



For Immediate Release

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**STUDENTS ENCOURAGED TO APPLY FOR 2025 ON-FARM AND DAIRY PROCESSING
INTERNSHIPS**

College Students and High School Graduates Can Apply for an Internship, Dairy Farms and Dairy Processors Can Apply to Host an Intern

Harrisburg, Pa. – Undergraduate students, high school graduates, dairy farms, and dairy processors are encouraged to apply for the 2025 Internship Program. Applications are now being accepted for On-Farm Internships, Dairy Processing Internships, and a Dairy Education and Communications Internship next summer. The Professional Dairy Managers of Pennsylvania (PDMP), Pennsylvania Dairymen’s Association, and Dairy Excellence Foundation partner to support the On-Farm Internship program. The Center for Dairy Excellence sponsors the Processor and Center internships. Online internship applications are now available and due in November.

“These internship opportunities are a great way for students to take their personal interests in dairy science, animal science, dairy processing, or even agricultural communications, and expand on their knowledge through real-world experience,” said Michelle Shearer, Workforce Development Manager at the Dairy Excellence Foundation. “These are competitive internships that help expose students to new management styles, different business models, new technology, and different work environments. These internships can also help them network and build connections with dairy industry professionals.”

The On-Farm Internship experiences give high school graduates and undergraduate college students the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in dairy production through a 10- to 12-week internship at the farm level. Participating students receive a \$3,000 stipend in addition to compensation from their host farms. To apply, students must meet *one* of the following requirements:

- Currently enrolled in, or a recent graduate of, a Pennsylvania university or college
- A resident of Pennsylvania who is currently enrolled in, or a recent graduate of, an out-of-state university or college
- A resident of Pennsylvania with a high school diploma and between the ages of 18 and 25 as of June 15, 2025, who has agriculture experience and an interest in dairy farming

In addition, students must be either majoring in Animal Sciences or a related agriculture field or gaining experience in production agriculture. It is also recommended that students are interested in the production aspect of the dairy industry and an on-farm learning experience.

“I wanted to get more experience and a different idea of what a functional day [looks like] on a dairy farm. My host farm did a lot of genetic work and embryo transfers, and they let me breed and everything. My host farmer put a lot of trust in me to do that which I’m appreciative of. The On-Farm Internship was extremely valuable,” said Calvin Dechow, a junior at The Pennsylvania State University and a previous intern in the program.

Students who are accepted into the On-Farm Internship program are paired with host farms that can help them solidify their career goals. Throughout the experience, interns will participate in discussion groups, set goals for the summer, and complete an in-depth research project. Host farms benefit by mentoring skilled interns who are eager to learn and interested in dairy production. Farms that apply for the program may be located within or outside of Pennsylvania, but producers must agree to expose the intern to all aspects of a successful, progressive dairy operation.

The Dairy Processing Internship experiences are designed to help students gain practical knowledge, information, and skills about progressive dairy processing operations. Students who are accepted into the internship program will receive \$3,000 from the Center for Dairy Excellence in addition to dairy processing plant wages. To qualify for these internships, students must:

- Be currently enrolled in, or a recent graduate of, a Pennsylvania university or college, or a resident of Pennsylvania who is currently enrolled in, or a recent graduate of an out-of-state university or college.
- Be majoring in Food Science, Dairy Science, Animal Sciences or related agriculture field or have experience in food agriculture.
- Be interested in the processing aspect of the dairy industry.

“I’ve definitely known that I really like dairy, but this internship [with a dairy processor] has really solidified that. I think dairy foods are one of the most interesting aspects of food science. There are a lot of regulations, but I think it’s really neat that the dairy products we buy are some of the safest foods out there. That was cool to see firsthand,” said Darcy Heltzel, a sophomore at Iowa State University and a previous intern in the program.

The Center for Dairy Excellence and the Dairy Excellence Foundation are also seeking a Dairy Education, Programs and Communications Intern for May-August 2025. Applicants must be entering at least their sophomore year of an undergraduate degree at an accredited college or university. This is a paid internship with a competitive hourly wage for 10-12 weeks at 40 hours a week. The intern will assist with the continued development of dairy education curriculum programs, creating communications and marketing content, and planning youth educational events.

“This Dairy Education and Communications Internship experience was crucial to my personal and professional development as a young person in the dairy industry. I grew in my

communication and critical-thinking skills as well as task management,” said Jordan Anderson, a senior at The University of Wyoming and a previous intern in the program. “As a student majoring in agriculture communications, this work was valuable as I look to expand my portfolio. My work gave me validation that this truly is what I want to do and it gave me a whole new perspective.”

Student applications for all internship opportunities are due by November 1, 2024. Host farm and dairy processor applications are due by November 15, 2024.

Visit www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/internship for more information about the program. Contact Michelle Shearer at mshearer@centerfordairyexcellence.org or 570-768-8316 with questions.

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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/.

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