



*Dairy Cow on Horsebarn Hill – Photo by Ryan Blatchley '20*

# UConn Department of Animal Science Fall 2021 Student Newsletter

## A Message from the Interim Department Head

Welcome to fall 2021 semester and more importantly, welcome back to campus! As the Interim Department Head, I am looking forward to working with you during the next academic year.

It has been an extraordinary 18 months since we were abruptly sent home in March of 2020. During this time, we have all learned how to work and learn efficiently and effectively from home. While many faculty got used to teaching remotely, interacting with students face-to-face is still the preferred and more effective modality. This fall, faculty and staff will be available in person and our offices will be open during business hours. A full re-opening, however, may feel strange for some and many may have to re-acustom themselves to work on-site again. We may face new challenges under many uncertainties, and we thank you for your patience in advance. While regulations may still change due to new variants of COVID-19, our full commitment to excellence in teaching, advising, research and extension remain the same.

Congratulations to all of our graduating seniors and their families. We hope that you all stay in contact with the Department through email, Facebook, or a return visit to your alma mater. We would love to hear your stories and new career development after leaving UConn. Just send your updated email address to [AnimalScience@UConn.edu](mailto:AnimalScience@UConn.edu) to stay on the mailing list for news and job opportunities.

Our virtual Open House in April was informative and well-attended as was summer orientation for new students. All incoming students should have been assigned an academic advisor. If you are unsure of who your advisor is, it should be listed on your student admin page. If no advisor is listed, please contact the main office via email at [AnimalScience@UConn.edu](mailto:AnimalScience@UConn.edu) and we will assign you an advisor.

*(More on page 2)*

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## Message from the Interim Department Head *(continued)*

A major change in the department is the stepping down of Dr. Steven Zinn after serving diligently for more than 10 years as the Department Head. While doing full-time administration, he also enjoyed ample success in teaching, research and professional services. He recently received the prestigious Morrison Award from the American Society of Animal Science. Congratulations Dr. Zinn! The department is currently searching for new leadership in a nationwide search. If you know of any qualified individuals, please encourage them to apply by visiting [our careers webpage](#).

Students, please check your emails! The call for applications for the Tony Yurgaitis and George Malkemus Arethusa Farm scholarships was recently sent to all Animal Science students. Five \$4,000 scholarships will be awarded to full-time, animal science undergraduate and graduate students with a demonstrated interest in dairy science, dairy foods processing and/or dairy production. The applications should be sent electronically to me ([Xiuchun.Tian@UConn.edu](mailto:Xiuchun.Tian@UConn.edu)) with a copy to Jennifer Simoniello ([Jennifer.Simoniello@UConn.edu](mailto:Jennifer.Simoniello@UConn.edu)) by Tuesday, September 14, 2021.

We look forward to a great success in the re-opening. We urge you to follow the [UConn Promise!](#)

Stay safe.



Dr. Cindy Tian  
Interim Department Head



*Dr. Cindy Tian*

## Dr. Cindy Tian Named Interim Department Head



*Dr. Cindy Tian*

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Animal Science Professor Dr. Cindy Tian as Interim Department Head for the coming year.

She is an internationally recognized scientist and faculty member in the UConn Department of Animal Science. Her research is focused on improving reproductive efficiency in cattle and her notable records include working with the research team that created the first cloned calf in North America.

Dr. Tian began her administrative duties in August and will serve a one-year term while the department undergoes a national search to fill the position permanently.

Read more in an [article on UConn Today here](#).

To learn more about the open position for our Animal Science Department Head, please visit [our careers webpage](#).

## Scenes from Animal Science Student Welcome

Last week we welcomed new and returning students with a welcome event held outside on the front lawn of the George White Building. Students enjoyed UConn ice cream, met faculty and staff members, and visited with representatives of clubs and teams on campus. We welcomed approximately 120 undergraduate students to campus this fall!



*Students pose with ice cream in the ANSC Instagram frame*



*Students learning more about an on-campus club*



*Students with dog at ANSC Student Welcome*

## Equine Program Updates

Alena Meacham, Lecturer and Director of Horse-Riding Programs, collaborated with the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources (CAHNR) Communications office to produce a virtual horse ride video that showcases a trek over Horsebarn Hill. The video was created to celebrate the alumni event "UConn Together" in June. Learn more and [see the video here](#).

The equine program in our department is developing an equine rehabilitation minor and is looking for feedback. The goal of our study is to determine what practical skills and knowledge are deemed most useful for employment of a lay individual (non-veterinarian) in this industry. If you are an equine veterinarian or work at, manage, or own an equine rehabilitation facility, please take a few minutes to [fill out the survey here](#).



