

**News Release**  
For Immediate Release

**YOUNG FARMERS ATTEND COOPERATIVE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE**

SYRACUSE, NY.-- There were 19 participants sponsored by their cooperatives to attend “Cooperatives—They’re Your Business,” the Thirty-Second annual Cooperative Future Leaders Conference held July 25-27 at The Genesee Grande Hotel in Syracuse, New York. Dairylea Cooperative was this year's host cooperative for the conference.

The Cooperative Future Leaders Conference is co-sponsored by the Northeast Cooperative Council and Cornell Cooperative Extension. The conference provides an excellent opportunity for members and staff who are likely to be in leadership positions in their cooperatives to learn more about the unique operating features of cooperatives and current issues affecting their organizations.

Featured speakers included: Brian Henehan, Sr. Extension Associate at Cornell University led a panel discussion of cooperative leaders on “Cultivating Leadership Skills” that included: Greg Wickham, CEO, Dairylea Cooperative; Sandy Stauffer, board member of Dairylea and Dairy Farmers of America; and Joyce Bupp who serves on the Dairy Farmers of America board of directors.

Dave Chamberlain, Dairylea Cooperative board of directors, presented the “Roles and Responsibility of Members and Directors”. Kate Rossini of Dairylea discussed “Managing Price Risk.” Tom Cosgrove, Vice-president with COBANK discussed “Cooperative Finance.” The Economics of Cooperative Business” was presented by Brian Henehan from the Department of Applied Economics and Management at Cornell University. Brad Keating, COO of Dairy Marketing Services presented “Milk Marketing Collaboration.”

The participants enjoyed a Thursday afternoon tour of the HP Hood Dairy Plant as well as the Plainville Turkey Farm operations.. The day ended with a dinner at the Plainville Farms Restaurant in Cicero, NY. The Friday morning sessions involved group discussions with cooperative management and directors from: Agri-Mark, Dairy Farmers of America, Dairylea, DairyOne Cooperative, First Pioneer Farm Credit, Genex Cooperative, National Grape Cooperative/Welch Foods, St. Albans Creamery Cooperative, and the Cooperative Development Institute (CDI).

The Cooperative Leadership Conference has, over the years, provided past participants with a solid foundation for becoming today’s cooperative leaders. This conference provides a productive investment towards insuring informed future leadership.

The Northeast Cooperative Council (NECC) is a regional membership organization serving cooperatives in New York and New England. Council members represent a variety of cooperative businesses including: rural electric, service, supply, credit and marketing. The mission of the NECC is to enhance the overall effectiveness of member cooperatives through improving the understanding of directors, managers, employees and members about cooperative principles and business practices. Through NECC, member cooperative businesses can leverage their own resources by working together to address common issues and develop solutions to their informational and educational challenges.