



# Hand in Hand with the Next Generation of Dairy



For those of us in dairy, it's hard to imagine not knowing where your milk comes from. But as our generations become more removed from agriculture, most kids think milk and dairy foods come from a refrigerator and have no idea the care and commitment dairy farm families and others in the value chain put into bringing them to the marketplace. With Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) standards now prioritized in our educational systems, dairy and educational concepts go **hand in hand**. Through that connection, we can open a whole new world to these students by sharing how dairy farms care for their cows, the land, and the products they produce. We can also inspire these students to explore the many different careers that are part of the dairy industry. With more than 1.8 million students reached worldwide, that is what our Foundation programs are doing through every experience we provide for these students to learn about dairy. Adopt a Cow and Discover Dairy programs inspire connections, while the Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow program cultivates a passion for working in dairy. Our scholarships and internships support students in their journey along the way. From the farmers of today to the farmers of tomorrow, the Foundation works to foster collaboration, legacy, and meaningful dairy education opportunities by working hand in hand with students, farmers and teachers.

—Jayne Sebright, Executive Director



It has been exciting and empowering to watch the Dairy Excellence Foundation build collaboration across the dairy industry. The Foundation team not only works hand in hand with teachers, industry partners and the community, but they give dairy farmers the opportunity to share their story and inspire the next generation of advocates and consumers for dairy. Take Gavin, for example. You'll meet him as you look through this annual summary. He grew up in the suburbs with little to no agriculture experience. After completing an on-farm internship on a 1,000 cow PA dairy operation, the supportive, purpose-driven dairy farmers that Gavin worked alongside helped solidify his desire to find a career in the dairy industry. You'll also meet Lynne, a cafeteria director from Oregon. After incorporating the Adopt a Cow program into her lunch programs, she has noticed more kids wanting to drink milk. It's these stories, and these moments of excitement and clarity, that are part of a bigger legacy that the Dairy Excellence Foundation is helping to build for the dairy industry. I encourage you, as supporters of the Dairy Excellence Foundation, to understand that our outreach efforts are not possible without your generous donations. As you read through this annual report, please know that your contributions are deeply appreciated. We hope you will continue to support us and give again this year to the Foundation.

—Justin Potts, Chairman of the Board of Directors

## MISSION

We build and invest in programs that cultivate and inspire the next generation of producers, consumers and advocates for the dairy industry.

## VISION

To empower the next generation of the dairy industry.

## OUR VALUES

Legacy | Education | Collaboration | Integrity | Creativity



# Today's Donors & Tomorrow's Dairy Workforce

Thanks to the ongoing support of our donors and partners, the Dairy Excellence Foundation not only exposes school-age children to dairy farming for the first time, but we help young professionals like Shara live out their dreams of finding meaningful careers in the dairy industry. With a donor base of 238 generous individuals, many of these donors are today's dairy farm families who want to invest in the dairy producers of tomorrow.



*"This is one of the 'must attend' events of the year, and it supports a great cause. It's a great event to meet with other folks that have similar interests in supporting our agricultural community, and specifically, the Dairy Excellence Foundation. It's a very enjoyable evening with great activities! Of course, the food is excellent as well."*

—Frank Campbell who regularly attends the "A Toast to Dairy" fundraiser

## DONOR ENGAGEMENT AND GROWTH:

- EITC Funds: \$64,220 (24% increase)
- Donor Retention Rate: 67 percent
- 238 total donors
- 375 people attended our annual "Toast to Dairy" fundraiser (25% increase in attendance)



## MEET SHARA,

**a Previous On-Farm Intern Who Found Lifelong Career at the Farm Level**

Where are students now? For young professionals like Shara, they are living out their dreams in the dairy industry.

