



For Immediate Release

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

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HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS EXPLORE THE FOOD SCIENCE INDUSTRY

Students Visited The Pennsylvania State University Food Science Department During the Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow Exploration Experience



Harrisburg, Pa. – The Center for Dairy Excellence Foundation of Pennsylvania and The Pennsylvania State University Food Science Department recently partnered to host the Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow Exploration Experience, which was an interactive workshop for high school students who are interested in dairy and food science careers, at the Food Science buildings at University Park, Pa.

During the Exploration Experience workshop, a group of 11 students learned about all spectrums of food science. Through a sensory evaluation activity, students learned how to evaluate cheddar cheese for quality attributes such as appearance, aroma, flavor, body and texture. They also participated in a hands-on food processing activity where they learned how to make ice cream in Penn State’s Wet Pilot Plant.

“When I learned about the Exploration Experience, I knew it was a natural fit for [my student] who has an interest in food science,” said Sherisa Nailor, an agriculture teacher at Big Spring High School in Cumberland County. “I thought it would be a chance for her to see different aspects of the industry that she might not have thought about before. From a hands-on perspective, this experience was awesome.”

Students had the opportunity to tour the Berkey Creamery and Food Science Department and learned about summer work experiences, independent research, international experiences, and scholarship opportunities available through Penn State’s Food Science Department. They also discussed potential career paths and industries available within the food science field.

“One of our main focuses is building awareness about what food science is,” said Dr. Chris Sigler, assistant food science professor at The Pennsylvania State University. “In our department, students get a well-rounded background in chemistry, biology, and microbiology. We have world-class facilities, and it’s also a very small, family atmosphere. At the end of the day, we like to treat our students as individuals, not as statistics or faces in the crowd.”

The Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow Exploration Experience was supported through the Dairy Excellence Foundation. The workshop was an extension of the Foundation’s Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow program, which is designed for high school students who are interested in receiving hands-on experience and industry-based certifications in dairy.

“It’s one thing to get a tour of a facility or a lecture from a professor, but having the opportunity to taste and experience food science firsthand is what the Exploration Experiences are all about,” said Brittany Haag, Dairy Education Program Manager at the Center for Dairy Excellence. “These experiences give high school students a day to immerse themselves into their interested field of study and learn from world-class professionals about how to be successful in their desired careers.”

Dairy Leaders of Tomorrow is a three-part model program, offering classroom instruction, on-farm experiences and scholarship opportunities to high school students. The program also provides curriculum and industry certifications in dairy herd management and dairy business management. Visit dairyleadersoftomorrow.com for more information.

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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/.

Center for Dairy Excellence Foundation ▼ 2301 North Cameron St., Harrisburg, PA 17110 ▼ 717-346-0849 ▼

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