



Growing a Community of Sustainable, Grass-Based Dairy Farmers in the Mid-Atlantic through Formal Apprenticeship

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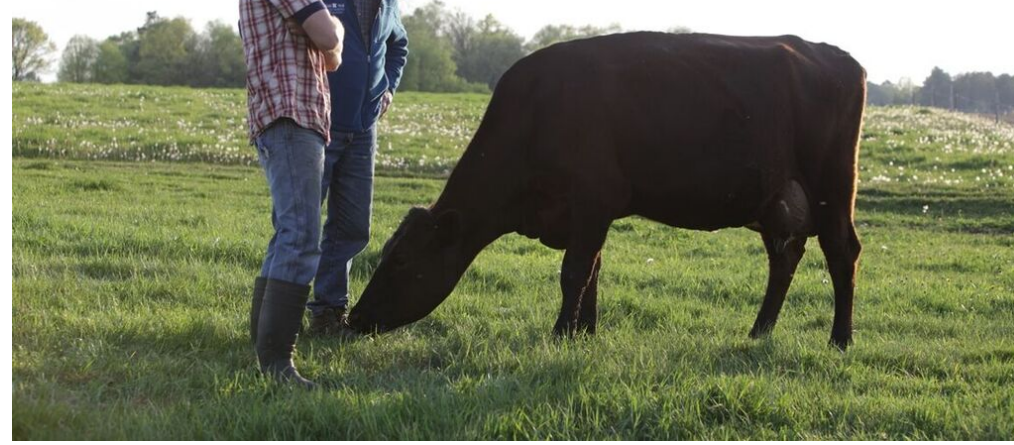
¹ Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture; ² Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship; ³ Center for Dairy Excellence; ⁴ USDA Agricultural Research Service; ⁵ Pennsylvania Grazing Lands Coalition-----NIFA Award number: 2017-70017-26849

Summary: A network of partnering organizations, led by the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture (PASA), collaborate to establish a formalized apprenticeship program in grass-based dairy in Pennsylvania and the surrounding mid-Atlantic region.

DAIRY GRAZING APPRENTICESHIP

Objective:

Train a new generation of dairy farmers using the DGA curriculum



DGA pairs Apprentices with experienced dairy farmers, certified as Master Graziers by a committee of their peers. The program centers on two-years of full-time, paid, on-the-job training, where Apprentices and Masters steadily work through a specific checklist of skills. This work is coupled with related technical instruction, including core college-level courses, and electives such as pasture walks, webinars, and conference workshops.

Outcomes:

- 18 Master Graziers recruited
- 15 Apprentices enrolled
- 7 Journey Dairy Graziers graduated
- Formation of an Apprentice Committee to assume oversight of DGA in the mid-Atlantic region



