

DAIRY SCIENCE, BS

Admissions to the Dairy Science, BS were suspended as of spring 2025 and will be discontinued as of fall 2029. If you have any questions, please contact the department.

Students interested in the Dairy Science BS may be interested in the Dairy and Food Animal Management BS (<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/agricultural-life-sciences/animal-dairy-sciences/dairy-food-animal-management-bs/>), a new major as of Fall 2024.

Studying the biology and management of dairy cows can lead to improvements in dairy production, animal welfare, human nutrition, and environmental protections. Students in the dairy science major learn all of these principles while embracing innovation and technology to meet needs in the dairy industry. The Department of Animal and Dairy Sciences, home of the undergraduate program in dairy science, produces skilled leaders who address the challenges of animal health and welfare, land and water stewardship, precision livestock farming, food safety, and biomedical advancements.

A 10:1 student-faculty ratio and small classes allow for meaningful connections. Out-of-classroom learning opportunities, such as internships on farms or with agribusiness, give students the training they need for successful 21st-century careers. Students can also gain valuable experience in research labs or in the student-operated Dairy Cattle Center.

Students majoring in dairy science are working toward a variety of careers that require a strong background in animal biology including agribusiness, dairy farm management, technical services and consulting, research, and teaching. Students also prepare for veterinary medicine or graduate school.

LEARN THROUGH HANDS-ON, REAL-WORLD EXPERIENCES

UW–Madison has cows on campus. The Dairy Cattle Center is located near classrooms giving students access to cows during lab sessions. But dairy science isn't just about milking cows – it includes genetics, nutrition, lactation, and biological and digital technologies that are relevant to the dairy industry and beyond. Out-of-the-classroom experiences are the norm for dairy science students, with 100% of students completing an internship or field experience.

Field courses include dairy nutrition and dairy cattle judging. Lab courses cover dairy herd management, lactation, reproduction, and dairy cattle improvement. Students solve problems through field trips to working commercial dairy operations.

BUILD COMMUNITY AND NETWORKS

Madison is an ideal location for the study of dairy science. It is a vibrant city – home to many large agribusinesses – that's also located close to dairy farms. Students volunteer in a variety of activities directed by the Badger Dairy Club (<https://win.wisc.edu/organization/badgerdairyclub/>). The largest effort is their work at the World Dairy Expo, an international dairy event held in Madison.

CUSTOMIZE A PATH OF STUDY

Dairy science students can customize their coursework to fit their career goals with a large variety of classes in the department. The major can be combined with other majors such as agricultural business management, genetics and genomics, life science communications, or agronomy. Students can also pursue Honors in Dairy Science.

MAKE A STRONG START

Students can take an introductory seminar course that helps them develop an individualized four-year course plan, learn about internships and job opportunities, and discuss leadership development opportunities.

GAIN GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE

Dairy science majors are encouraged to go on study abroad programs, where they can immerse themselves in research or field experiences. In recent years, a program to central Mexico has focused on global agricultural, rural development, and the relationship between the U.S. and Mexican dairy industries, and many students have completed a semester abroad in The Netherlands. Students can explore studying abroad as a Dairy Science major by utilizing the Dairy Science Major Advising Page. Students work with their advisor and the CALS study abroad office to identify appropriate programs.