In early October, we will be joined by a new assistant professor in meat chemistry, Dr. Chaoyu Zhai from Colorado State University. Dr. Zhai brings with him expertise in proteomics and connections with the meat industry. We will soon look to refill a number of faculty positions that are currently vacant in our department. I ask you to support us in these searches and provide your vision for the department. In the meantime, I am grateful to Mr. William Davenport, Dr. Sheila Andrew, and Dr. Sau-mei Leung who will continue to teach courses left behind by retired faculty members. A HUGE thank-you goes to Dr. Curtis Schondelmeyer, who took over the Lab Animal Science course on top of his duties as the Director of Animal Care Services and the University’s Attending Veterinarian. Additionally, we are very blessed that our graduate students Atul Walunj and Saurav Ranjitkar stepped up to teach in our department with very little advanced notice. Both have taught similar courses in their home countries as faculty members and Atul also practiced as a veterinarian in livestock reproduction. I also thank all of those who volunteered to give guest lectures to their courses. Last but not least, Mr. Jaran Smith and Ms. Laurie Norton joined the department during the summer in the administrative office. I ask for your patience while we go through these major transitions and continued training.

For those who plan to graduate this December, please make sure that you apply for graduation and submit plans of study to the degree auditor. The plan of study should be submitted within the first two weeks of the semester through Student Admin. Check with your advisor to make sure you are all set for graduation.

Lastly, we look forward to a great fall semester. We continue to urge you to be positive and to follow the UConn Promise!

Sincerely

Dr. Cindy Tian
Congratulations to Dr. Kristen Govoni on her recent appointment as the Associate Dean of Academic Programs and Director of the Ratcliffe Hicks School of Agriculture.

“I am honored to have been selected to lead the academic mission for CAHNR. It is truly my home away from home,” says Govoni. “In the classroom and beyond, I have dedicated my career to fostering impactful, inclusive experiential learning opportunities for my students. I am so excited to extend this experience to a broader range of undergraduates, academic advisors, and faculty members.”

Read the full UConn Today article

UCONN POLO TEAM WINS NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

The University of Connecticut Polo team won their first national championship since 2008 in Kaufman, Texas in March, beating the Texas Tech Red Raiders 15-11.

Interviewed following the historic program victory, Rylyn Koger ’22 said, "The UConn polo team is my family. The girls on my team are my best friends and I am so lucky to have been their captain."

Read the full article
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.

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.

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.

Did you know?
The University of Connecticut offers multiple choices for students interested in participating on competitive riding teams. Options include the Dressage Team, Equestrian Team (hunt seat), Polo Teams (men’s and women’s), and Western Team. Learn more
SCENES FROM ANIMAL SCIENCE STUDENT WELCOME

Last week we welcomed new and returning students with a welcome event held outside 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 100 new undergraduate students to campus this fall!

Fun Fact: The UConn Creamery produces over 25 flavors of ice cream, all made from milk from UConn cows!

DISCOVERING EXCELLENCE IN OKLAHOMA

Several graduate students and faculty members attended the American Society of Animal Science (ASAS)/Canadian Society of Animal Science (CSAS) Joint Annual Meeting in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma in July.

Faculty and students gave invited presentations and presented their research in oral and poster competitions, including Mia Kawaida (PhD, Dr. Reed) and Nicole Tillquist (PhD, Dr. Govoni), who were both awarded the H. Allen Tucker Appreciation Club Graduate Student Travel Award this year.

Undergraduate Student Welcome Event Aug. 30, 2022 (Dalton Scott/UConn CAHNR Communications)

Graduate students and faculty posing for a photo at the ASAS/CSAS Joint Annual Meeting in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma in July (Contributed Photo)

COPYRIGHT 2022 MILTON LEVIN
ASAS UNDERGRADUATE AWARDS

The 2022 American Society of Animal Science (ASAS) Undergraduate Scholar Recognition Awards Ceremony was held in May. ANSC sophomores, juniors, and seniors in the top 10% of their class are eligible for this award.

The ASAS Undergraduate Scholastic Achievement Award recognizes undergraduate students enrolled in a four-year curriculum of animal science (dairy, food, meat, or poultry) for a period of at least two semesters or three quarters who rank scholastically among the top 10% of senior, junior, or sophomore classes and who are of good moral character and intend to pursue a career in animal science.

Congratulations and great job to our students all their hard work!

Learn more about this ASAS undergraduate award

THANK YOU, DONORS!

In 2021, CAHNR awarded over $868,000 in total scholarship funding. This included nearly 500 scholarships to 361 deserving students funded through donor support, which allows students to enrich their educational and experiential opportunities while at UConn and reduces the potential burden for families.