CENTER FOR Dairy EXCELLENCE

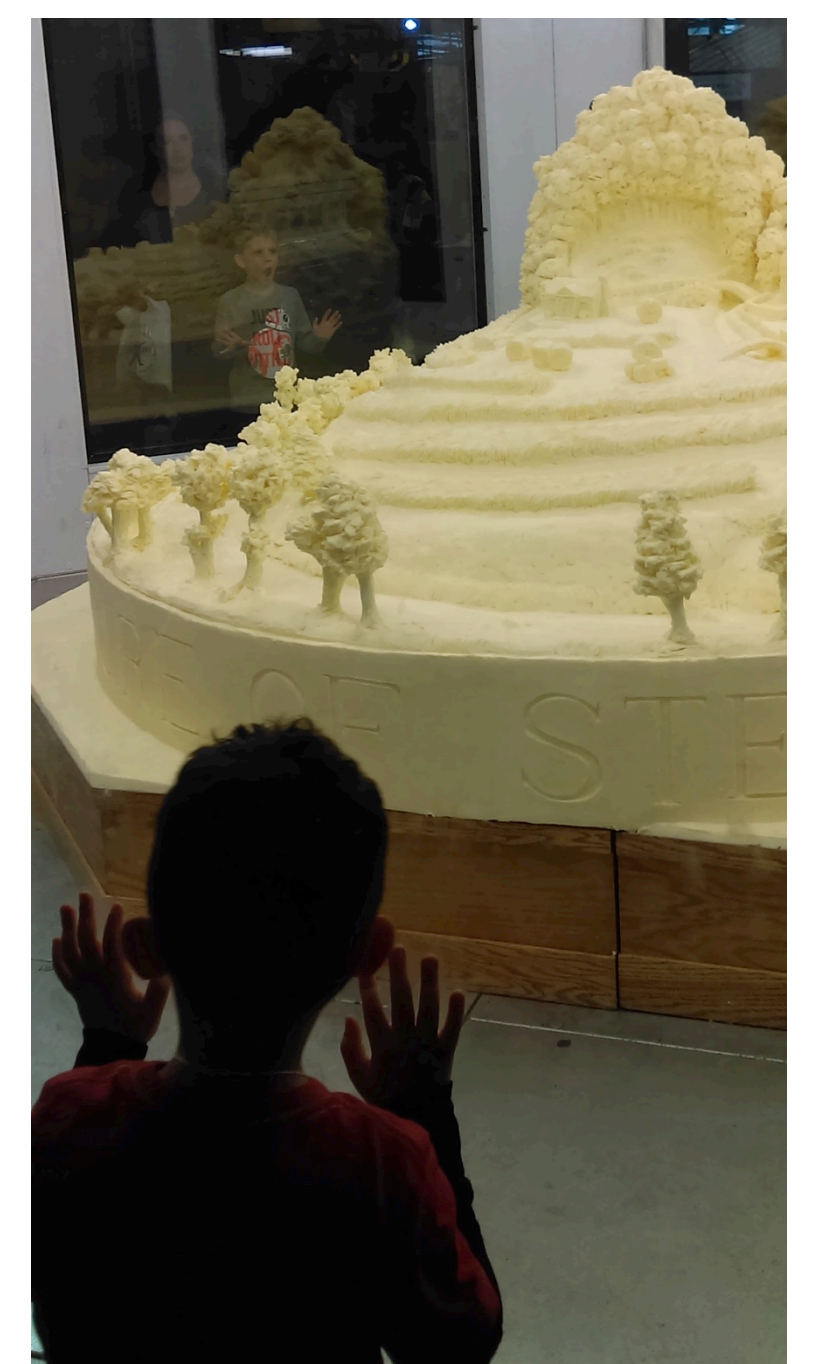
CDE is a nonprofit dedicated to supporting the Pennsylvania dairy industry through research, education, and mentoring. Through partnering with CDE, PASA will significantly increase our outreach within the PA dairy community. CDE will also provide matching funds to support planning sessions for both Masters and Apprentices with CDE business and production consultants.

Objective:

Improve financial models for Master Graziers and Journey Dairy Graziers

Outcomes:

- 6 consulting sessions between Master-Apprentice pairs and CDE teams
- 4 new business plans produced by 2nd year Apprentices and CDE teams
- 1 farm financials case-study booklet summarizing insights from CDE consulting sessions
- 3 beginning farmers participate in a 10-week internship on a grazing dairy farm



Pennsylvania Grazing Lands Coalition

Working together to maintain and improve the Management, Productivity, and Health of the nation's privately-owned grazing land.

PASA will partner with PAGLC to develop a calendar of educational events that provides Masters and Apprentices, as well as others in the dairy community, opportunities to deepen their understanding of grazing practices and strengthen their personal and professional networks.

Objective:

Promote grazing practices and networks through educational events

Outcomes:

- An annual calendar of 8 grazing dairy pasture walks, field days, and workshops
- 300 dairy farmers increase their understanding of grazing practices, farm management, and formal apprenticeship

