



**For Immediate Release**

## **SECOND ANNUAL CONFERENCE HELPS YOUTH MAKE SENSE OF IT ALL**

**Cambridge, ON May 25, 2011** - On May 5, 45 young dairy enthusiasts came together at the University of Guelph campus for a 3-day workshop in dairy management. The second annual Dairy Sen\$e conference drew participants ages 17-25 from across the province eager to learn valuable finance and business skills that will help them manage successful dairy operations.

4-H Ontario's Andrew Campbell was thrilled to see so much interest in the program this year. Campbell, who was hired in March to coordinate the delivery of the Suite Sen\$e programs, could not have been more pleased with the program's achievements.

"To be able to bring together young people from the dairy industry from Lambton County to Thunder Bay is incredible," says Campbell. "I'm hoping the participants will take some great information home with them to their own operations and their own communities."

The Dairy Sen\$e program was originally developed and co-managed by the Ontario Holstein Branch and 4-H Ontario in 2010 in order to fill a education gap within the industry regarding business management. According to Branch General Manager, Jason French, Ontario has some of the best young dairy show people, fitters and judges, but when it comes to business know-how, and young farmers knowing what to expect when they come home to farm, there is always more to learn.

"Dairy Sen\$e provides an introduction to the business side of dairy farming," French says. "Our program will help make young dairy farmers in the province more confident in their decisions on the farm as they become more involved in a management role in the future."

Participants listened keenly to a number of guest speakers at the university during their first day of the program, which included talks on working first off the farm before coming home, keeping proper records, the benefits of the Profit Profiler program and key business acumen. They also received presentations from Kelly Daynard of OFAC on the key role they play in keeping the public informed and from Ben Loewith of Summitholme Holsteins on the importance of achieving a high pregnancy rate within your herd.

The second day saw participants visit two well-managed dairy operations: Beslea Farms Ltd. in Shelburne and Opsterlawn Farms in Drayton. Here, they received instruction on several topics ranging from dry cow management to succession and retirement planning.

Participants spent the remainder of the evening working hard on their assigned case studies, which were presented in groups the following morning. The consulting group of Curtis Walt, Jason de Witt, Brandon Dietrich, Emily den Haan and Sander Van Stee were the winners of the case study project and will receive an all-expense paid trip to the 2011 World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wisconsin later this year.

This project is funded in part through the Agricultural Management Institute (AMI). The AMI is part of the Best Practices Suite of programs for Growing Forward, a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

4-H Ontario and the Ontario Holstein Branch would also like to thank the following sponsors for helping to make this year's Dairy Sen\$e such a success: Eastern Breeders Inc., Gencor, Dairy Farmers of Ontario, Holstein Canada, Ontario Dairy Youth Trust Fund, Ontario Joint Dairy Breeds, Shur-Gain, TD Canada Trust – Agriculture Services, AgCareers.com, Altona Lea Farms, Armstrong Manor Farms, Beslea Farms Ltd, CanWest DHI, CIBC, Farm Credit Canada, Gay Lea Foods, Grand Valley Fortifiers, Milt Carr & Associates, OMAFRA, Ontario Farm Animal Council, Opsterlawn Holstein, Starview Financial Advisors, Summitholm Holsteins and University of Guelph.

For more information and/or photos, please contact:

Jason French, General Manager Ontario Holstein Branch  
Tel: (519) 653-6180  
[branch@ontario.holstein.ca](mailto:branch@ontario.holstein.ca)

OR

Marianne Fallis, Senior Manager, Programming  
Tel: 1-877-410-6748 x. 472  
[programming@4-hontario.ca](mailto:programming@4-hontario.ca)