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Students Conduct Research at UT to Control Spread of E.coli

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. – Undergraduate students from all over the country will visit a beef herd at UT's East Tennessee Research & Education Center today as a part of their summer research project to understand and help control the spread of E.coli bacteria in cattle. The students will learn about the management of a beef (cow-calf) operation so they can incorporate farm management factors into mathematical models and evaluate how changing management affects the spread of E. coli 0157 at the farm level.

The students are participating in the Research Experience for Veterinary Students (REV) program organized by National Institute for Mathematical and Biological Synthesis (NIMBioS, pronounced "NIM-bus").

The undergraduates are working with their research mentors, Suzanne Lenhart, professor of mathematics, and associate director for education, outreach and diversity at the National Institute for Mathematical and Biological Synthesis (NIMBioS), and Cristina Lanzas, assistant professor of epidemiology in the Department of Comparative Medicine in UT's College of Veterinary Medicine.

The highly select group of sixteen undergraduates, four veterinary students from other institutions, and one high school science teacher are conducting research as a part of the REV and Research Experience for Undergraduates (REU) programs from May 31 to July 22.

The participants live on campus and work in teams with UT Knoxville professors and Oak Ridge National Lab scientists on various mathematical biology research projects. The organizer, NIMBioS, is located on the UT Knoxville campus, and fosters new collaborative efforts to investigate biological questions using mathematical and computational methods.

Details about the E.coli project are available at http://www.nimbios.org/education/rev2011_ecoli_proj.

More information on REU is available at http://www.nimbios.org/education/reu2011 and on REV at http://www.nimbios.org/education/rev2011.

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