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## Teaching Dairy Barn acclaimed for its form, function

By Harrison Lewis

Since Cornell's founding, students, faculty and visitors have celebrated and reveled in the university's exceptional physical form. Now, the school's cows can do the same.

Cornell's Teaching Dairy Barn has gained national acclaim for its design, most recently when the barn was the cover story of the July issue of Architectural Record magazine. The barn's architects, the firm Erdy McHenry, also received a citation for design from the New York state chapter of the American Institute of Architects and the Gold Medal for design from the Philadelphia Chapter of the American Institute of Architects – the organization's top honor.

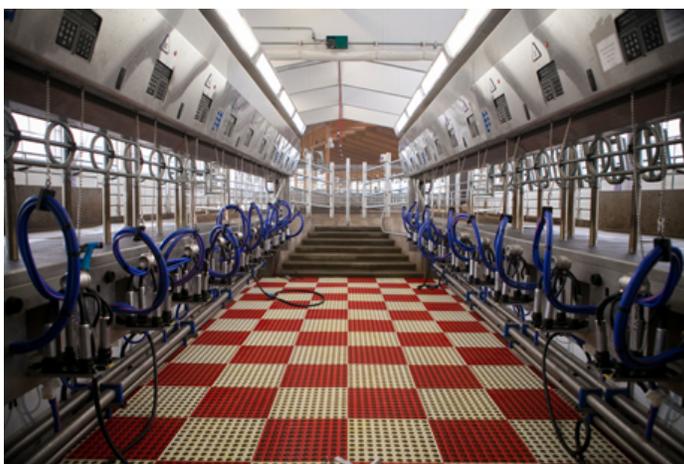
Most reviewers have expressed enthusiasm over a simple building thoughtfully conceived and executed. "The barn's shape is meant to take advantage of the natural topography and also the prevailing winds," said architect Scott Erdy after the facility's opening in September 2012. "After the wind comes through the barn, it is filtered through the woods. There is no smell in this dairy barn."

The free-stall barn features 28,000 square feet of open space, an attached wing that hosts a milking parlor with an observation area overlooking it and a 40-person classroom. Free-stall barns let in fresh air and sunshine when possible and provide shade and protection from inclement conditions as needed. Similarly, an offset roof peak with a clerestory promotes air circulation and allows for maximum daylight.



Provided

Cornell's Teaching Dairy Barn, opened in September 2012, has received several plaudits for its innovative design.



University Photography

The College of Veterinary Medicine and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences celebrate the opening of the Cornell Teaching Dairy Barn.

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The designers believed the dairy barn needed to be a “piece of architecture” in part because of its gateway placement on one edge of campus, says University Architect Gilbert Delgado. Those involved in the barn’s daily operations, however, were skeptical of ornate design elements.

The Erdy McHenry team collaborated closely with Cornell representatives to fully meet the functional needs of the cattle and staff. In doing so, the designers satisfied both ends by creating a highly practical and well-integrated structure.

The barn’s one-two punch of architectural craft and overall functionality plays into the notion of cow comfort – that relaxed cows live longer and produce more quality products. Comfort is crucial to the barn’s mission of supporting dairy cattle husbandry. The Teaching Dairy Barn even has back scratchers for the cows.

Lorin Warnick, associate dean for veterinary curriculum, says the 150-cow barn is on track to receive LEED Silver certification. The barn is the first building of the university’s Large Animal Teaching Complex, a planned five-acre parcel that will host Cornell’s livestock studies.

*Harrison Lewis '14 is a writer intern for the Cornell Chronicle.*