*Cover photo of horse on Horsebarn Hill from YouTube*



*UConn graduate student Mia Kawaida wrapping a horse's leg*

## Online Course on GMO's

The College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources (CAHNR) [Department of Extension](#) is offering an online course entitled "Let's Talk GMOs: Creating Consistent Communication Messages." Participants of the course will learn the basics of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and how to present information about them to a variety of audiences. The program was developed in part by Dr. Cindy Tian, who also presents a module in the course on the history of GMOs and dialogue management.

[Learn more and register for the course here.](#)

Let's Talk GMOs

Creating Consistent  
Communication Messages



*Jonathan XIII*

## In Memoria

The University of Connecticut said a final goodbye to former mascot, Jonathan XIII, in August. He was 14 years old and served as the official mascot for almost six years before passing peacefully at home.

Read more in [an article on UConn Today](#) about his time at UConn.

## UConn Dairy Program Media Features

The UConn dairy program was featured on the UConn Facebook page for Cow Appreciation Day in July. The post highlighted the robotic milking system. See more [photos on the Facebook post here](#).

The UConn Dairy program was featured in [a post on the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources Facebook page](#) that highlighted an [article on the CT Post](#) entitled "Connecticut's Ice Cream is the Cherry on Top of Centuries of Dairy Farming History." The article discussed the history of the dairy program at UConn, which dates back to 1881.

The UConn Creamery was also featured in [a Facebook post on the UConn Extension page](#) highlighting fun facts about the ice cream made here in our department.

In celebration of National Cheese Day, CAHNR Communications created [a video highlighting cheese production](#) at the UConn Creamery.



*Cows grazing on Horsebarn Hill*

## Did You Know? Donors Make the Difference!

While we raise our own award-winning cattle and equine herds, the UConn Department of Animal Science accepts select donations to contribute to the diversity of those herds. Pictured is "Brette", a Jersey cow donated by alumna Bonnie Burr and her sister Becky Burr Petro. Brette is classified EX 92 by the American Jersey Cattle Club and is an exceptional addition to our high-quality milking herd.



"Brette"

The equine program at the University of Connecticut Department of Animal Science relies largely on the generous donations of horses from alumni, community members, and equine industry professionals. Many horses come to our program because they are ready to step down from their showing careers or because they are looking for a new job. Whatever the circumstances, we are happy to discuss your horse's future in our program. Care of donated horses is a top priority for the UConn equine program as they are our greatest teaching asset.



ANSC undergraduate with a horse donated to our program

We are currently looking for sound and healthy beginner safe horses with experience in western, dressage, or hunt seat, intermediate to advanced hunter jumper type, as well as playing polo horses. To be considered horses must be 15 years old or younger and currently/recently in regular work.

If you have a horse that fits this description and you are interested in donating them, please contact Lisa Streff, UConn Horse Unit Manager, at 860-486-2034 or [Lisa.Streff@UConn.edu](mailto:Lisa.Streff@UConn.edu).

## UCAHNRA Board Connect Alumni

The UConn College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources Alumni Board was featured in [an article on UConn Today](#) in September. The Board is well represented by three Animal Science alumnae and a student representative, **Kimberly Alvarez**.

The UCAHNRA Board supports current students and alumni through events and programs that seek to connect alumni from all of the CAHNR majors. Anyone interested in getting involved with UCAHNRA should reach out to Erika Glebocki at [Eglebocki@foundation.uconn.edu](mailto:Eglebocki@foundation.uconn.edu) or Amy Chesmer at [AChesmer@foundation.uconn.edu](mailto:AChesmer@foundation.uconn.edu).



UCAHNRA Board Members (ANSC alumni are Amy Salai-top left, Michelle Lewis-center, and Molly Stanavage-middle right)

## Important Dairy Scholarship Deadline

The deadline to apply for the [Arethusa Farm](#) dairy scholarship is Tuesday, September 14<sup>th</sup>!

Up to 5 \$4,000 scholarships will be awarded to full-time animal science graduate and undergraduate students with demonstrated interest in dairy science, dairy foods processing, or dairy production. Email your completed applications (check your email!) to [Dr. Cindy Tian](#) and copy [Jennifer Simoniello](#).



## Undergraduate Student News

Our undergraduates have been making headlines all summer long!

Undergraduate student **Morgan Dougherty** was selected to receive a Summer Undergraduate Research Fund (SURF) award for summer 2021. She worked on a study entitled "Investigation of Altered Reproductive Efficiency of Ewes Born to Poorly-Fed Mothers" under the guidance of Dr. Steven Zinn.

