



Producers Honored for Their Commitment to Milk Quality

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Winners of the 2007 **National Dairy Quality Awards** (NDQA) program were announced during the NMC 47th Annual Meeting, January 20-23, 2008, in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Now in its 14th year, the goal of the NDQA program is to honor dairy producers who successfully have placed top priority on producing milk of the highest quality. The NMC, along with Hoard's Dairyman, DTN Dairy, Fort Dodge Animal Health, WestfaliaSurge, Inc., Ecolab Inc, IBA Inc., Select Sires, Cover-All, and QMI, sponsored the awards.

Dairy farms are nominated for the award by professionals in the dairy industry who work with producers, such as dairy plant field representatives, veterinarians, DHI supervisors, or extension personnel. Over 100 dairy farms were nominated in 2007.

Finalists from this year's program were judged by milk quality experts who looked at quality indicators such as somatic cell count, bacteria count and incidence of mastitis. The judges looked beyond just numbers however -- applications were also evaluated for milking routine, systems of monitoring udder health, protocols for detecting and treating clinical and subclinical cases, record keeping, and strategies for overall herd health and welfare.

Silver, Gold and Platinum winners were designated from the group of finalists.

Top-rated Platinum winners, honored during the NMC Annual Meeting, are pictured below [\[click here for photos and brief bios\]](#).

For a complete list of all **Silver, Gold, and Platinum winners and nominators**, [click here](#).

Read the "**round table discussion**" article from the *January 10, 2008 issue of Hoard's Dairyman*, featuring the five NDQA Platinum winners and their day-to-day strategies to produce high quality milk [file size 550 KB] [click here](#).



A global organization for mastitis control
and milk quality



2007 NDQA Platinum Winners

click on images for larger view



Glenn, Emily and Jon Beller, Carthage, New York

This northern New York family also received Platinum recognition in 2004. Their veterinarian Mark Thomas of Countryside Clinic nominated the Bellers. "They don't cull or treat their way to quality milk," said Thomas. "It results from overall excellent attention to management." The Beller herd is housed in sand-bedded freestalls and milked in a double-8 parallel parlor. Bellers add fresh sand to their stalls weekly and groom stall beds three times a day. They culture fresh cows and heifers as needed, plus do a tank culture four times a year. *Strep.* and *Staph.* species have been their challenge.



Dick Brokish, Hollandale, Wisconsin

Also a Platinum winner in 2005, Dick Brokish milks by himself using five units in a 63-cow stall barn with Pasture mats topped with chopped straw. About 50 switch cows are housed in a sand-bedded freestall barn. He is especially careful about keeping teat dip cups clean. Dick has his local dealer (Fullers Milker Center) check his system regularly. Culture results from clinical cases indicate environmental pathogens have been this herd's major problem. Dick was nominated by Kevin Johnson of Dodgeville Large Animal Clinic. Johnson said, "All decisions are made with cow comfort in mind, and milk quality shows it."



Lowell and Karen Davenport, Ancramdale, New York

The Davenports are repeat NDQA winners, earning Platinum in 2005. Their herd is housed in a tie-stall barn, and they milk with four units. Milking is done both by family members and one of four employees. They clean pulsators and filters four times a year and rebuild pulsators every year. Davenports were nominated by David Patteson of Agri-Mark Inc. "They don't have the fanciest or newest equipment," he said. "But their amazing attitude toward making a quality product is exemplary. They strive to improve all the time." *Klebsiella* has been their major mastitis problem, based on culture results. Making some cow lot changes lowered SCC.



Randy and Cindy Dragt, Howard City, Michigan

High milk production and top milk quality go hand in hand for the Dragt Family as the rolling herd average is near 26,000 pounds of milk on 175 cows. Randy and Cindy Dragt use Michigan Milk Producers Association's equipment analysis and replace all rubber parts annually. Inflatons are changed on a set schedule. The Dragt herd is kept in sand-bedded freestalls and milked in a double-8 parallel milking parlor. Nominator Jeremy Glaspie of Michigan Milk Producers said the Dragts are extremely hard workers and have come a long way during their 20 years in the dairy business. He commented, "The family even had to rebuild after a fire. They take a lot of pride in producing quality milk."



John and Pete Kappelman, Manitowoc, Wisconsin

Meadow Brook Farms, with 440 cows, has the largest herd among the Platinum winners. The Kappelmans have a double-9 parallel milking parlor, with the herd housed in sand-bedded freestalls. Routine culturing of clinical cases has revealed that E. coli is the most common mastitis-causing pathogen on their farm. They've added a midlactation J-5 vaccination to help. "I have not worked with another dairy that takes quality milk to a higher level," said nominator Thomas McCaulley of Land O'Lakes. "From their team of consultants, to their employees, to their dairy cattle, it has been obvious to me that quality is the attitude at Meadow Brook Farms."