"To our dedicated donors: you provide invaluable support that allows our students and their families to embark on a college experience with less worry of financial hardships and focus only on opportunity. Together, you form the foundation of our College and pave the way for a bright future" - Dean Indrajeet Chaubey.

Undergraduate Students pose with scholarship certificates in front of the George White Building (Michelle Lewis/UConn ANSC)

Cows on horsebarn Hill. Sept. 3, 2022. (Sean Flynn/UConn Photo)
DAIRY PROGRAM MEDIA FEATURES

The Boston Globe featured the Dairy Bar in their 40 Tiny, Perfect Things About Summer in New England feature publication. Francis Storrs, editor, stated the following regarding the ice cream shop: “The University of Connecticut started as an agricultural school, and the Dairy Bar helps continue that tradition, crafting dozens of flavors using milk and cream from cows you can actually see from the shop, as they graze on Horsebarn Hill.”

Yankee Magazine also had the Dairy Bar among its top ice cream shops in New England and had this to say: “Through an observation window, you can see UConn students and Animal Science staff formulating decades-old recipes. Wander up Horsebarn Hill to marvel at the robotic and uniquely human ‘voluntary milking system,’ which allows the cows that power this hyperlocal creamery to choose when to contribute their next udderful of milk.”

SAY CHEESE!

The Creamery cheeses were awarded Bronze medals at the 2022 Big E Gold Medal Cheese Competition. Old Farm Lane Fresh Cheese - Green Chili, Old Farm Lane Fresh Cheese - Chipotle, and Old Farm Lane Fresh Cheese - Cracked Bl each earned medals in the Class 9 - Flavored Semi-Soft Cheese category.

View the official results of the competition

Learn More about The D’Amico Microbiology Lab
A translational food microbiology research laboratory at the University of Connecticut

Block of 1881 Reserve cheese produced by the UConn Creamery (Contributed Photo)
ALAN THACKER BUSBY ('18) HONORED IN UCONN TODAY

ANSC Alumni and University trailblazer Alan Thacker Busby, was honored by UConn Today in February. Busby, the university's first Black student and graduate, attended what was then called Connecticut Agricultural College to pursue a degree in Animal Science between 1914 and 1918. As mentioned in the article, Busby was a popular and accomplished student, who spent much of his time working at the College's animal barns, taking care of the facilities, horses, and dairy cows on Horsebarn Hill.

Following his graduation from the CAC, Busby went on to serve for several months overseas in the United States Army in France during the final months leading to the end of World War 1, and later worked in higher education.

Read more about his life

UCONN MAGAZINE FEATURES ANSC ALUMNA

Sisters Augusta Collins ('00 PhD plant science/agronomy) and Telchilde Hinckley ('00 PhD animal science/reproductive physiology) were visited by UConn Magazine in February at their farm in Bethlehem, Conn. The famous farming nuns are still plying their doctorates in plant and animal science by raising Belted Galloways and making Gouda cheese.

Learn more
IMPORTANT DAIRY Scholarship Deadline

The deadline to apply for the Arethusa Farm dairy scholarship is Tuesday, September 13th!

Several scholarships up to $4,000 will be awarded to full-time animal science graduate and undergraduate students with demonstrated interest in dairy science, dairy foods processing, or dairy production.

Selection will be based on the above criteria and financial need (as per the Financial Aid Office). The ANSC Scholarship Committee will review scholarship applications and the goal is to award these scholarships to animal science students by mid-October 2022.

Completed applications are to be emailed to Michelle Lewis (mlewis@uconn.edu) by 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 13.

Check your email for details!

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

Isabelle Ampofo (PhD, Dr. Fragomeni)
Nicholas Barnello (MS, Dr. Govoni)
Agustín Curutchet (MS, Dr. Fragomeni)
Ana Leticia Rodrigues (MS, Dr. Upadhyaya)
Gaurav Dutta (PhD, Dr. Fragomeni)
Sulthana Humayoon Muttathukonam (MS, Dr. Amalaradjou)
Natalie Rossi (MS, Dr. Fragomeni)
Chetna Shah (MS, Dr. Upadhyay)
Viktoria Sinani (MS, Dr. Zinn)
Santhi Priya Voggu (PhD, Dr. Govoni)
Gopi Yalavarthi (MS, Dr. Nadeau)
NEW FACES IN THE DEPARTMENT

Dr. Chaoyu Zhai, Assistant Professor in Meat Chemistry, obtained his PhD from Colorado State University, where he applied proteomic and metabolomic approaches with machine learning algorithms to explain and predict fresh meat quality variation resulting from preharvest and postharvest factors, such as breed, muscle type, noninfectious animal diseases, heat stress, feeding system, feed additives, and storage time. He also investigated the interaction between lipid peroxidation products and enzymes ruling meat color stability and tenderization on the molecular level. He received his BS from the program of Food Science & Engineering at Shandong Agricultural University (China) in 2015, and he continued his MS focusing on meat biochemistry and muscle biology jointly at Shandong Agricultural University and the University of Kentucky from 2015 to 2018.

