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News Release

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Future Ag Leaders Embark on Educational Experience
Dairy Management Inc. Sponsors College Aggies Online

ARLINGTON, Va—20 September, 2016: Farmers and ranchers spend their days forking food to America – now it is your turn to bring their message to the world. With the launch of the eighth annual edition of the College Aggies Online (CAO) scholarship program this past Monday, the Animal Agriculture Alliance is delighted to announce a platinum sponsorship from Dairy Management Inc. (DMI).

“The animal agriculture industry needs strong social media users to communicate information about agriculture to consumers,” said Don Schindler, senior vice president of digital initiatives for DMI, which manages the national dairy check off. “College Aggies Online does a great job of engaging and mentoring the next generation of agriculture communicators for doing just that.”

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With the support from DMI’s sponsorship, CAO participants will cultivate valuable skills while competing for scholarship funds and other prizes. Throughout the nine-week competitive program, college students harvest their interests and grow their passions for animal agriculture. With weekly training and instruction from industry experts, participants connect on social media by posting about current and emerging issues facing farmers and ranchers, and by sharing personal stories and experiences on industry-related topics.

Through research, education and innovation, DMI supports dairy foods, farms and businesses to maintain America’s confidence in the dairy industry. DMI was created to benefit dairy farmers and importers by increasing sales and demand for dairy products. This is the third year DMI has sponsored CAO.

“We are so grateful for DMI’s platinum sponsorship of CAO,” said Kay Johnson Smith, Alliance president and CEO of the organization. “The consistent support from sponsors like DMI helps the Alliance meet our goal of training the next generation of ‘ag-vocates’ while paving a strong future for animal agriculture.”

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CAO registration remains open for both individuals and student organizations to be a part of this year’s competition. For registration information, visit www.animalagalliance.org/connect/#collegeaggies.

Participants receive weekly tasks such as writing blog posts, attending webinars hosted by industry experts, creating infographics and more. If students participate as an organization, they are assigned group challenges, such as holding an “Ag Day” on campus; handing out candy wrapped with meat myths and facts; teaching at local elementary schools, etc. Students earn points for each task completed and for promoting agriculture on social media.

Since its inception in 2009, CAO has impacted over 4,000 students nationally. Organizations are encouraged to contact Allyson Jones-Brimmer, Alliance membership and marketing manager, with questions regarding sponsorship at ajonesbrimmer@animalagalliance.org.

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About Animal Agriculture Alliance: “The [Animal Agriculture Alliance](http://www.animalagalliance.org) is an industry-united, nonprofit organization that helps bridge the communication gap between farm and fork. We connect key food industry stakeholders and arm them with responses to emerging issues. We engage food chain influencers and promote consumer choice by helping them better understand modern animal agriculture. We protect by exposing those who threaten our nation’s food security with damaging misinformation.” (<http://www.animalagalliance.org/about/>)

