

Dairy Extension Agenda

- February 5-7, 2018. 29th **Florida Ruminant Nutrition Symposium**, Gainesville, FL. More information at <http://dairy.ifas.ufl.edu/rns/info.shtml>
- Saturday March 31, 2018. Annual **Family Day at the Dairy Farm**. This is the Open House for the general public at the University of Florida Dairy Unit in Hague, FL. Free admission. More information at <https://www.facebook.com/FamilyDayattheDairyFarm/>
- The 54th **Florida Dairy Production Conference** is being planned for the fall of 2018. More information: Francisco Peñagaricano, fpenagaricano@ufl.edu

Mary Sowerby Retirement

Dr. Mary Sowerby will retire from UF/IFAS Dairy Extension on January 25, 2018. Mary first joined the University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service in



November 1993 near the conclusion of her Ph.D. program in Animal Sciences – Dairy Management at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She had previously attained B.S. and M.S. degrees in Dairy Science from Virginia

Tech, Blacksburg, and worked several years in the field of cattle genetics as a sales representative, communication manager and assistant manager of the world's largest computerized dairy mating program.

As a Multi-county Extension Agent II for Hillsborough, Hardee, Pasco and Polk Counties, Mary organized many field days and meetings focused on producer needs and wants, on everything from passing their periodic milk inspections, to survival in poor milk price economic times, to keeping herd breeding bulls

performing at their best. Much of Mary's work in South Florida involved helping dairy producers with environmental problems. Mary also coordinated the statewide 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl program, coaching teams who competed and did very well nationally at annual dairy bowls and the National 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl. She was awarded the Florida Association of County Agricultural Agents (FACAA) and NACAA (National) Achievement Award in 2000 for her cumulative Extension efforts. In February 2000, Mary resigned from the University of Florida to be full time with her husband in East Tennessee.

The fun of solving dairy producer problems and working with super youth called her back to Extension in June, 2007. Mary re-joined UF Extension as a Northeast Regional Specialized Dairy Agent III, housed in the Suwannee County Extension Office in Live Oak. Mary focused on dairy risk management, joining forces with Dr. John Van Sickle from the Food and Resource Economics Department to introduce producer use of the futures market to lower their financial risk.

Close proximity with Georgia led to multi-state endeavors such as quarterly South GA/North FL Dairy Update meetings held in the Brooks County Extension Office, Quitman, GA. Mary also coordinated a GA/FL Dairy Graziers group for several years. Mary also worked with several State Forage Specialists conducting forage research and field days for producers. More recently, she has been a cooperator in a multi-state NIFA Mastitis Extension/Research grant. Several Florida dairy herds are benefitting from milking parlor evaluations and employee trainings through this work.

Mary has been working with the NE Florida dairy youth, especially with Dairy Quiz Bowl. She has also worked with other agents and FFA leaders with day camps, judging practices and Farm/City Days.

Close proximity to campus led Mary to become instrumental in keeping the UF Dairy Science Club alive and now thriving. She has been a club advisor for nine

years, being honored with the American Dairy Science Association (ADSA) Advisor of the Year Award in 2009 and 2017. Additionally, Mary has taught an undergraduate course in either Dairy Cattle Evaluation or Dairy Farm Evaluation on the UF campus.

She has also coached the UF Dairy Challenge team which has competed successfully at Southern Regional and North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenges the past several years. In November 2011 and 2017, Florida hosted the Southern Regional Dairy Challenge with Mary as co-host state coordinator.

Mary has been an active member of a multi-state dairy Extension/research group (SERA) which plans the Southern Dairy Conference annually and works to integrate Extension, research and teaching projects between southeastern university dairy faculty members. She has also been a member of various ADSA committees, plus NE Extension District and FACA committees over the years. In 2017, Mary was honored with the Southern Regional ADSA Honor Award for her role in many regional dairy Extension efforts.

After retirement, Mary plans to continue involvement with especially youth and hopes to use her dairy expertise on international missions in the future.

