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DAIRY TRAINING CENTRE TO BOOST INDUSTRY CONFIDENCE

Dairy UK has welcomed today's opening of a brand new dairy technology training centre in Cheshire as the start of a new era for the industry.

The Eden International Dairy Academy at Reaseheath College is the product of hard work by Dairy UK, dairy companies including Arla Foods UK, Robert Wiseman Dairies, First Milk, Milk Link, Muller Dairy and Dairy Crest, the National Skills Academy for Food and Drink Manufacturing and Reaseheath College.

An investment of £2.7m means that facilities are at the cutting edge of technology. And a new Foundation Degree in Dairy Technology ensures that students leave with the skills needed to develop the industry's future.

Speaking at the Academy's official opening today, Dairy UK Director General Jim Begg said: "Dairy UK has worked tirelessly alongside the country's major dairy companies, the National Skills Academy and Reaseheath to bring Project Eden to life.

"We can now boast one of the best equipped training dairies in the world, capable of developing the dairy technologists of the future. This investment is necessary for the industry to maintain a competitive position in the world. Those responsible for the innovation and efficiency gains that our processors need will spring from this establishment.

"The Academy is a major vote of confidence in the future of the industry. Dairy farmers, processors and retailers should interpret this as a sign that the UK is serious about building and maintaining an important role in the global dairy sector."

Jens Termansen, Supply Chain Development Director at Arla and Chairman of the Eden Steering Group said: "This all came about because the dairy industry in the UK was facing serious skills shortages in some critical areas, such as dairy technologists.

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“We brought the industry together with a shared vision of our current and future skills requirements, how to meet them, and how that would help improve the competitiveness of our industry and our individual companies. This fabulous new Eden Academy is just the start, and we will keep working together to achieve our goals.”

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For further information and for photos, please contact Sam Fortescue, Communications Director at Dairy UK on: 020 7467 2630 / 07918 942999 or email sfortescue@dairyUK.org

NOTES FOR EDITORS

Dairy UK is a trade association that represents the interests of dairy farmers, producer co-ops, milk processors and doorstep deliverymen. For more information visit www.dairyUK.org.



Proud of Dairy is a Dairy UK campaign to raise the profile of the dairy industry. Are you Proud of Dairy too? If so, why not support the campaign by clicking onto www.proudofdairy.com where you can find more details.

About Project Eden

Project Eden is a groundbreaking dairy education initiative. It is driven by the whole dairy industry to provide a foundation degree level dairy qualification for dairy processing and manufacturing personnel, with the aim of producing world-class staff for tomorrow's dairy industry.

Students are taught the fundamental principles of dairy production processes, and become innovative, creative, motivated and confident enough to develop the UK dairy industry. Twenty-seven students were enrolled for the first year of teaching.

The new qualification provides comprehensive dairy training for three years at the Eden International Dairy Academy at Reaseheath College, with terms spanning 12 weeks in years 1 and 3, and 18 weeks in year 2. Students study dairy theory, science and practical skills using the Academy's state-of-the-art equipment. The remainder of the time is spent "hands on" in the dairy industry working with some of the country's leading companies.

Project Eden is a unique collaboration with the backing of the whole UK dairy industry. It is the start of a new drive to collaboratively develop industry skills. Those involved include Dairy UK, the Society of Dairy Technology, Arla Foods UK, Dairy Crest, First Milk, Robert Wiseman Dairies, Milk Link and Muller Dairy, as well as the National Skills Academy for Food and Drink Manufacturing and Reaseheath College.