want to pursue.

"I went on the DLT dairy farm tour field trip last year. At the time, I was trying to decide whether I really wanted to do animal science in the future or if I wanted to transfer to Healthcare Pathways instead. I was actually leaning more towards the Healthcare Pathways option at the time. Once I talked to some of the vet techs and veterinarians [at the event], and once I saw the area that surrounded me, I pictured that scene 20 years in the future to see if that was what I wanted to do," shared Madison, a high schooler and participant in the DLT program. "I fell in love with animal science for a second time on that trip, and it helped reaffirm my love for the field of animal science and veterinary medicine."

High school students who successfully complete all four Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow courses may also be eligible to earn college credits through two articulation agreements with colleges and universities. To dive deeper and gain foundational knowledge in the dairy industry, DLT students can complete the Dairy Laborer Pre-Apprenticeship Program as well.

"I really like working independently on topics I'm passionate about. I liked how the DLT courses were self-paced. It helped me gain a lot of credits for just starting out in college. I'm currently a semester ahead as far as I'm aware," shared Natasha Maddox, a student at Delaware Valley University who benefited from the articulation agreement. "Even though I already had a strong foundation with my own livestock, DLT helped me have a better understanding to bring over to what I want to do after college."

To sign up for the Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow program this school year or share with an agriculture educator you know, visit www.dairyleadertomorrow.com. If you have questions about the program, contact Michelle Shearer at mshearer@centerfordairyexcellence.org or by phone at 570-768-8316.

Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow is a program managed by the Dairy Excellence Foundation and designed specifically to prepare high school students to work in the dairy industry. To learn more about how you can support this scholarship fund or donate to provide DLT Exploration Experiences and Farm Tours to more students, visit www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/donate.

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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/.

Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow (DLT) is a program designed specifically to prepare high school students to work in the dairy industry. A three-part model program, Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow offers classroom instruction, on-farm experiences and scholarship opportunities. The DLT curriculum includes four main courses: Introduction to Dairy, Introduction to Dairy Herd Management, Introduction to Dairy Business Management, and Introduction to Dairy Technologies. The program is managed by the Center for Dairy Excellence Foundation of Pennsylvania, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax deductible organization that is Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) approved. Learn more about the program at www.dairyleadertomorrow.com.

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