



CENTER FOR  
**Dairy** EXCELLENCE

**Dairy** Excellence  
**FOUNDATION**

## **For Immediate Release**

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### **FIVE DAIRY PROFESSIONALS JOIN CENTER FOR DAIRY EXCELLENCE AND FOUNDATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

*Rife, Frye, Opp, Longenecker, and Rep. Owlett Recently Filled Open Board Positions*

**Harrisburg, Pa.** – The Center for Dairy Excellence and Dairy Excellence Foundation recently welcomed five dairy professionals to the organizations' Board of Directors. The Center for Dairy Excellence Board of Directors guide the work of the non-profit 501c6 organization which fosters collaboration across the industry and provides resources to strengthen Pennsylvania dairy farms. The Dairy Excellence Foundation Board of Directors guide the work of the 501c3 charitable organization focused on cultivating and empowering dairy's next generation.

Representative Clinton Owlett from Wellsboro, Pennsylvania was elected to the Center for Dairy Excellence Board during the December 2020 Board meeting. Owlett filled an open position, which was vacated by Representative Mark Keller who retired from the Pennsylvania General Assembly in December.

"Growing up on a dairy farm, I have a real appreciation for the hard work of our dairy farmers and the importance of healthy, nutritious products they supply to our Commonwealth's families. I also live in an agriculture-rich area of the Commonwealth, so the success of our dairy industry is important to our local economy," Owlett said. "Ultimately, dairy farming – and all farming – is more than just a job. It is a way of life, and I want to see those traditions passed on to future generations."

Owlett has experience working on a dairy farm and farm market. After completing an Outdoor Education and Camp Ministry internship at Three Springs Ministry and Farm in 2001, Owlett spent the next nine years serving as assistant director to develop outdoor learning programs for teens. He eventually joined Ski Sawmill as their group sales manager and began meeting with other business leaders and community members. He discovered his passion for serving his community through state politics and policy issues, and in 2018, was elected as Representative of the 68<sup>th</sup> Legislative District in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives. He serves parts of Bradford, Potter and Tioga counties.

Amanda Rife, a marketing cooperative representative from Carlisle, Pa., also joined the Center for Dairy Excellence Board during the December 2020 Board meeting. Rife filled an open position, which was vacated by Robin Breeding from Greenville, Del. who reached the two-consecutive term maximum set by the organization's bylaws.

Amanda works for Land O'Lakes and manages approximately 940 member-owners' milk quality and regulatory compliance along with a team of field staff representatives in the eastern region. She is also responsible for the cooperative's PA Government Relations and National Milk Regulatory. Amanda serves as co-chair to the PA Liaison committee, sits on Council I for National Conference of Interstate Milk Shippers (NCIMS), and serves on the NCIMS AppN (drug residues) and Lab committees. She also serves on both the NCIMS and Regulatory Committees for NMPF and the Board of Directors for the Dairy Practices Council. Amanda grew up on a registered Holstein dairy farm in Carlisle, Pa.

The Center's Board of Directors must agree to serve a three-year term and may be re-elected for an additional term. The Board was developed to represent multiple aspects of the dairy industry, with seats for dairy farmers, allied industry professionals, marketing cooperative employees, veterinarians, retail representatives, processor representatives, and members from the Pennsylvania General Assembly.

The three new members elected to the Dairy Excellence Foundation's Board of Directors include Jason Frye, Marcia Opp, and Yvette Longenecker. They filled three open positions vacated by Jeff Harding of State College, Pa., Jim Van Blarcom of Columbia Crossroads, Pa., and Patti McLaughlin of Elliptsburg, Pa.

"The Dairy Excellence Foundation has a direct and instrumental role in developing the next generation of dairy industry community members," said Yvette Longenecker, a dairy producer from Blair County, Pa. "I am excited to be involved with an organization that is committed to inspiring the passion for dairy in our youth."

Longenecker is a partner in the Penn England LLC dairy farm operation in Williamsburg, Pa. Yvette earned her bachelor's degree in agricultural business from The Pennsylvania State University. Upon graduation, she returned to the family farm where she manages the business office and employees. Today, Penn England LLC milks 2,000 registered Holsteins between three dairy facilities and grows corn and alfalfa on approximately 3,500 acres. Longenecker, along with her husband Douglas, also own and operate a beef and cropping operation and custom combining business. She is involved as a volunteer in several Blair County 4-H Clubs and serves on the Board of Morrison's Cove Dairy Show and the Blair County Dairy Promotion Committee.

Marcia Opp is part of The SpringHouse operation in Washington, Pa. For the last 33 years, she has managed the family business – a country store featuring the farm's own farm-fresh milk and homemade food. The SpringHouse also provides catering, entertainment, and local produce for their community. Opp is a graduate of The Pennsylvania State University with a degree in agriculture business management.

"Having grown up on a dairy farm and in our retail operation, I am excited to join the Dairy Excellence Foundation Board of Directors," Opp said. "Educating the public and promoting dairy products has always been important to me, and I love how hands-on the Foundation has become in those areas. I hope I can contribute to the continuation of a really great thing."

Jason Frye was also elected to the Dairy Excellence Foundation Board of Directors. Frye is a dairy farmer, technology executive, and head cheese-maker at Pleasant Lane Farms, a multi-

generational, small-sized dairy farm and creamery located in Westmoreland County, Pa. After 20+ years in the technology industry, Jason returned to western Pennsylvania with the goal of ensuring that his family's farm could support a large extended family for the next several generations. Frye graduated from Drexel University (Philadelphia) and then took up various roles in the technology space. His background in agriculture, conservation, marketing, and technology makes for a unique set of skills to help drive excellence for the next generation of Pennsylvania's dairy industry.

More information about the organizations' Board of Directors can be found at [centerfordairyexcellence.org](http://centerfordairyexcellence.org).

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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](http://centerfordairyexcellence.org).

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 [www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/our-foundation](http://www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/our-foundation).

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