

From the Department of Dairy and Animal Science

This regular column from Penn State's Department of Dairy and Animal Science features the research findings, student opportunities, and reports on other important topics generated in the Department. The back issues of the column are archived on Lancaster Farming's Internet www.lancasterfarming.com home page. Look for them.

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Internships, or work experience, seem to be a "buzz word" on college campuses and in the business community. Internships are certainly not new and were probably first initiated in the medical field. However, the interest and need for

internship programs in the animal sciences and all of agriculture has increased in recent years. The Department of Dairy and Animal Science at Penn State now has over 25 companies, businesses, and employers that interview students on campus each year and hire interns.

The interest and growth of internship programs has occurred for many reasons. From the

student's standpoint, internships enable students to:

- > Explore career interests
- > Establish professional goals
- > Apply knowledge gained in classes
- > Identify additional courses needed
- > Gain valuable employment experience

Internships allow students to gain experience related to their field of study, often while receiving academic credit. Often, an employer will not hire a student after graduation unless they have had some experience. How does a student get experience if nobody will hire them? An internship is one answer. Many students now do two or more internships. Comments from students who recently completed internships include: "My internship gave me the opportunity to apply what I

had learned in courses." "An internship helps a person think about what you want to do for the rest of your life, and it provides contacts." Students often return to campus with a better understanding of how their course work relates to the real world.

Internships provide many benefits to employers:

- > Influence students career paths
- > Help to strengthen college curricula
- > Evaluate prospective employees
- > Benefit from an infusion of new ideas

Clearly, a 12-week internship can provide an employer with a good evaluation of future employees. According to a recent survey, over 1/3 of the companies surveyed said interns were their most important source of new employees.

At Penn State, we are encouraging more students to get these real life experiences and

grow beyond the classroom. To accomplish this, we need companies, businesses, and organizations to partner in the education of college students. Companies and businesses that have interviewed and selected students for internship programs through the Department of Dairy and Animal Science include:

- Agri Basics, Inc.
- Agricultural Extension
- Agway, Inc.
- Cargill, Inc.
- Certified Angus Beef
- Dairy Promotion Program
- Empire Kosher
- Farm Credit
- Ft. Dodge Animal Health
- Hoechst-Roussel Agri. Vet Company
- John Deere
- Merck & Co., Inc.
- Monsanto, Inc.
- Murphy Family Farms
- National Holstein Association
- New Holland, Inc.
- NRCS
- PA Beef Council

(Turn to Page A37)



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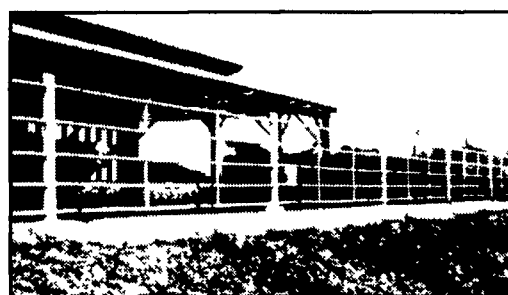
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