Chris Holcomb Accepts New Position

Chris Holcomb, Dairy 4-H Regional Specialized Agent, has recently taken a new position in the private dairy sector. He will continue to work with the dairy program in a smaller role until further notice or until a



new agent is hired to fill the position. His position will concentrate on managing the dairy program and events, but he will not be actively coaching or traveling with the competitive teams. If you have questions or concerns please contact Chris Holcomb, (863) 519-

1050, or christophersholc@ufl.edu

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Semen from Slick Holstein Bull Produced at University of Florida Now Available

Peter J. Hansen

The SLICK haplotype confers cattle with a short and sleek hair coat. It is a dominant trait caused by a mutation in the prolactin receptor gene. The SLICK condition was originally described in the Senepol breed located on St. Croix, US Virgin Islands. Dr. Tim Olson of the University of Florida used crossbreeding to introduce the gene into the US Holstein. SLICK Holsteins are better able to regulate their body temperature during heat stress and experience a less-severe decline in milk yield during the summer than Holsteins with typical hair.



Figure 1. Shaved areas of the rump of a cow with the SLICK haplotype (C) and a cow without the mutation (D). The SLICK cow has a short and sleek hair coat which makes her more heat stress resistant.

The University of Florida has been registering its SLICK animals with the Holstein Association USA and has initiated a breeding program to increase genetic merit of the SLICK population for economically important traits. The goal is to provide producers in hot climates with semen from SLICK bulls to facilitate incorporation of the gene into their herds.

The first bull to be marketed in this program is **Slick-Gator Blanco (551HO03574)** who was purchased by STGenetics and whose semen is now available from that company. Note that Blanco (NM\$ 373) is heterozygous for the SLICK mutation – only one of two copies of the prolactin receptor gene codes for the slick phenotype. Therefore, half his offspring will be slick and half will have hair of normal length.

UF is continuing to upgrade the genetics of the SLICK population of animals it possesses and, once genetic merit is sufficiently high, cattle will be mated to produce bulls that are homozygous for the SLICK

haplotype. Because the SLICK mutation is dominant, it would be expected that all offspring from a homozygous bull would have a slick hair coat.

For more information about the SLICK program and bulls with the SLICK mutation, contact Dr. Pete Hansen, pjhansen@ufl.edu, (352) 359-5753.



Figure 2. Slick-Gator Blanco (551HO03574).

12th Annual Southern Regional Dairy Challenge Hosted by Florida was a Success

Mary Sowerby and Albert De Vries

"Being able to attend the Southern Regional Dairy Challenge in November 2017 was a wonderful experience for me. Up until the previous semester, I was very unsure of what I wanted to do after college or what animal industry I wanted to go into. Then I fell in love with the dairy industry because of my Dairy Challenge prep course. I have never really been around dairy cows, but my experiences at the Southern Regional Dairy Challenge have now inspired me to enter the dairy industry as a dairy nutritionist. I loved being able to meet other students with the same passion and be able to learn about different methods used by dairies along with learning professional skills that will help me in my future endeavors. I learned so much about what makes a good and profitable dairy farm, and sincerely hope to be able to attend again in the future!" Megan Pearce, UF Animal Sciences major and a junior student.

Do you want to make a difference in the lives of young people like Megan who will potentially impact the dairy industry in the future? Please keep doing

what you are doing, dairy producers and industry members alike; share your financial resources through the Milk Check-off program or donations to efforts like the Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge, 4-H/Collegiate Dairy Judging, 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl, etc., and keep sharing your farms and experience to help these youth learn not just the facts, but a love for the dairy community.

On Sunday, November 12, 2017, students from 12 universities across the Southeast converged at Full Circle Dairy near Lee, FL, for the Southern Regional Dairy Challenge pre-contest farm tour. Owner Greg Watts, Farm Manager Eric Diepersloot and their fantastic staff, family members and nutritionist welcomed the group and provided four training stations; at the robotic-feeder calf barn (how to raise calves); in a free stall barn (how to feed and house cows for high production); at the herd breeding area (how to achieve reproductive and genetic success); and in their rotary parlor (how to most effectively harvest milk from cows). Before everyone left the farm they also toured the feed commodity barn and learned how to feed several thousand cows and heifers 365 days a year.

Back from Full Circle Dairy, the actual Dairy Challenge event began that evening at the Advent Christian Village Conference Center and Camp Suwannee in Dowling Park, FL. A total of 16 universities and colleges from 12 states were present: from Texas to West Virginia, and from Kentucky to Florida:

- Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College (GA)
- Alabama A&M University
- Clemson University
- Eastern Kentucky University
- Louisiana State University
- Middle Tennessee State University
- North Carolina State University
- Tarleton State University (TX)
- Tuskegee University (AL)
- University of Florida
- University of Georgia
- University of Kentucky
- University of Mt. Olive (NC)
- University of Tennessee
- Virginia Tech
- West Virginia University

Seventy-eight students were placed on 16 teams named for sponsors of the event. By intention, student teammates were from a variety of schools, so challenge number one was to meet and work with strangers with

varying degrees of dairy expertise. Each team also had a mentor to help guide them in their team process.