**Megan Davenport**, Animal Science senior, was featured in an article in UConn Today. The article covered her internship with UConn Extension this summer. [Read the article here.](#)

**Kirsten Krause**, Animal Science senior, was featured on social media for her work in an internship with UConn Extension this past summer. Learn more in [a Facebook post here.](#)

Recently graduated Animal Science senior **Caroline Selesky** was featured in [an article on UConn Today](#) in April. Caroline reflected on her time here at UConn and how it's prepared her for the next steps in her journey.



*Morgan Dougherty*



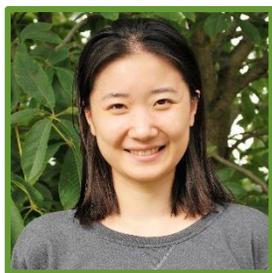
*Caroline Selesky*



*Megan Davenport*



*Kirsten Krause*



*Lang Sun*

## Graduate Student News

**Delong Zhang** (M.S., Dr. Tian) and **Lang Sun** (Ph.D., Dr. D'Amico) were selected as the recipients of the Animal Science Outstanding Graduate Awards. Awardees are selected based on their strong academic performance, outstanding contributions in the research laboratory, and service to the department during the 2020-2021 academic year.



*Nicole Tillquist*



*Delong Zhang*

**Nicole Tillquist** (Ph.D., Dr. Govoni) was awarded 2nd place in the graduate poster competition at the annual American Society of Animal Science meeting in July. Her poster was entitled "Poor Gestational Nutrition Impacts Sheep Offspring Growth but Not Feed Efficiency."

## Welcome New Graduate Students!

The Department of Animal Science would like to extend a warm welcome to the new graduate students who joined us this fall! Visit our [virtual graduate student directory](#) to learn more!



*Rachel Carter*  
(M.S., Dr. Reed)



*Divya Joseph*  
(Ph.D., Dr. Venkitanarayanan)



*Ruiheng Zhao*  
(Ph.D., Dr. Tian)



*Megan Munis*  
(Ph.D., Dr. Zinn)



*Atul Walunj*  
(Ph.D., Dr. Upadhyay)



*Emily Everhart*  
(M.S., Dr. D'Amico)



*Kirsten Krause*  
(M.S., Dr. Zinn)



*Angela Miller*  
(M.S., Dr. Nadeau)



*Chen Zhu*  
(M.S., Dr. Upadhyay)

## Faculty and Staff News

**Dr. Steven Zinn** was selected to receive the 2021 American Society of Animal Science (ASAS) Morrison Award. This prestigious award was given in recognition of his significant lifetime contributions to livestock production research. Zinn was featured in [an article on UConn Today](#) for the award. Read more about this [ASAS awards here](#). In June, Zinn was also honored for his service to the UConn Department of Animal Science as Department Head with an ice cream flavor, Chocolate Brownie Fudge Blast.



*Dr. Steven Zinn accepting the ASAS Morrison Award*

**Dr. Kumar Venkitanarayanan** was named an Institute of Food Technologists Fellow in June. This honor recognizes his contributions to improving food safety. Read more in an [article on UConn Today here](#).



*Dr. Kumar Venkitanarayanan*

**Dr. Sarah Reed** was featured in an article on UConn Today entitled "The Best of Both Breeds: UConn Researchers Studying Best Feeding Practices for Crossbred Calves." The article focused on her current research into the most efficient and effective feeding strategies for growth of crossbred cattle. [Read more in the article here](#).



*Dr. Sarah Reed with crossbred calf*

**Dr. Mary Anne Amalaradjou** received a \$150,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture SARE program to study the potential benefits of utilizing a probiotic supplement to control Salmonella in poultry hatchlings. Read more about this grant in [an article on UConn Today here](#).



*Dr. Mary Anne Amalaradjou*

**Dr. Jenifer Nadeau** was quoted in *The Horse* in August 2021 in an article titled "Road Ready: Haul your horse with safety and wellness in mind."

Animal Science Livestock Units staff member **Dave Macha** retired in August after ~34 years of service to the department. Crops and Feeding staff member **Bill Meister** also retired this month. We wish them all the best and hope that they enjoy their retirement!



*Dave Macha*

We would like to extend a warm welcome to **Dr. Abraham Pellissery** who has joined us as an Assistant Research Professor. Dr. Pellissery completed his Ph.D. and Post Doc here in our department and we're excited for him to join our team as a faculty member. Read more about the new CAHNR faculty members in [an article here](#).