Dean and Patti Tohl, Tillamook, Oregon

If there was a milk quality Hall of Fame, the Tohls would be in it. They also received Platinum recognition in 2003 and 2004. The 100-cow herd is on pasture some of the time, but housed in a freestall barn bedded with kiln-dried shavings. Tohls do all of the milking themselves. The fact that they predip twice underscores their meticulous approach. "Dean and Patti's established procedures, although seemingly monotonous, are never deviated from," said nominator Richard Steel, Evergreen Veterinary Services. "Their management philosophy focuses on cow environment and welfare issues, milking hygiene and equipment maintenance, nutrition and proper mastitis treatment and prevention."

Overall Results from the 2007 National Dairy Quality Awards Program

2007 NDQA Platinum Winners

Emily, Glenn and Jon Beller, Carthage, N.Y.

Nominated by: Mark Thomas, Countryside Veterinary Clinic

Dick & Michelle Brokish, Hollandale, Wis.

Nominated by: Kevin Johnson, Dodgeville Large Animal Clinic

Lowell & Karen Davenport, Ancramdale, N.Y.

Nominated by: David Patteson, Agri-Mark Inc.

Randy & Cindy Dragt, Howard City, Mich.

Nominated by: Jeremy Glaspie, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Pete & John Kappelman, Manitowoc, Wis.

Nominated by: Thomas McCaulley, Land O'Lakes

Dean & Patti Tohl, Tillamook, Ore.

Nominated by: Richard Steel, Evergreen Veterinary Reproductive Services

2007 NDQA Gold Winners

Jim Austin, Oakville, Wash.

Nominated by: Rachel Turgasen, Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative

Don Beattie, Holton, Mich.

Nominated by: Jeremy Glaspie, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Kevin & Donna Carolan, Calmar, Iowa

Nominated by: Jim Murphy, Swiss Valley Farms

Tom & Shirley Carson, Hesperia, Mich.

Nominated by: Jeremy Glaspie, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Daniel & Darlene Coehoorn, Rosendale, Wis.

Nominated by: Rachel Turgasen, Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative

Randy & Becky Dreier, Norwalk, Wis.

Nominated by: Bob Zielsdorf, Swiss Valley Farms

Holsum-Elm Dairy, Hilbert, Wis.

Nominated by: Lynn Thornton, Grande Milk Marketing & Keith Engel, WestfaliaSurge

Robert & Terri Ketchum, Utica, Minn.

Nominated by: Bob Zielsdorf, Swiss Valley Farms

Jerry, Carolyn & Michael Leahy, Brandon, Wis.

Nominated by: Mary Schuster, Park Cheese

Tim, Michele & Chris McDonald, Greenwich, N.Y.

Nominated by: William Nichols, Stewarts Processing

Michigan State University Dairy, Lansing, Mich.

Nominated by: Duane Farmer, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Randy & Sara Mikshowsky, Bangor, Wis.

Nominated by: Bob Zielsdorf, Swiss Valley Farms

Charles & Julie Nelkie, West Branch, Mich.

Nominated by: Gerry Volz, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Tim & Sandy Ver Hage, Allegan, Mich.

Nominated by: Steve Beroza, Michigan Milk Producers Association

2007 NDQA Silver Winners

Derek & Heidi Blanken, Lynden, Wash.

Nominated by: Rachel Turgasen, Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative

Daniel, Derek & Deb Brimeyer, Sherrill, Iowa

Nominated by: Kara Koopmann, Swiss Valley Farms

Arlan & Janell Garber, Chambersburg, Pa.

Nominated by: Grant Gayman, Maryland/Virginia Milk Producers Co-op

Siobhan Griffin, Schenvus, N.Y.

Nominated by: Rachel Turgasen, Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative

Mark & Jennifer Hamlett, Aurora, Iowa

Nominated by: James Kuennen, AMPI

Jerry Hodsen & Joel Dirksen Families, Plymouth, Iowa

Nominated by: Roger Lenius, Swiss Valley Farms

Jeff & Shannon Kane, Enosburg Falls, Vt.

Nominated by: Tom Gates, St. Albans Co-op Creamery

Koty Laufenberg, Cross Plains, Wis.

Nominated by: Ken Ley, Swiss Valley Farms

Mike & Cheryl Meier, Glen Haven, Wis.

Nominated by: Doug Anderson, Swiss Valley Farms

Steve, Patty, Andrew, Taylor & Nick Meyer, Hardwick, Vt.

Nominated by: Tom Gates, St. Albans Co-op Creamery & Rachel Turgasen, Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative

Brian & Harold Newton, McDonough, N.Y.

Nominated by: Dave Balbian, Cornell Cooperative Extension

Jason & Ashley Randall, Westfield, Vt.

Nominated by: Rachel Turgasen, Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative

Kenneth & Marlus Schmitz, Norwalk, Wis.

Nominated by: Bob Zielsdorf, Swiss Valley Farms

John & Patty Schwendimann, Hartford, Wis.

Nominated by: Mary Schuster, Park Cheese

William & Walter Selke, Dakota, Minn.

Nominated by: Bob Zielsdorf, Swiss Valley Farms

Andy & Linda Styger, Chehalis, Wash.

Nominated by: Rachel Turgasen, Organic Valley/CROPP Cooperative

Philip & Carol Uhlenhopp, Sumner, Iowa
Nominated by: Brian Gomer, IBA Inc.
