

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ten Students Honored in 2011 National Dairy Shrine Student Recognition Program

DENMARK, WI — National Dairy Shrine recently recognized ten college students for their outstanding leadership skills, academic abilities, and interest in the dairy industry. The prestigious Student Recognition Award honors exceptional graduating seniors from across the country as they begin careers in the dairy industry or further their education.

This year's top student and winner of \$2,000 is Brandon Thesing of Winona, Minn. Second place honors and a cash award of \$1,500 go to Brittany Thompson of Snow Camp, N.C. Rounding out the list of winners are eight students who will each receive \$1,000. In alphabetical order they are: Cassandra Dutcher, Humboldt, Neb.; Joshua Ebert, Blairsville, Pa.; Kristin Hogan, Tillamook, Ore.; Corey Kayhart, Vergennes, Vt.; Emily Lyons, Rockford, Ill.; Ashley Sears, South Deerfield, Mass.; Hannah Thompson, Walkersville, Md.; and Abby Udermann, Sartell, Minn.

Brandon Thesing graduated from the University of Minnesota in May with a degree in animal science and an emphasis on dairy production. In addition to academic achievement, Brandon actively participated in collegiate organizations including service in leadership roles as vice president of the Gopher Dairy Club, president of the Delta Theta Sigma fraternity, and dairy species chair of the Minnesota Royal. Brandon enjoyed success in judging dairy cattle as a member of the second-place team at the 2009 All-American contest and third-place team at the National Intercollegiate contest at World Dairy Expo. As an individual he placed third overall and in reasons at the All-American and eleventh overall and sixth in reasons at Expo. He exhibited a fall yearling that earned Junior All-Minnesota and Junior All-American nominations in 2008. Brandon also competed in the 2011 North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge, where his team earned a gold award.

In addition to continued participation in his home farm throughout college, Brandon completed summer internships with Alta Genetics and Accelerated Genetics and worked part time throughout the school year. Brandon will apply all of these experiences as he begins a career with Minnesota Select Sires. He plans to hone his skills in sire selection, reproduction, and genetics as he works toward his long-term goal of returning to his family's farm, expanding the operation, and breeding high quality registered Holstein and Jersey cattle.

Brittany Thompson earned a dairy science degree from Virginia Tech in May, finishing her class work a semester ahead of schedule to take advantage of a job offer from Pfizer Animal Health. Brittany served as treasurer and Showcase Sale selection chair for the Virginia Tech Dairy Club, as president of the North Carolina Junior Holstein Association, and also maintained active participation in the collegiate Young Farmers and FFA. As a sophomore, she was a member of the dairy judging team that won the National Intercollegiate and All-American contests in 2008. Brittany was the fourth place individual overall at both contests and first and second place in reasons at the All-American and Expo contests respectively. In 2004 she established her own herd of Holstein and Brown Swiss cows. While attending college, Brittany helped manage the herd and worked as a research assistant and as teaching assistant for three different classes. Brittany was named the outstanding senior of the Department of Dairy Science in 2010

and received numerous other awards throughout her college career. A summer internship in cattle sales with Pfizer lead to her current position as a cattle territory manager.

Cassandra Dutcher will graduate from Kansas State University with an animal science production management degree in the fall. She is an active member of the Dairy Science Club and has held numerous leadership positions, including president and vice president. Cassandra also leads the Little American Royal as president and participates in Alpha Zeta, Sigma Alpha Lambda, and Army ROTC. She competed on the 2009 dairy judging team, placing sixth in Red and Whites at the National Intercollegiate contest. Cassandra and her team earned a silver award at the 2009 North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge. She completed a summer internship at the Hoard's Dairyman Farm and will be interning at Heartland Jerseys in Kansas this summer. Cassandra purchased a Brown Swiss herd to help expand her family's dairy and plans to join the business as a fifth generation dairy farmer.

Joshua Ebert graduated in May from Penn State with an animal sciences degree. He was an active member of the Dairy Science Club and served as the Dairy Expo show manager. He led the collegiate Farm Bureau as president and also was active in Block and Bridle. Josh was a member of the 2010 dairy judging team that placed fourth overall and third in reasons at the National Intercollegiate contest and first overall and in reasons at the Eastern States Exposition. As an individual, Josh placed fifth overall and third in reasons at Madison and second overall and third in reasons at Eastern States. Josh remained involved with his family's herd of registered Holsteins while in school and hopes to return to it in the future. Meanwhile, an internship with Cargill Animal Nutrition last summer developed into an opportunity to join the company full time following graduation.

