GSD President’s Letter

by Marie Lawton, Cornell University

This year the ADSA Graduate Student Division (GSD) is gearing up to host some engaging opportunities for our members. We are looking forward to a great year of professional development, networking, and social activities followed by an exciting program at the ADSA annual meeting in 2019. The officers for this year’s GSD Advisory Council include President Marie Lawton, Cornell University; Vice President Bethany Dado-Senn, University of Florida; Secretary Glenda Pereira, University of Minnesota; Treasurer Melissa Cantor, University of Kentucky; Dairy Foods Director Heather McCain-Keefer, North Carolina State University; and Dairy Production Director Connor Owens, Virginia Tech.

The 2018 annual meeting was very successful for GSD as we experienced record-breaking attendance for many of our events. For the GSD symposium we brought back the popular Manuscript Writing Workshop, which included speakers Lou Armenzano, Dave Barbano, Marina von Keyserlingk, and Corey Geiger. During the Career Insights Luncheon, professional members of ADSA provided career advice to graduate students. Participation in the Three-Minute Thesis Competition was popular as usual and resulted in a huge audience. Gustavo Mazon, University of Kentucky, took first place this year. All of the presentations can be seen on our website. New this year, we hosted a poster session mixer, an event for students, industry, and academia. The goal of this event was to connect job-seeking graduate students with employers in an informal environment.

The GSD Advisory Council and committees are working hard this year to expand our presence on social media. Watch for our posts on Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, and the GSD website. Please contact GSD President Marie Lawton at adsagsd@gmail.com with any questions or ideas for improvement or if you would like to get more involved with the ADSA GSD.
International Spotlight: Azores Dairy Industry

by Glenda Pereira, MS, University of Minnesota

Author’s note: I was born in the Azores but moved to the United States at the age of 10. My family still owns and operates a dairy farm with 100 milking Holsteins (Figure 1). It wasn’t until recently that the Azores become the “Hawaii of Portugal,” as tourism has substantially increased in the past five years.

History of the Azores
When you picture volcanic islands in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean (Figure 2; 932 miles or 1,500 km from mainland Portugal and 2,423 miles or 3,900 km from North America), would you think of dairy cows? One of the most talked-about tourist attractions in the Azores is the green hills filled with dairy cows.

The Azores were discovered around 1427 and populated in the 15th century, mostly by people of the Portugal mainland. However, these volcanic islands have been around for long; some believe the oldest island to be 5 to 8 million years old. Very small in size, covering 901 square miles (2,333 km²) over nine islands, the Azores have a total population of 245,283. The largest and main island, named São Miguel, has 138,138 inhabitants on 290 square miles (760 km²). The official spoken language is Portuguese; however, many different dialects are heard throughout the nine islands. Temperatures vary from 40 to 80°F (4–26°C) throughout the year, and the breeze is the ocean’s way of reminding you that you’re surrounded by water.

Dairy Industry
Because the weather is so favorable, grazing is the most common practice during the year. The pastures are predominantly made up of ryegrass, some clover, and alfalfa. Permanent fencing is rare other than hydrangea bushes or the lava rock walls dividing pastures (Figure 3); therefore, electric fencing is heavily used.

Most dairy cows receive a pelleted grain concentrate during milking, as this is an incentive for cows to come into the milking parlor from pasture. Some farmers also supplement corn silage and hay bales...
in feed bunks during this time. With the average herd size of 20 to 30 cows, mobile milking parlors are used.

Producers still bring milk to the milk processors in the back of a pickup truck after every milking. In the first 6 months of 2018 alone, the Azores produced 104 million gallons (394 million L). Most of the milk produced is used for consumption, including ultra-high temperature processed milk, cheese (mainly raw and aged), whey protein, butter, yogurt, and heavy cream.

There are around 90,000 milking cows in the Azores, and 50% are on the main island. Most producers use artificial insemination; however, many still use a herd bull. The predominant breed is Holstein, allowing producers to participate in two national Holstein shows during the year.

After the quota system came to an end in early 2015, niche markets were explored in the Azores. One of the main milk processors on the island of São Miguel is Terra Nostra, owned by Bel (owner of The Laughing Cow and Babybel cheeses). This company started the Happy Cow program with the goal of encouraging consumers to buy milk from Azorean cows that are allowed to graze year round (check out this video to learn more: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_6Yff4ZfgIU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_6Yff4ZfgIU)).

With many dairy products exported to mainland Portugal and Europe, the dairy sector will continue to thrive in the Azores. If you get a chance to visit, make sure to try a cheese board with traditional cow cheeses, be it fresh white or aged, such as Queijo de São Jorge (Figure 4). However, beware of the delicious taste, for you will want to purchase a whole wheel of cheese!