Laurie Norton, Financial Assistant 1, has experience working in non-profit organizations helping college students, banks and other private sectors. She is located in GW Room 104.

Jaran Smith, Educational Program Assistant 1, is a recent graduate from Eastern Connecticut State University with experience working in higher education. He is located in GW Room 107.

Cynthia Kelley (BS, ’86), Adjunct Professor, has 45 years of experience with horses, dogs, small and large ruminants and small animals as well as a working knowledge of how to handle and work with those species. She is an alumna of the animal science program, having earned her Bachelor of Science in 1986. Prior to joining the department, she worked as an Agricultural Science teacher. Her aim is to help students become life-long learners in animal science.

Tyler Bentley, Agricultural Worker 2

John-Paul (JP) Williamson, Agricultural Worker 2
IN MEMORIA

It is with great sadness that we share the news that Dr. Robert "Bob" Milvae, Animal Science Associate Professor, passed away this spring (1953-2022). Dr. Bob faithfully served our UConn community for over 35 years. He was an incredible mentor, teacher, friend, and above all, treated people with kindness and respect, leaving a lasting mark on everyone he met. He will be sorely missed by everyone in the department and the UConn community at large.

Read more about Dr. Milvae's life

Dr. Robert "Bob" Milvae (1953 - 2022)
Madison Lane ’24 spent this past spring interning with the Kentucky Equine Management Internship program (KEMI), gaining hands-on experience with industry professionals. In her recount of the experience, Lane mentioned feeling “empowered” and “driven to take advantage of every opportunity” presented. Learn more about the KEMI program

Matt Syrotiak ’25 interned with UConn 4-H during the summer. His internship included assisting at 4-H summer programs at area camps, libraries and schools throughout Litchfield County. Matt's commitment to giving back to the 4-H program was discussed in a UConn Today article in March. Read the full article

Hailey Kampton ’24 spent her summer interning with the Department of Animal Science Livestock and Equine Units. Kampton's internship provided her with hands-on experience working with animals, machinery and production. Read more about her full experience

Jillian Bowen ’25 joined the UConn One Health Office as an intern this summer. Bowen's work included supporting One Health's goal of achieving optimal health outcomes recognizing the interconnection between people, animals, plants, and their shared environment. She assisted with educating UConn 4-H members and Connecticut residents about how to enjoy all that summer in the state has to offer without all the risk. Read more about her experience

Jasmine Morris ’23 received a UConn Idea Grant in February, which she applied to her volunteer work with the Horizons at The Ethel Walker School Program in Simsbury over the summer. With support from the Idea Grant, Morris educated students about animal science and demonstrated how animals can support their socioemotional learning. Read about her experience

Madison Robicheau's ’23 passion and determination for horseback riding was on full display in her interview for UConn Today in August. In the article, Robicheau recounts her experiences with the UConn Polo team, including their national championship win this past spring. Read the full article
Brindhalakshmi Balasubramanian (PhD, Dr. Upadhyay), Molly Riser (PhD, Dr. Fragomeni), Bruna Santana (PhD, Dr. Fragomeni), Nicole Tillquist (PhD, Dr. Govoni) and Jiaqi Zhu (Ph.D., Dr. Tang) were awarded conference participation awards from the UConn Graduate School.

Mairui Gao (PhD, Dr. Amalaradjou), Yuying Ren (PhD, Dr. Amalaradjou), Ragini Reddyvari (PhD, Dr. Amalaradjou) and Jodie Allen (PhD, Dr. Upadhyay) traveled to the 2022 Poultry Science Association (PSA) Annual Meeting in San Antonio, Texas. Students presented their research findings and were finalists in the oral and poster competitions held at the meeting.

Mia Kawaida (PhD, Dr. Reed) was recognized as the recipient of the Graduate Student Mentorship Excellence Award by the Office of Undergraduate Research.

Bruna Santana (PhD, Dr. Fragomeni) and Molly Riser (PhD, Dr. Fragomeni) presented their research at the 12th World Congress of Genetics Applied to Livestock Production in Rotterdam, The Netherlands.

Mairui Gao (PhD, Dr. Amalaradjou) participated in Annual International Association for Food Protection Meeting held in Pittsburgh, PA. Gao was the recipient of the 2022 Trial Scholarship and was selected as the judge's choice winner for the 3 MT Thesis Competition.

Nicole Tillquist (PhD, Dr. Govoni) was voted to be the next Graduate Student Director of the Northeast Section of ASAS/ADSA.