That Sunday night students had their first introduction to the Dairy Challenge host farm: White Oak Dairy, located north of Mayo, FL. The teams had two hours to evaluate DHI/PCDART/Dairy Comp records, financial records and the answers to 50+ questions from farm mission to reproductive program to nutrition program to acres of crops grown to number of employees to farm history and future goals and everything in between. Each team's official challenge was to evaluate the farm at all levels, from manure management to calf raising to parlor efficiency to herd health to employee relations to finances to facilities, etc., and make economically sound recommendations for improvement.

Monday morning everyone was champing at the bit to actually see White Oak Dairy, so 16+ vans left Dowling Park ahead of schedule and came rolling down the farm driveway soon thereafter. Host Jared Moseley and his family were ready and waiting for the crowd, welcoming the group and answering preliminary questions before the teams split up to see the whole farm for the next two hours. Jared's brother-in-law, Jodi Sullivan, managing partner over crops of the operation, stayed low key while making preparations for silage harvesting to continue as soon as the Dairy Challenge group retreated back to Advent Christian Village for lunch and PowerPoint preparations.



Students, coaches, judges, and volunteers gather at the host farm of the 12th Southern Regional Dairy Challenge, White Oak Dairy, in Mayo, FL.

Monday afternoon, following a few last comments from mentors, each team of students had the challenge of working together to prioritize and summarize their suggestions for making White Oak Dairy a better dairy farm into a 20-minute PowerPoint presentation. Two panels of five judges each would evaluate the team presentations on Tuesday. But that afternoon the

judges were also busy assembling a PowerPoint with their own recommendations to share at the finale of the event.

By 6 PM on Monday, all PowerPoints were submitted to the Dairy Challenge staff. Finally everyone could relax for an evening of line dancing and marshmallow roasting at a bonfire – except for one little detail: about that time the UF student who had committed to calling the line dances at 7 PM notified the participating UF students that she was not going to be able to come. Instead of eating supper, those UF students assembled line dance music and practiced steps, while Kas Ingawa from DMRS, (who with Glen Stauber, now with Dairy One, were lead IT men for the event) purchased the necessary connecting wire to get the music to come through the camp speakers. At 7:15 PM Gloria Rodriguez (UF Dairy Science Club President) was calling line dances with other members of the UF group on the dance floor leading the dancing. No one else knew we were missing the “real” caller thanks to the way these gals stepped up to make it a fun time for everyone.

Tuesday started early for Teams 1 and 8 who headed to their 45-minute practice session before facing their judges' panel at 8:15. Every 45 minutes another two teams made their presentations, except for a 45-minute lunch break. Following each 20-minute presentation there was a 10-minute question and answer period. Then the judges had a few minutes to deliberate before the team returned to hear their comments. The Regional Dairy Challenges (one is also held in the Northeast, Mid-west and Western Regions) are considered a training program for the North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge held each April somewhere in the US. The judges' comments are an important part of this educational process.

This year students who were not presenting in the morning or afternoon had the opportunity to learn from three case scenarios posed by Purina calf specialist Christie Underwood (who also was Chairwoman of the Southern Regional Dairy Challenge organizing committee), Dave Whitlock from Select Sires and Albert De Vries from UF. They presented real farm problems for the students to deliberate as a group and give possible solutions. In addition, the students had the opportunity to talk to sponsor industry representatives about their products and potential job opportunities.

After the last student presentations were made on Tuesday, each panel of judges who evaluated eight teams, determined their first and second place teams. Then together they gave their presentation of their suggestions, first to host farm owner Jared Moseley and then to all the students.

UF was represented at the Southern Dairy Challenge by eight Animal Sciences undergraduate students who took the Challenge as team members: Joseph (J.B.) Tarnate, Michelle Taepakdee, Kim Archer, Huridises Torrealba (member of a second place team), Cole Diepersloot, Brittney Davidson, Megan Pearce, and Gloria Rodriguez. Two UF graduate students with previous Dairy Challenge experience served as mentors and two others, along with another undergraduate, helped with everything from pre-contest tour van driving to timing during the challenge presentations. Mary Sowerby and Albert De Vries served as Host State University coordinators for the event.

