Food Systems Ph.D. Student Opportunity in Organic Dairy and Microbial Ecology

We are looking for a highly motivated student to work within the research and extension project “Bedding strategies that promote udder health and milk quality by fostering a beneficial microbiome on organic dairy farms” funded by the USDA Organic Research and Extension Initiative (OREI). This transdisciplinary 3-year project is a collaboration between the Department of Animal and Veterinary Sciences, the Department of Plant and Soil Science, and UVM Extension Center for Sustainable Agriculture. Desired start date is January 1, 2019.

Project dimensions range from farmer surveys and developing best management practices on the farm to microbiome ecology of the disease cycle of the pathogen, vector and farm bedding source. Integrated are disciplines of epidemiology, agroecology, manure waste management, soil health and dairy cattle housing and welfare.

Candidates should have excellent academic records with a background(s) in animal science, microbial ecology or soil ecology, epidemiology, molecular/cellular biology, veterinary science and/or a related field. Candidates must be highly self-motivated and have a good work ethic. Prior research experience in field and/or laboratory work is highly desirable. Experience working with dairy cattle or on dairy farms is desirable. An interest in metagenomic or molecular approaches to studies of microbial ecology and/or infectious disease epidemiology is necessary. Prior experience in either of these areas in desirable. Excellent oral and written communication skills are essential.

The graduate student will be supported by research and teaching assistantships which include a 12 month stipend, tuition scholarships and health care coverage. For international students, a minimum of TOEFL score of 100 (of 120) is required. Interested candidates should contact John Barlow DVM PhD at john.barlow@uvm.edu or Deborah Neher PhD at dneher@uvm.edu. Application is through the University of Vermont Graduate College, and further information can be found at https://www.uvm.edu/graduate/prospective\_student\_resources. All applicants are required to submit a statement of purpose, academic transcripts, GRE scores, curriculum vitae, and email addresses for three people who will provide letters of recommendation. Complete application instructions can be found at <https://www.uvm.edu/graduate/application_instructions>.