**References and Further Reading**


**Photo Credits**

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**Figure 2**: [http://primepassages.com/wp-content/uploads/DayHikingAzores/azoresmap-1.jpg](http://primepassages.com/wp-content/uploads/DayHikingAzores/azoresmap-1.jpg)

**Figure 3**: [https://www.geekyexplorer.com/why-the-azores-are-the-next-big-travel-destination/](https://www.geekyexplorer.com/why-the-azores-are-the-next-big-travel-destination/)

**Figure 4**: [https://culturecheesemag.com/travel/dairy-treasure-in-the-azores](https://culturecheesemag.com/travel/dairy-treasure-in-the-azores)
Student Spotlight: Karla Rodriguez-Hernandez

Name: Karla Rodriguez-Hernandez
Country of origin: Mexico
Current school: South Dakota State University
Degree: PhD
Year in school: Graduated in August 2018
Area of specialization: Dairy science (production)
Research focus: Evaluation of carinata meal in dairy heifer feeding programs
Future plans: Keep working in research and extension in Mexico
Just for fun, what is your favorite dairy food? Cheese
Award won: Third place, National Milk Producers Federation Paper Presentation Contest in Dairy Production: PhD Division
Student Spotlight: Russell Pate

**Name:** Russell Pate  
**Country of origin:** Visalia, CA, USA  
**Current school:** University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign  
**Degree:** PhD  
**Year in school:** 3rd year of my PhD program  
**Area of specialization:** Dairy Nutrition

**Research focus:** My research focuses on how nutritional and environmental stressors effect lactation performance and immune function. Specifically, I have conducted studies that research the effects of aflatoxin challenge and heat stress on lactating dairy cows. I’ve also done some work with foliar fungicide application on corn silage.

**Future plans:** After I graduate I would like to become a nutrition consultant within the dairy industry.

**Just for fun, what is your favorite dairy food?** Just recently I drove through Delaware and stopped at the University of Delaware Creamery. I had a bowl of their “8th and Market” ice cream and it was unbelievable! Hands-down best ice cream I’ve ever had!

**Award won:** First Place in the Oral Paper Presentation Competition at ADSA, and the ADSA/EAAP PhD Student Travel Award.
Industry Spotlight: Mike Socha

What degrees do you hold and from where?
BS, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1988
MS, University of Wisconsin–Madison, 1991
PhD, University of New Hampshire, 1994

What company do you work for?
Zinpro Corporation

What is your position—title and duties?
My current position is associate director—research and product development leader. My duties are to work with our product development team to develop new products for the livestock industry. Our product development team is part of the research and nutrition services group at Zinpro Corporation.

Why did you choose your current position?
I have worked at Zinpro Corporation for 22 years in various capacities in our research and nutrition group. Just prior to our restructuring this past spring, I was overseeing both our North America research and nutrition services group and the product development team. However, product development was not getting the focus it needed. With the restructuring, we now have a team of individuals devoted to only product development. Product development is both challenging and rewarding. It is challenging because one is working in an area where there really is not a clear path. We not only have to develop new products, but once we find a promising new product idea, we have to figure out how much to feed and when to feed it. So it is very challenging work. However, it is very exciting to develop a new product and see it come to market.

What is your favorite part of your current position or company you work for?
The favorite part of my work is seeing how one of our new products can help producers. It is very rewarding to see how a new product can help producers increase health and performance of their animals. We developed a product several years ago to help growing cattle overcome a foot problem. This problem had frustrated producers for years. It has been really satisfying seeing how this product has helped producers.

What previous jobs have you held?
Prior to coming to Zinpro Corporation, I worked for Growmark for two years. I enjoyed this job very much. It was great working with producers and my coworkers. This position involved providing technical support to the sales force as well as developing new products and maintaining the ration formulation software. Prior to going back to graduate school after my BS, I worked for a milk cooperative where I worked with dairy producers to solve milk quality issues and maintain their licenses. I also worked to recruit new patrons for the milk cooperative.
Did you always know that one day you would work in the dairy industry?
I grew up on a small dairy farm in Wisconsin and was about five years old before I realized that not everyone had dairy cows. I always knew that I wanted to be part of the ag industry. The biggest question for me was not whether I was going to be part of the ag industry. It was whether I was going to be a farmer or be working in an ag support industry.

If you could give advice to any student, what would it be?
Technology is evolving fast, so you never stop learning. Even after you get your graduate degree, you will need to continue to read and attend conferences to stay up on the latest research and research techniques. As far as preparing for the job market, there are opportunities for people who have a good practical working knowledge of the dairy industry as well as a solid science background. You also have to be flexible on your location and willingness to travel. Possessing foreign language skills is a real plus.

What is your favorite thing about the dairy industry in general?
I do like cows. To me, there is nothing better than to walk onto a dairy and see a group of content, healthy cows with slick haircoats and full udders.

Just for fun, what is your favorite dairy food?
Yogurt, followed by ice cream, cheese, and milk. I have not found a dairy product I do not like.

In this newsletter, we feature 10 things graduate students have benefited from by being members or by staying involved with ADSA-GSD committees:

1. Networking
2. Access to Journal of Dairy Science
3. Professional webinars
4. Graduate student–only events at the ADSA Annual Meeting
5. Registration discounts for the ADSA Annual Meeting
6. Access to myDairy Career and job offers
7. Friends
8. Resume building and professional writing workshops
9. Career-focused events at the ADSA Annual Meeting
10. Leadership

If you want to join a committee, email adsagsd@gmail.com or check out the Leadership section at https://www.adsa.org/Membership/Graduate-Student-Division to meet our officers!