Saurav Ranjitkar (PhD, Dr. Tian) was selected as the recipient of the Xiangzhong (Jerry) Yang Graduate Research Excellence Award for Fall 2022. The Jerry Yang Scholarship Award is based on demonstrated academic achievement and is to encourage research excellence at the University, College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources. The award is in memory of University Professor Xiangzhong (Jerry) Yang.

Emily Everhart (MS, Dr. D’Amico), Atul Walunj (MS, Dr. Upadhyay), Saurav Ranjitkar (PhD, Dr. Tian) and Mairui Gao (PhD, Dr. Amalaradjou) were selected as recipients of the ANSC Outstanding Graduate Student Award. Awardees were selected based on their strong academic performance, outstanding contributions in the research laboratory, and service to the department during the 2021-2022 academic year.

Yue Sue (PhD, Dr. Tang) was selected to receive the Student Best Poster Award in 48th International Embryo Technology Society (IETS) Annual Conference.
Dr. Cindy Tian and Dr. Jenifer Nadeau were among faculty members recognized by the Association for Communication Excellence for their research.

Dr. Breno Fragomeni, Dr. Joe Emenheiser, Dr. Cindy Tian, and Dr. Dennis D’Amico were featured in the 2021 editions of Research and Extension Highlights organized by the College of Agriculture, Health and Natural Resources.

Dr. Dennis D’Amico’s research concerning protective culture and food-borne pathogens in cheese was featured in a number of national publications, including NewBreak, Labroots, Phys.org, Lab Manager and more. Read the article

Mary Margaret Smith was the recipient of the University’s Unsung Hero Award, awarded annually to a person who is continually both a real benefit to coworkers and a stable, dependable resource for the entire University.

Dr. Young Tang and Dr. Cindy Tian’s work on bovine stem cells for cultivated meat was recognized by BioCT and UConn Today. Dr. Tang and Dr. Tian demonstrated the first successful iPS cells for bovine. Read more

Dr. Jenifer Nadeau’s article, “Best Practices for Trail Riding” was featured in the Successful Farming category on Agriculture.com. Read the full article

Dr. Sarah Reed was a guest editor for issue number 3 of Animal Frontiers (Performance Horses). Read the full issue

Dr. Abraham Pellissery was the recipient of a $300K Grant to reduce antimicrobial resistance in broiler chickens using phytochemicals. Read the full article

Dr. Breno Fragomeni was awarded a U.S. Department of Agriculture grant to evaluate if a national evaluation for heat tolerance in dairy cattle is feasible.

Dr. Mary Anne Amalaradjou was selected to serve as the faculty affiliate for inclusive excellence with the University Graduate School.

Several members of the Department of Animal Science Faculty and Staff received awards at the CAHNR Annual Awards and Honors event in April. Awardees include Dr. Abhinav Upadhyay ’14 - Early Career Research Award, Sharon Aborn ’99 - UCAHNRA Outstanding Staff, and Dr. Steven Zinn - Spirit of the Land Grant Award.
ALUMNI NEWS

Dr. Surendranath Suman (PhD, ’06) was selected as the 2022 AMSA Distinguished Research Award recipient.

Dr. Robert Cushman (MS, ’92, advised by Dr. Robert Milvae) was recently promoted to a GS15 scientist at the USDA-ARS U.S. Meat Animal Research Center in June 2022. Dr. Cushman leads a research team that focuses on developmental programming and reproductive physiology in beef cattle.

Dr. Ranjith Ramanathan (PhD, ’12) was the recipient of the Early Career Achievement Award from the American Society of Animal Science (ASAS). Learn more about Dr. Ramanathan

Dr. Robert P. Wettemann (’66, ’68) was the recipient of the Morrison Lifetime Achievement Award from ASAS. Read more about Dr. Wettemann’s career

Jim Davenport (BS,’83) was featured in an article regarding teat health and milk quality in American Agriculturist. Read the full article

Audra Persano (R.H.S.A. ’13) and the United States Women’s National Polo Team placed 2nd at the 2022 Women’s World Polo Championship in Argentina!

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?
VETERINARY ALUMNI UPDATES

Dr. Casey Merola (’18) started a new position with Glenolden Animal Hospital in Pennsylvania.

Dr. Chelsea Santa Lucia (’17) joined Twin Pines Equine Veterinary Services in Connecticut as a full-time equine veterinarian.

Dr. Amanda Michelson (’18) began a new position at Hyde Park Veterinary Clinic in Florida.

Dr. Laura Bylina (’12) started a new position with Coastal Elite Veterinary Services in New Jersey.

Calling all alumni!
Do you have a story to share? Please send your news to jaran.smith@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.

Need More Info?
Email Sharon Aborn (sharon.aborn@uconn.edu).
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 Michelle Lewis by email at mlewis@uconn.edu, via phone at (860) 486-1088 or by mail: University of Connecticut, Department of Animal Science, Attn: Michelle Lewis, 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.