*"I knew a lot of the farmers in the area [where I grew up], so I wanted to do something different and meet new people through the On-Farm Internship program. I actually worked on two different dairies up in New York that were bigger, really progressive, and technologically advanced and efficient. I learned a lot of hands-on skills through the internship as far as IV-ing cows and breeding cows, but you really don't get good at it until you're doing it every single day. **Now, I'm a herd manager** and we're big enough that I have the opportunity to do those things every day.*

*My role is everything related to health and reproduction of the cows. I treat sick cows, watch transition cows, assist in calvings and breed. Seeing a cow and knowing her life story, or where she's at in her lactation, is pretty rewarding."*

—Shara Allman, full-time herd manager at S&A Kreider and Sons, a Lancaster County dairy farm

Scan here to see how the Foundation was part of her career journey







## Dairy Education Programs & “Aha” Moments for Elementary and Middle School Students

The Discover Dairy and Adopt a Cow programs continue to grow each year by introducing elementary and middle school students to agriculture and dairy farming in creative, memorable ways. The programs build connections to different subject areas and lead to several “aha” moments that stay with students for a lifetime. Here are some of those moments:

**Agriculture could be a career option.** *“We live in a rural area. We have a high poverty rate, and we’re a title one school. Dairy farming is a new thing for a lot of the kids, but it’s not out of the realm of possibilities for professions they could end up choosing. Having that knowledge about these career opportunities, developing the appreciation for where their food comes from, and seeing how technology has found its way into this profession, those pieces are all very important to students.”*  
–Lacey, fifth-grade teacher

**Dairy farmers are real people.** *“It’s really important for kids to see value in our agriculture community and those who work in it – for them to make real connections with who those people are and what they’re doing. The virtual farm tours through the Adopt a Cow program helped them see that these are real people. This program is something students really gravitate toward and get excited about.”*

–Amy, an elementary teacher

**Their food comes from farms in their community.** *“I started using the Adopt a Cow program because it’s really important for kids to make that connection [to where their food comes from]. I have kids who still think chocolate milk comes from chocolate cows and don’t understand that yogurt is a dairy product. From the truck drivers to the processors and the grocery store, all of those components are important to help students understand the economy, too.”*

–Julie, a sixth-grade teacher

Scan here to see some of these  
“aha” moments in action



### ADOPT A COW PROGRAM GROWTH:

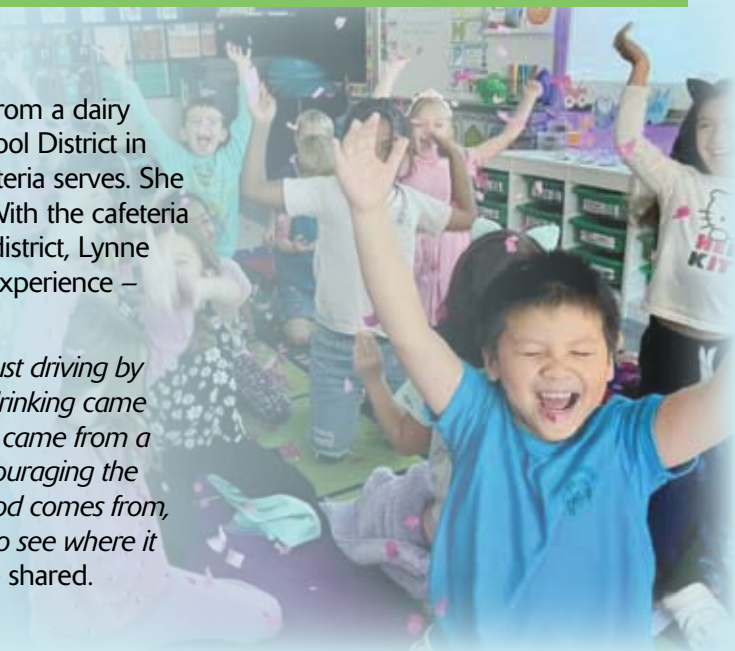
- **Participating Classrooms: 39,000**
- **Virtual live chats with dairy farmers: 27,631 views**
- **Classrooms from all 50 states and 41 countries participated**
- **Spanish-speaking classrooms registered: 157**

### MEET LYNNE,

a Nutrition Director in an Oregon School Cafeteria

What does it look like when an entire school cafeteria adopts a calf from a dairy farm? For Lynne Shore, Nutrition Services Director at Willamina School District in Oregon, she made this a reality for the 800 students (K-12) her cafeteria serves. She decided to participate in Discover Dairy’s “Adopt a Cow” program. With the cafeteria being a central point between all the schools in the Oregon school district, Lynne enjoys adding bursts of education and fun into the students’ lunch experience – leading to nutrition-based learning moments with students.

