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8th Family Day at the Dairy Farm was a Success!

Izabella Toledo, Albert De Vries, Emily Miller-Cushon, and Diwakar Vyas

The Department of Animal Sciences held its eighth Family Day at the Dairy Farm on Saturday February 10, 2024. The event attracted 1,600 visitors on a beautiful sunny day! The event, first held in 2012, is an open house for the public to visit the UF Dairy Unit and is designed to be educational for children and adults alike. During the event, visitors can see a real working farm and meet and learn about research and dairy farming practices from students, faculty, and the UF Dairy Unit staff. Fifteen stations and activities organized by faculty, staff, and students provided opportunities for visitors to pet calves, make butter, tour barn facilities, watch cows get milked, learn about nutrition, physiology, health, and how milk is produced, stored, and transported. Visitors also learned how UF/IFAS dairy research, UF Veterinary Services and Extension help dairy



farmers sustainably produce quality milk, while keeping their herds comfortable and healthy.

Florida Dairy Farmers also had a station where they showed their support to the dairy industry and gave away dairy products.

The event was organized by faculty and staff of the Department of Animal Sciences, the staff of the UF Dairy Unit, and Florida Dairy Farmers Inc. Volunteers were a big part of the event! It took over 60 volunteers, including undergraduate and graduate students, dairy faculty, and staff, to make this Family Day at the Dairy Farm a success. The event could not be organized without the help of our sponsors Florida Dairy Farmers, Gatorland Kubota, and M&B Products.

For more information about Family Day at the Dairy Farm, contact Izabella Toledo at izatol@ufl.edu. Visit the event websites at <https://www.facebook.com/FamilyDayattheDairyFarm/> <https://animal.ifas.ufl.edu/events/familydayatthedairyfarm>



1600 visitors at the 8th Family Day at the Dairy Farm



2024 Family Day at the Dairy Farm

UF Heifers Being Raised in Kansas

The Department of Animal Sciences recently decided to start having its heifers raised at Kansas Dairy Development in Deerfield, Kansas. The decision was made to save on heifer raising costs and follows the local industry trend to raise heifers outside of the Southeast. The current breeding age and pregnant heifers will stay at the UF Heifer Unit in Alachua, FL until they move into the nearby lactating cow herd. The UF Dairy Unit milks approximately 500 cows.

The first load of heifers moved to Kansas on February 24. The plan is to ship calves several days old and receive heifers back when they are 7 months pregnant.



First load of heifers moving to Kansas



Barn for pre-weaned calves at the UF Heifer Unit in Alachua, FL



Calves at the UF Heifer Unit in Alachua, FL

35th Annual Florida Ruminant Nutrition Symposium Attracted Over 200 Participants

The Department of Animal Sciences held the 35th Florida Ruminant Nutrition Symposium in Gainesville, Florida on February 26-28, 2024. Over 200 attendees heard from 18 speakers who covered topics from amino acid nutrition to trace mineral supplementation to feed efficiency to carbon footprint of beef production. Speakers addressed both dairy and beef cattle nutrition topics. The Symposium website is:

<https://animal.ifas.ufl.edu/dairy/conferences--meetings/florida-ruminant-nutrition-symposium/>

For more information, contact Dr. Jose Santos, event coordinator, at jepsantos@ufl.edu



Participants at the 35th Annual Florida Ruminant Nutrition Symposium



Brazilian BBQ the 35th Annual Florida Ruminant Nutrition Symposium



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Save The Date

58th Annual Florida Dairy Production Conference



Wednesday, October 23rd, 2024

Straughn Professional Development Center
2142 Shealy Drive, Gainesville, FL 32611

Dairy Update is published quarterly by the Department of Animal Sciences, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, University of Florida. Please address any comments to Albert De Vries, Editor, Dairy Update, PO Box 110910, Gainesville, FL 32611-0910. Phone: (352) 294-6983. E-mail: devries@ufl.edu.

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the view of the University of Florida.

Past issues are posted on the UF/IFAS Animal Sciences Dairy Extension website at <https://animal.ifas.ufl.edu/dairy/>. This issue was published on **March 15, 2024**