

Graduate Research Assistant / M.S. opportunity in Value-Added Dairy Production

Dairy producers have historically been at the mercy of volatile milk prices based on national and international market trends. To combat that, some producers have turned to value-added dairy production, otherwise known as farmstead processing. These producer/processors are required to manage animal husbandry, the processing plant, and often customer marketing and relations. The University of Tennessee is conducting research in partnership with Kentucky and North Carolina to better understand the current state of the Southeast Value-Added Dairy industry and identify key components of success. These research efforts will be a combination of exploratory visits to value-added processors across the three states and survey work.

Students in the Eckelkamp lab will be provided the opportunity to learn about the dairy industry, data collection, collaboration with other specialties across campus, present their research at national meetings, and to develop communication and interpersonal skills. For more information about the Eckelkamp lab, interested applicants should visit <https://utia.tennessee.edu/utdairy/>. *This M.S. student position also provides full tuition, a stipend, and Graduate Student benefits.* In turn, students will contribute to extension publications, research articles, and direct producer outreach. A variety of degree backgrounds should be a sufficient starting point for this MS position, but a knowledge of animal science and baseline knowledge of dairy cattle and animal handling will be beneficial.

Interested applicants should submit a brief letter describing the basis for their interest, along with a curriculum vitae, copies of their undergraduate transcript, and contact information for three references to: Dr. Liz Eckelkamp, Assistant Professor, Department of Animal Science, using the e-mail address eeckelka@utk.edu. Applicants may also reach Dr. Eckelkamp by e-mail or phone (865-974-8167) with any questions, if necessary.