



Daryl Nydam named Atkinson Center Faculty Director

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Daryl Nydam in the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine's Teaching Dairy.

The Atkinson Center has named Daryl Nydam its newest faculty director.

Nydam will begin his new role on July 1, succeeding Natalie Mahowald, professor of earth and atmospheric sciences, who will continue to remain engaged with the center by co-leading its Reducing Climate Risks Working Group.

“My work with the Atkinson Center to start the new working group on reducing climate risk has been a fantastic experience,” Mahowald said. “I look forward to continuing my involvement with Atkinson and seeing what innovative new work Daryl will initiate.”

Nydam is a veterinarian and epidemiologist who is professor in the Department of Population Medicine and Diagnostic Sciences at Cornell's College of Veterinary Medicine, and has served as director of the Quality Milk Production Services program since 2013. His research focuses on the intersection of agriculture and public health, specifically sustainable dairy production. He joins two other faculty directors at the center: Cathy Kling, professor of environment, energy, and resource economics, and Lindsay Anderson, associate professor in biological and environmental engineering.

“Daryl’s expertise nicely complements the expertise of professors Kling and Anderson. Daryl brings a deep understanding of farming, which is increasingly essential to overcome the rural-urban economic, cultural, and political divides that often prevent solutions to pressing sustainability challenges,” said David Lodge, the Frank J. DiSalvo Director of the Atkinson Center. “Daryl and the other faculty directors bring stellar academic leadership to the collaborations among faculty from across the university, senior staff at the Atkinson Center, and the NGOs, corporations, and government agencies with whom we work toward large-scale, long-term changes in public opinion, practices, products, and policies.”

Nydam’s involvement with the Atkinson Center goes back nearly ten years, when he attended his first meeting of the Faculty Advisory Board. In addition, Nydam is the principal investigator on a 2016 Academic Venture Fund project that is studying antibiotic use in the dairy industry.

“What excites me about the Atkinson Center is the opportunity to work across disciplines within Cornell and, moreover, reach outside the academy. This synergism can lead to effective impact,” Nydam said. “Cornell is a land-grant institution to the world, and one idea that came out of the strategic plan is how the Atkinson Center can be a catalyst for this rural-urban network. Cornell, given its expertise and geography, is in the middle of a living laboratory. We can excel in areas that our peer institutions frankly can’t.”

Having grown up in a farming community in the Catskills before attending SUNY Geneseo and later Cornell, as well as working in a private veterinary practice while living in Vermont, Nydam understands the dynamics of rural America, and the food, water, energy, and economic systems that connect those regions to urban centers. Built on this foundation, he’s been lucky enough to work with farmers and allied agricultural service providers on six different continents.

“We can find ways at Cornell to continue to enhance the livelihood of farmers, locally and globally, while producing the food the world needs and exploring alternative energy systems, some of which dovetail really well with our agricultural sectors,” he said. “These integrated linkages are crucial, as are the connections between human health and the health of the environment, livestock, and wildlife that we’re trying to advance in our One Health efforts.”

Nydam noted that the interdisciplinary approach of One Health has deep roots with the early veterinary epidemiologists who worked across key sustainability areas like energy, economics, and the environment, as well as the medical and agricultural sciences. This interdisciplinary scope will inform his work as faculty director.

“I look forward to carrying on the work that Natalie has done and complementing it with the skillset that I have,” Nydam said. “I’m excited to get started.”

This story originally appeared [on the Atkinson Center website](#).