Kristin Hogan completed dual majors in animal sciences and general agriculture as well as a communications minor at Oregon State University in June. Kristin served two terms as president and chaired numerous activities of the Dairy Club in addition to representing the college as an ambassador, serving on the Agricultural Executive Council, and reigning as 2009 National Jersey Queen. She has also been successful in dairy cattle judging, earning high individual honors at the N.A.I.L.E. contest in 2007 and All-American status at the 2008 National Intercollegiate contest. Kristin continued her involvement with her family's dairy operation while in college and added to her experiences with internships at a Wisconsin dairy and as an ambassador for Tillamook County Creamery. Kristin plans to work in industry, spreading the story of the American dairy farmer, and would like to return to her family's farm eventually.

Corey Kayhart graduated from Cornell University with a degree in animal science in May. Corey served as vice president and treasurer of the Dairy Science club and participated in Dairy Fellows, Farm Credit Fellows, and Alpha Gamma Rho. He was a member of the 2010 dairy judging team that placed third overall in the National Intercollegiate contest. As an individual Corey placed ninth overall. He also competed in the 2011 North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge, where his team earned a first-place platinum award. Corey received a Traditions award for leadership and scholarship, an honor provided to just one percent of Cornell students, and he was named the outstanding senior in the dairy program. Corey completed an externship with Holtz Nelson Dairy Consultants and an internship with Farm Credit East. He will pursue his interests in farm business and financial analysis as he begins his career at Farm Credit.

Emily Lyons graduated in May from the University of Illinois with a degree in animal sciences and a minor in environmental economics and law. She was active in the Illini Dairy Club and served as treasurer and secretary, as well as external public relations chair for the Illinois PDCA calf sale. Emily also participated in the Illinois Junior Holstein Association, Phi Mu Women's Fraternity, and Orchid Club.

Emily was a member of the 2010 dairy judging team and earned eighth overall at the 2010 All-American contest. She participated in two regional Dairy Challenge events, and her team earned a gold award at the 2011 North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge. Emily plans to attend law school to study agricultural and environmental law and hopes to work to defend the rights of farmers and to assist them in complying with environmental requirements.

Ashley Sears completed degrees in business and dairy science at Cornell University in May. Ashley was active in the Dairy Science club, Dairy Fellows, Collegiate 4-H, Sigma Alpha, and the American Guernsey Youth Association and served as a college ambassador and prospective student recruiter. She competed on the 2010 dairy judging team that placed third at the National Intercollegiate contest and at Eastern States. As an individual Ashley was sixth overall and eighth in reasons at Madison and ninth overall and first in reasons at Eastern States. Her homebred cow, Indian Acres MM Pistachio Pie, was named Supreme Champion at both the All-American and World Dairy Expo in 2007. Ashley was a classification intern with Holstein Association USA and spent last summer in Washington, D.C. as a public policy intern with the American Farm Bureau Federation. She plans to attend law school in the fall while maintaining her involvement in the family's dairy operation.

Hannah Thompson graduated from The Ohio State University in May with a degree in agricultural communication. She was active in the Buckeye Dairy Club, serving as yearbook chair, corresponding secretary, and co-chair of the Buckeye Classic sale. Hannah also participated in Agricultural Communicators of Tomorrow, Alpha Zeta, and the Scarlet and Gray Ag Day committee. She is active in the National Red and White Dairy Cattle Association and is the current RWDCA Queen. Hannah was a member of the 2010 dairy judging team that earned fifth overall at the All-American and National Collegiate contests. As an individual she placed fourth in reasons at Harrisburg and eighth overall and ninth in reasons at Madison. Hannah has earned multiple Junior Red and White All-American nominations and clerked for MD-Hillbrook. She is currently a sales and marketing communications intern for Select Sires and will return to Ohio State to pursue a master's degree in agricultural and extension education this fall.

Abby Udermann completed an animal science degree with dairy production emphasis and applied economics minor at the University of Minnesota in May. Abby served the Gopher Dairy Club in many capacities, most recently as secretary. She also chaired fundraising efforts for the Minnesota Royal and participated in Collegiate Agri-Women and the Minnesota Junior Holstein Association. She achieved success as a member of the 2010 dairy judging team that placed first at the All-American and second overall and first in reasons at the National Intercollegiate contest. Abby was fourth overall as an individual and third in reasons at the All-American and seventh overall and sixth in reasons at Expo. She also competed in the 2011 North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge, where her team earned a gold award. Abby completed a dairy cattle genetics internship with Genex/CRI last summer and has now joined Genex full time.

These outstanding young people will be honored during the annual National Dairy Shrine awards banquet to be held during World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wis., October 6. For more information about the banquet or about students, producers, and industry representatives being recognized by Dairy Shrine, contact Executive Director Dr. David Selner at (920) 863-6333. Dairy Shrine membership information also is available by phone or on the internet at www.dairyshrine.org. Dairy enthusiasts are encouraged to become a part of this important organization to help honor our heritage, inspire future leaders, and promote the industry.

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