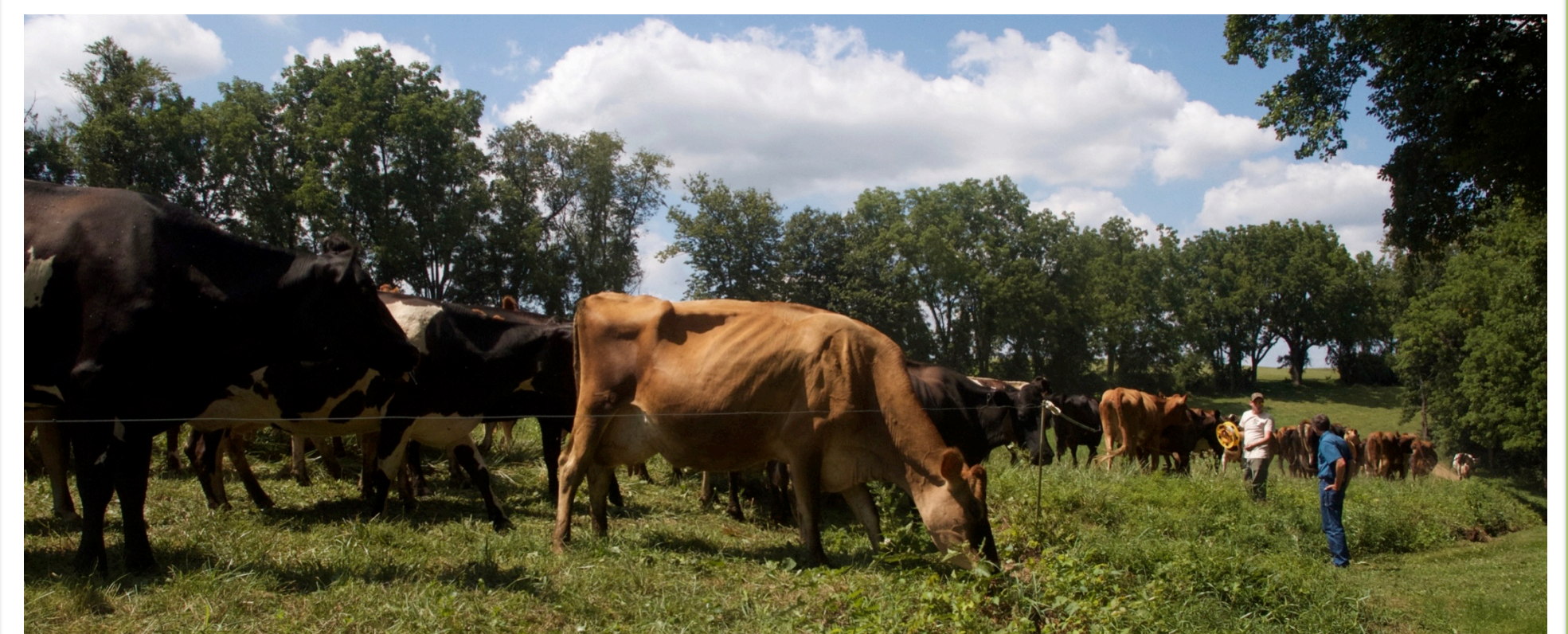


Objective:

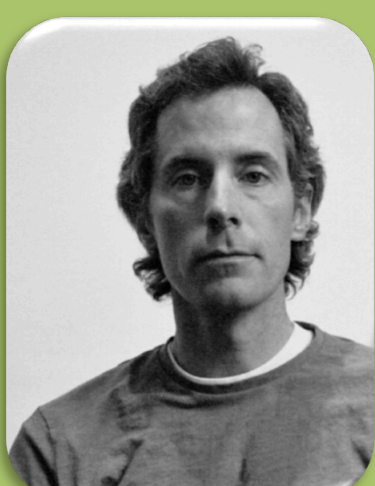
Empower the next generation of dairy graziers with a holistic and quantitative understanding of their farm's economic and environmental impact.

Outcomes:

- Using the Integrated Farming Systems Model from the USDA, 4 apprentices will complete a capstone project assessing their host farm's economic and environmental footprint. Results will be summarized in a factsheet.



The Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture is one of the largest and most active sustainable agriculture organizations in the U.S. PASA's mission is to promote profitable farms that produce healthy food for all people, while respecting the natural environment. PASA has been the administrative partner for the Dairy Grazing Apprenticeship in Pennsylvania and the surrounding mid-Atlantic region since 2016.



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