



For Immediate Release

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FREE COURSES AND CURRICULUM AVAILABLE FOR HIGH SCHOOL AGRICULTURE TEACHERS

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

Harrisburg, Pa. – To help high school agriculture teachers expand on their curriculum with dairy-focused lessons, the [Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow \(DLT\) program](#) is designed specifically to prepare high school students to pursue careers in the dairy industry. Using a three-part model, the program offers online courses and classroom curriculum, on-farm experience opportunities, and annual scholarships for both educators and students. A total of more than 25,000 high school students have been impacted by the DLT program to date. Teachers can register for the free program this school year at www.dairyleadersoftomorrow.com.

“Last year we worked with more than 600 high school educators from Pennsylvania and beyond to help prepare high school students for future careers in the dairy industry, and we’re looking forward to the learning opportunities we have planned for this school year,” said Michelle Shearer, Workforce Development Manager at the Dairy Excellence Foundation. “Whether students grew up on a dairy farm or are just discovering their passion for agriculture, the Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow courses are comprehensive, engaging and interactive. Our hands-on educational experiences take it a step further and allow students and teachers to step foot on a working dairy farm to explore the exciting career opportunities available to them.”

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 to their animals.

"I made the DLT Dairy Business Management course independent work for my students. I found it nice to use for independent study students. I had a student who wanted to go into the dairy industry, and I thought it would be a great experience for him to get the certification. It's hands-free for me as a teacher, and as he worked through the course, I could look at his progress. He enjoyed it, and overall, students learn a lot from the program," said Stephanie Balmer, a DLT educator and high school agriculture teacher from Solanco High School in Lancaster County, PA. "The DLT program also gives me great opportunities to take students out on the farm. Once you take them to the farm, it's an 'aha' moment where they can connect things and put their education to work."

Lesson plans and associated resources can be accessed online and downloaded at no cost once educators or students complete the DLT registration. Industry-recognized certificates in both Dairy Herd Management and Dairy Business Management are available to students who receive a minimum of 80% on certificate examinations.

"Before I went through the DLT program, I thought I knew pretty much everything about the dairy industry. I was wrong. I did not know anything about the financial or management practices that go into running a dairy farm. I learned really how vast the industry is," said Calvin Dechow, a freshman studying animal science at The Pennsylvania State University and a previous DLT participant. "The DLT program had lessons about reproduction and genetics, and taught me about career opportunities in the genetics side of dairy which made me want to pursue a career in that field."

Scholarship opportunities and on-farm experiences, including a hands-on Exploration Experience and annual Farm Tour, are also available throughout the school year. This year’s Exploration Experience is scheduled for October 13 at Penn State University and will explore veterinary science with hands-on exercises and labs. This year’s Farm Tour will take place in Chester County on October 20 and give students exposure to the wide range of careers in the dairy industry.

To sign up for the Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow program this school year, 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. Learn more at www.dairyleadersoftomorrow.com.

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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.dairyleadersoftomorrow.com.

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