*“I don’t think kids have much experience with dairy farms other than just driving by them. They love this program. I’ve had kids ask if the milk they were drinking came from our dairy cow. I had another student who had no idea milk even came from a cow. They are asking good questions. I think the program is really encouraging the kids to drink milk. It’s always important for kids to know where their food comes from, but especially milk and foods they see every day. It’s really important to see where it comes from and the process. It has been really fun for the kids,”* Lynne shared.





# Dairy Farmers & Stories That Matter to Consumers



Dairy farming and storytelling go hand in hand, because dairy producers have a very powerful story to share with consumers. From farm tour field trip grants through the Discover Dairy program to the Calving Corner “live birthing center” at the PA Farm Show, the Dairy Excellence Foundation helps spark connection – giving the next generation of students the opportunity to learn directly from dairy farmers.

## CALVING CORNER EXHIBIT IMPACT:

**100,000+ people reached through the Calving Corner**

This exhibit allows the dairy industry to share its story with the general public each year.

*“I really love the Calving Corner, and it’s a big part of my family tradition to attend. I appreciate having insight into the farms where my food comes from. I know my 18-year-old son is more thoughtful about his meat and dairy choices from visiting the exhibit. We have had great conversations with farmers and veterinarians to learn more about how they care for their animals.”*

—Calving Corner visitor

## DISCOVER DAIRY PROGRAM GROWTH:

- Teachers and ag advocates enrolled in Discover Dairy: 67,500
- Views on Discover Dairy website: 1.4+ million
- Students impacted through Discover Dairy: 255,000
- Funds awarded through Farm Tour Field Trip Grants: \$29,250
- Discover Dairy app downloads: 49,000+



Scan here to view highlights from the exhibit

## MEET TANYA,

**a Teacher Who Introduced Students to PA Dairy Farm**

How do students react when they set foot on a dairy farm for the first time? Thanks to farm tour field trip grants from Discover Dairy, elementary and middle school students have the chance to meet dairy farmers in their community and understand more about how they care for their animals and land to produce nutritious products.

*“We visited a working dairy farm in Pennsylvania, Walmoore Holsteins. I bought a read-aloud story [about dairy farms], and we made our own butter. We loved all of the opportunities this grant afforded us,” said Tanya, a fourth-grade teacher from PA.*

*“The grant provided a wonderful opportunity for my pre-k students and their families. They had a lot of great questions and learned about what it takes to run a dairy farm. We all left with a greater appreciation for the hard work and dedication that goes into putting dairy products onto grocery store shelves,” shared Martha, a pre-kindergarten teacher from Maine.*





# Hands-On Dairy Learning Opportunities & Preparation for Meaningful Careers



The Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow program is designed to help high school students explore the dairy industry through four relevant courses and direct, on-farm learning experiences. Thanks to the support of donors and contributors, the Foundation helped offer solidarity and support to agriculture teachers at the start of the school year with a new, back-to-school box campaign.



## DAIRY LEADERS OF TOMORROW PROGRAM GROWTH:

- Educators enrolled in DLT: 742
- Students impacted through DLT: 32,929
- 88 students attended DLT Farm Tours
- 29 students attended hands-on Exploration Experiences
- Program is in 47 states



## BACK-TO-SCHOOL BOXES AND SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS:

**More than 250 boxes sent to teachers in PA and beyond**

*"One of the major initiatives for the Lancaster County Ag Council is ag education, especially educating our youth. With that in mind, the ag educators in Lancaster County play a very important role in the agricultural education process of Lancaster County youth. The teachers were very appreciative of the thoughtfulness of all involved in providing this recognition to them. I have heard from many who expressed how opening the box eased some anxiety when preparing for the new school year – not to mention the practicality of several items enclosed in the box. Lancaster County Agriculture Council is happy to participate in this program."*

—Greg Kirkham, Executive Director of the Lancaster County Agriculture Council, one of the sponsors for the boxes.



