

NEWS (/NEWS)

2015 California Dairy Leaders Program participants named

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Ten highly qualified individuals have been selected to participate in Western United Dairymen's (WUD) California Dairy Leaders Program, a leadership development course designed to create strong leaders in the dairy industry. They are:

- Gregory Fernandes, Tulare, FernOak Farms
- Kurtis Monteiro, Tulare, M.S. Monteiro & Sons
- John Cardoza, Manteca, Sustainable Conservation
- Tim Van Beek, Tipton, Van Beek Brothers Dairy
- Jason Evangelo, Hanford, D & E Dairy
- Catherine Machado, Madera, Machado Farms
- Rachel Lourdeaux, Petaluma, Bivalve Dairy
- Landon Fernandes, Tulare, Fernjo Farms
- Erin Natcher, Newman, Hidden Valley Dairy
- Kathi Thomas, Fresno, Western United Dairymen

The program consists of regular classes to study challenges affecting dairy producers in today's industry. Topics include: environmental issues, state and federal legislative process, dairy pricing and economics, biotechnological developments, marketing and promotion, and public relations skills. Participants will develop a more thorough understanding of the dairy industry and society through communication and team building exercises.

"It takes strong, informed and engaged leaders to keep the California dairy industry moving forward," said Lucas Deniz, WUD member and chairman of the Dairy Leaders Program. "As a dairy producer our greatest responsibilities lie with our cows and consumers, but we also have to be proactive advocates who share our story, represent our industry and work collaboratively

with others to improve the business environment for those involved in every aspect of dairy production.”

The primary goals of the Dairy Leaders Program is to: develop informed producers who will take leadership roles in the next generation of dairy organizations; increase dairy producers’ awareness of and exposure to the state and federal legislative and regulatory processes; improve understanding of our dairy industry with emphasis on the California milk pricing and pooling system; create leaders who understand and are able to effectively work with media sources to promote dairy issues; and expand the horizons of our future leaders by promoting knowledge and appreciation for non-dairy aspects of society.

To learn more about the Dairy Leaders Program, call Western United Dairymen at (209) 527-6453.
