



CENTER FOR
DairyEXCELLENCE

For Immediate Release

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CENTER FOR DAIRY EXCELLENCE AWARDS \$185,000 TO HELP DAIRY PRODUCERS ENHANCE EFFICIENCY AND COW COMFORT

The Dairy Excellence Grants Were Awarded to 37 Dairy Producers From 23 PA Counties

Harrisburg, Pa. – The Center for Dairy Excellence recently awarded a collective total of \$185,000 to 37 Pennsylvania dairy producers through the latest round of the Dairy Excellence Grant program. Leveraging funds provided through the PA Dairymen’s Association and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, this investment from Ag Excellence has supported a collective reinvestment of more than \$4,619,442 into Pennsylvania dairy farms across all the funded projects to date. The grants are designed to support dairy farm improvement projects that enhance efficiency and cow comfort.

“Over the past few years, this grant program has helped hundreds of Pennsylvania dairy producers advance their operations, drive efficiency, and commit to cow comfort,” said Melissa Anderson, Dairy Programs and Operations Manager. “These funds continue to spur investments and improvements at the farm level, so dairy producers can achieve their goals, care for their herds, and maintain a profitable family business.”

Grant recipients are planning to use the funds to invest in activity monitors for their herd, convert to group calf housing facilities, pursue new feed mixing technology, resurface barn and parlor holding pen floors, remodel free stalls, and enhance cow comfort with new fans, curtains and mattresses. Several producers also plan to use the grant funds to help build a new transition barn, invest in new milking technology, and install LED lighting.

“Through these funds, we have been able to improve the air flow in two of our barns. We see much less pneumonia now in our newly weaned calves where we installed overhead fans. We also added box fans to a section of our barn that houses a group of milking cows. Although the roof is high, the fans have added a lot to the airflow. The cows’ health has improved, and they therefore produce more milk. We are thankful for the Center to come alongside us financially to allow us to upgrade our facilities,” shared Donna Bushong of Bushong Farms LLC, a previous grant recipient.

During this seventh round of funding, a total of more than 9,298 Pennsylvania dairy cows will be impacted by the improvement projects. Grant recipients’ herd sizes range from approximately 40 cows to 2,150 cows. The dairy producers who received the grants represent a total of 23 counties, including:

- Beaver
- Berks
- Blair
- Bradford
- Bucks
- Cambria

- Chester
- Columbia
- Cumberland
- Fayette
- Franklin
- Huntingdon
- Juniata
- Lancaster
- Lawrence
- Lebanon
- Lehigh
- Mercer
- Mifflin
- Schuylkill
- Snyder
- Somerset
- Tioga

In a recent survey of Dairy Excellence Grant recipients, 60 percent of individuals surveyed said the improvement project would not have happened without the grant. After receiving the grant and implementing their improvement project, 56 percent of individuals surveyed said they noticed moderate to major improvements in milk production per cow. A total of 60 percent noticed moderate or major improvements in the overall profitability of their dairy operation through the project.

Grant recipients were selected by a committee of industry professionals and will receive a 50 percent match, up to a maximum matching level of \$5,000.

For more information about the grant program, visit www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/dairy-excellence-grants or contact Melissa Anderson at 717-346-0849. To see how previous grant recipients have used the funds, visit www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/testimonials.

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The Center for Dairy Excellence is a non-profit organization initiated by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture in 2004. Bringing together people from more than 40 different dairy organizations in Pennsylvania, the Center's mission is to enhance the profitability of the dairy industry by empowering people, creating partnerships, and increasing the availability and use of resources. Learn more at centerfordairyexcellence.org.

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