It takes a small army of mentors, judges, coaches, industry representatives who provide help in countless ways, committee members, dairy producers who are willing to host these events and the practices which come before them, and staff from the American Dairy Science Association and World Dairy Expo to make a Dairy Challenge happen. Combined they contribute countless hours of work and the financial resources to make a Southern Regional or North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge a terrific experience for each participating student.

The 2018, the regional Southern Regional Dairy Challenge will be hosted by the University of Tennessee, site to be announced. In April 2019, the Southern Region is hosting the North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge national event in Tifton, GA. If you are interested in contributing in any way with these or other future events, please let Albert De Vries know.

To close and re-emphasize how much students and coaches appreciate your financial support and opening your farms for tours and practices and AI schools which help support the UF Dairy Science Club events, here's a quote from veteran Dairy Challenge attendee Gloria Rodriguez:

"As always, the Regional Dairy Challenge was a fantastic experience. This is my second time participating at the regional level, and hopefully I'll be able to return for the North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge this spring. This event and others like it

have given me the greatest opportunity to join the dairy community, which I never thought would be a possibility, as I have no dairy background in my family. The connections and experience I've gained from these events are the best parts of my academic career, and it is truly a joy to be a part of the Challenge. The skills I use here will further me in nearly every professional endeavor I attempt. I am immensely grateful for all of the sponsors and volunteers who take the time to support students from all backgrounds trying to find their place in the industry."

As Mary Sowerby will be retiring soon, contact Albert De Vries about Dairy Challenge, devries@ufl.edu or (352) 392 5594 ext. 227



The Southern event is one of four regional contests sponsored each year by North American Intercollegiate Dairy Challenge® (NAIDC). These regional contests – plus a national event for about 250 dairy collegiates – are funded through generous support by 130 agribusinesses and dairy producers. Over its 15-year national history, Dairy Challenge has helped prepare nearly 5,000 students for careers as dairy owners or managers, consultants, researchers, veterinarians or other dairy professionals. About Dairy Challenge NAIDC is an innovative event for students in dairy programs at North American post-secondary institutions. Its mission is to develop tomorrow's dairy leaders and enhance progress of the dairy industry, by providing education, communication and networking among students, producers, and agribusiness and university personnel. The 2018 national event will be held April 12-14 in Visalia, CA; details are at www.dairychallenge.org.



78 students from 16 colleges and universities across the South participated in the 12th Southern Regional Dairy Challenge in Dowling Park, FL, in November 2017. The event was hosted by the Southern Regional Dairy Challenge committee and the University of Florida, with generous financial support from the dairy community.

**Prediction of the Future Florida Mailbox Price and
Future All Milk and Feed Prices:
January 2018 – December 2018**

Forecast of the future Florida Mailbox Price and Future All Milk and Feed Prices: Jan. 2018 – Dec. 2018

Month	Forecast FL mailbox price (\$/cwt milk)	2014 Farm bill formulas	
		Forecast All-Milk price (\$/cwt milk)	Forecast feed cost (\$/cwt milk)
Jan-18	17.85	15.36	7.55
Feb-18	17.38	14.85	7.61
Mar-18	17.48	14.96	7.67
Apr-18	16.92	14.78	7.72
May-18	17.24	15.10	7.78
Jun-18	17.57	15.45	7.84
Jul-18	19.28	15.94	7.89
Aug-18	19.54	16.23	7.94
Sep-18	19.74	16.41	7.99
Oct-18	20.26	17.15	8.04
Nov-18	20.29	17.16	8.08
Dec-18	20.25	17.10	8.13

Based on futures prices of January 12, 2018.

The forecast All-Milk price and the forecast feed cost have been added to the table since the Fall 2014 issue of Dairy Update (<http://dairy.ifas.ufl.edu/dairyupdate>). These forecast are based on the formulas in the 2014 Farm Bill. Daily updated Florida mailbox price forecasts are at http://future.aae.wisc.edu/predicted_mailbox/?state=Florida Feed costs are at <http://future.aae.wisc.edu/tab/costs.html#94>.

For more information, contact Albert de Vries at devries@ufl.edu or (352) 392 5594 ext. 227.