## MEET SKYLAR,

### A High School Student Who Gets Firsthand Look at Dairy Technology

If a student has a passion for technology and engineering, how can they build on those interest areas to find a career path in agriculture? For Skylar Peiffer, a high school student who participated in the Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow program during her high school career, the program's Exploration Experience allowed her to tour a dairy operation with robotic milking technology and opened her eyes to what a career in dairy robotics might look like.

*"I've been looking into dairy technology with agriculture, engineering and all these robotics. This Exploration Experience was an opportunity for me to come and see a farm with robotics. It definitely sparked my interest. I live on a dairy farm, but I definitely wanted to broaden my horizons and see the future that agriculture is leading into," Skylar shared.*



Scan here to hear what Skylar had to say







## Internship and Scholarship Opportunities & New Perspective for Young Dairy Professionals

From internships and scholarships to professional development opportunities, the Dairy Excellence Foundation is committed to supporting young dairy professionals once they graduate from high school. We help students gain new perspective on different types of farms, build relationships and connections across the dairy industry, and ease the financial burden of continuing their education. Here's some of the perspective these young people gained:



*"I found it beneficial to hear from people in a similar situation as I'm in, graduating from college and making a return to the dairy. Transition from generation to generation is difficult, and there is no correct way to go about it that will work for everyone. Regardless of the position you're in, the Dairy Summit and Young Dairy Professionals Scholarship is invested in your learning and understanding of the dairy industry."*

—Roy Hissong of Mercer-Vu Farms who received the Young Professionals Scholarship

### YOUNG DAIRY PROFESSIONALS SUPPORT:

- \$42,000 given to scholarship recipients thanks to partners
- 9 students completed on-farm internships
- 32 students received Young Professionals Scholarships to attend PA Dairy Summit



*"I've known that I really like dairy, but this [internship] has really solidified that. I think dairy foods are one of the most interesting aspects of food science. There are a lot of regulations around it, but I that's really neat that the milk that we get and the dairy products we buy are some of the safest foods out there. That has been cool to see firsthand."*

—Darcy Heltzel who completed an on-farm internship

*"For me, receiving this scholarship means that those dairy farmers whom I looked up to when I was younger believe and support me in my future career. I am extremely proud and honored."*

—Sarah Diehl, a Student Leader Scholarship recipient

### MEET GAVIN,

#### An On-Farm Intern Who Solidified His Career Path in Dairy

If students didn't grow up on a dairy farm, how can they solidify that a career in agriculture is definitely the path they want to pursue? On-Farm Internships take what students like Gavin Brophy are learning in college classes to the next level through hands-on skill-building and direct interaction with progressive dairy farmers.

*"I was using [this internship] as a defining moment. Do I want to pursue a career with large animals or do I go somewhere else? I think it really cemented that I want to stay in the dairy industry. It is so interesting and rewarding. I learned so many basic skills through this internship such as working with people and building a team. Working in an environment like this can help you grow a lot as a person," Gavin said.*



Scan here to meet all 9 on-farm interns





## Allocation of Expenses and Funding Sources

### CONTRIBUTIONS 2023-24

Individual and Farm Donations	\$ 297,652
Grant and Foundation Donations	\$ 206,695
EITC Donations	\$ 64,220
Corporate Donations	\$ 450,698
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,019,266</b>

(The financial statements are unaudited)

### Dairy Excellence Foundation Board Members

Justin Potts, Hershey, Pa. — *Chairman*

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### EXPENSES 2023-24

Youth Development and DLT	\$ 161,215
Consumer Education and Discover Dairy	\$ 415,476
Calving Corner	\$ 127,545
Toast to Dairy	\$ 41,071
Farm Safety	\$ 3,495
Administration and Operations	\$ 14,822
Fundraising	\$ 153,300
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$916,924</b>

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inspire the next  
generation



### 2023-24 Foundation Contributors

#### Gold Level:

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Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin  
Dairy Farms of Washington  
Friends of the PA Farm Show Foundation  
Horizon Farm Credit  
Midwest Dairy Association  
New England Dairy Food Council  
PA Dairymen's Association  
The Dairy Alliance

#### Silver Level:

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#### Bronze Level:

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Kitchen Table Consultants & Taste Profit Marketing  
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Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers  
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