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First-ever Cornell China Dairy Institute launches



It's a match made in China. Chinese dairy veterinarians are interested in learning about American veterinary practices, and faculty at Cornell University's College of Veterinary Medicine are eager to share information. After several months of discussions, the Cornell China Dairy Institute launched on September 6, 2010, in Sanhe City, Heibei province, 37 miles east of Beijing. (Read the [opening ceremony remarks](#) offered by Dr. Lorin Warnick.)

Modeled after Cornell's highly successful Summer Dairy Institute, which has trained 134 food supply veterinarians over the last seven years, the Cornell China Dairy Institute is a four-week continuing education collaboration between Cornell and Huaxia Dairy. Organizations supporting the program include Hebei Sanhe City Vocational Education College, Pfizer, the United States Grains Council, Land O' Lakes, and the City of Sanhe government. The program will be taught by six Cornell veterinarians who will be supported by two current veterinary students and one laboratory technician. Veterinarians will rotate through the program, each spending about 10 days onsite, and will focus on veterinary issues that are related to dairy production. Two dozen veterinarians are registered for the inaugural Institute.

"The program is a unique collaboration between a private dairy farm, Chinese educational and government institutions and a US veterinary college," said Dr. Lorin Warnick, associate dean for veterinary education at Cornell. "The Institute, which we hope will be the first of many initiatives with veterinarians in the area, will be taught on a private farm, making hands-on learning a prominent part of the course. Classes will be held at Hebei Sanhe City Vocational Education College and clinical skills labs will be held at the Huaxia dairy farm. Our goal is to improve the clinical abilities and knowledge of veterinary staff working on modern dairy farms in China. We think the learning will be more thorough, more relevant, and more enduring, if the training is offered on-site, where the issues are real, immediate, and decisions matter."

The program's content has been tailored to meet the current needs of the veterinary community in China. Instruction will focus on and integrate a variety of topics, including how to care for sick cows, calf health and heifer raising, dairy reproduction, and techniques for ensuring safe, wholesome milk production. Cornell veterinarians will offer instruction in English that will be translated into Madarin by local translators.

The timing is right for this type of initiative, according to Charles Shao, CEO and chairman of Huaxia Dairy Farm, who explained that China's dairy industry is presently in a growth phase.

"Our veterinarians are thirsty for the information that Cornell can share," said Shao. "There is an intense desire to improve efficiency and production in China and to be able to support increased consumer demand for high quality milk and dairy products. This collaboration has the potential to have a strong impact on the delivery of veterinary services to dairy farms in China."

The program, which will be funded by Huaxia Dairy, corporate sponsors and with tuition revenue from program participants, also supports two goals outlined in the College's strategic plan: to raise the standards for veterinary practice around the world and to provide additional teaching opportunities for Cornell veterinary students who may be interested in a career in academia.

"With China now being the world's second largest economy, and third largest milk producer, I see this as a unique opportunity to go there and see how they operate," said Will Leone, a member of the Class of 2011 who intends to work in the field of food animal production after graduation. "I expect that I will learn just as much as I teach during this experience."