*Dr. Abraham Pellissery*



*Dr. Jenifer Nadeau*

## Thank You Donors



"I worked in Career Services for 10 years but my husband Lonnie, (Louis A. Malkus), was a professor in the Animal Science Department for 30 years. He was the livestock and meat specialist and not only taught but worked with livestock producers throughout the state as well as 4-H livestock programs. Nate Hale was a dear friend who was also on the staff while we were there.

I now live in Easton, Maryland but we lived in Storrs for about 35 years.

Lonnie died in 2011 and it is a pleasure for me to continue supporting the Animal Science Program."

*Thank you Molly Malkus for your generous support of our programs!*

## Where Are they Now? Veterinary Alumni Updates

Our veterinary alumni have been busy making incredible impacts in the field all over the world! Some highlights below:

- **Tierra Price** ('16), D.V.M, was featured in an [article in The Westside Gazette](#) for her work to increase diversity and inclusion in veterinary medicine.
- **Kate Rowatt** ('17) completed her D.V.M at Texas A&M this spring
- **Ally Bettencourt** ('21) started her journey to D.V.M. at Texas A&M this fall. Read more [in an article here](#).
- **Andrew Mordasky** ('17) completed his D.V.M at St. George University this spring and is returning to Connecticut to practice!



*ANSC alumna Andrew Mordasky  
(UConn '17, St. George's  
University '21)*



*ANSC alumna Kate Rowatt  
(UConn '21)*



*ANSC alumna Tierra Price  
(UConn '16, Virginia-Maryland  
College of Vet Med '20)*



*ANSC alumna Kate Rowatt  
(UConn '17, Texas A&M '21)*

## Calling All Alumni!

Do you have a story to share? Please send your news to [MLewis@UConn.edu](mailto:MLewis@UConn.edu).  
We would love to feature you in the next edition of the newsletter!

## Compliance Corner

### REMINDER:

Faculty, Staff, Graduate and Undergraduate Students:

If you will be working with animals this semester it is more than likely that you will require Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) training or re-training. It is required for personnel listed on protocols, independent study students, riding teams, and student barn employees.

**Initial IACUC training** (#1 below) If you have never received IACUC you must complete the "Working with IACUC" module online through the CITI program. Please follow this link: <https://ovpr.uconn.edu/services/rics/animal/iacuc/iacuc-training/>

**Retraining** is required annually for most and every 3 years for PI's.

There are three options for renewals.

1. Complete a course through the CITI program <https://ovpr.uconn.edu/services/rics/animal/iacuc/iacuc-training/>
2. Complete the Biological Safety Considerations: Farm Animal Research and Production course on Husky SMS available through the link below: <https://uconn.bioraft.com/> click on training and course directory to find the specific course

If you are interested in working at the barn units or in an Animal Science lab, be sure to check out the [Compliance Corner](#) page.



Still scratching your head?

Contact Sharon!  
[Sharon.Aborn@UConn.edu](mailto:Sharon.Aborn@UConn.edu)

# UConn Department of Animal Science Fall 2021 Student Newsletter

## Give a Gift...

### ANSC Students, Faculty and Staff Welcome Your Support!

Many donors choose to honor a loved one or friend with a gift to support UConn in their name. Perhaps the gift is in memory of someone who loved UConn's animals, from an alumnus who attended the Department of Animal Science, or in honor of an inspirational professor.

**If you would like to donate to the Department of Animal Science, you can do so one of three ways:**

1. Donate online by clicking [here](#) and choose "College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources" under Choose Category, "Animal Science Department" under Choose Subcategory. Then select your desired fund under the Choose Fund dropdown and click the yellow Add Gift +. Then click "Next Step" on the right-hand side.
2. Donate by mail using the form [here](#). Under the "Designation of Your Gift" section, indicate desired fund from list of funds found online by following step 1.
3. Donate via phone by calling (800) 269-9965 or (860) 486-5000.

For more information, contact Jennifer Simoniello by email at [Jennifer.Simoniello@UConn.edu](mailto:Jennifer.Simoniello@UConn.edu), via phone at (860) 486-1088 or by mail: University of Connecticut, Department of Animal Science, Attn: Jennifer Simoniello, 17 Manter Road, Unit 4040, Storrs, CT 06269-4040.

The Foundation is a tax-exempt, non-profit corporation dedicated to UConn. Donors to the Foundation have the right to request in writing that their identity be anonymous.



*Nicole Tillquist, Animal Science Ph.D. student, working in the lab summer 2021*



*Students on a trail ride with Dr. Jenifer Nadeau (r)*