



Producers Honored for Their Commitment to Milk Quality

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Winners of the 2008 **National Dairy Quality Awards** (NDQA) program were announced during the NMC 48th Annual Meeting, January 25-28, 2009, in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Now in its 15th 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 200 dairy farms were nominated in 2008.

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, strategies for overall herd health/welfare, and adherence to drug use regulations..

Platinum, Gold and Silver 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, 2009 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



2008 NDQA Platinum Winners

click on images for larger view



Tom and Shirley Carson, Hesperia, Michigan

Platinum in 2006 and Gold in 2007, the Carsons again earned Platinum in this year's NDQA program. Several times they have ranked among Michigan Milk Producers Association's (MMPA) highest quality milk producers. Carsons milk their 85 cows in a flat-barn parlor and house them in a sand-bedded freestall barn. They watch fresh cows closely and run California Mastitis Tests (CMT) for two to three days, treating right away, if necessary. The Michigan couple clips cows' udders up to five times a year, and at freshening. *Strep.* and *Staph.* species have been their challenge.



Jim and Karen Davenport, Ancramdale, New York

The Davenports are repeat NDQA winners, earning Platinum in 2005 and 2007. With an average SCC slightly more than 54,000, 10 different people milk their cows. The milkers are meticulous, making sure that teats and teat ends are absolutely clean before attaching milking units. Milk culturing has found evidence of *Klebsiella* and encouraged them to improve cow lots. Davenports use a tie-stall barn with foam-type mattresses and bed with kiln-dried sawdust and chips. Daily, they add hydrated lime to the backs of stalls. Nominator David Patteson of Agri-Mark uses "constant improvement" to describe the Davenports.



Tim, Michele and Chris McDonald, Greenwich, New York

Milking 38 cows, the McDonalds' herd had just one clinical case of mastitis this past year. They double pre-dip in their tie-stall barn. Twice a day, they put lime in shavings-bedded stalls, which have mattresses. The McDonalds CMT fresh cows and check temperatures twice a day for two weeks. They milk fresh cows and heifers last. Nominator William Nichols of Stewart Processing attributes the McDonalds' high quality milk to the farm's neatness and their continual quest for higher quality milk.



Michigan State University Dairy Herd, East Lansing, Michigan

The Michigan State University (MSU) Dairy Herd achieved a remarkable 51,000 SCC average, with four full-time and six student milkers. They follow written milking procedures and wear gloves. Milkers use a good post-dip and change inflations at half the rated lifespan to foster healthy cow teat ends. Plus, the milking equipment dealer performs regular maintenance on the equipment. The cows' stalls have mattresses, covered with kiln-dried sawdust. Twice daily, they scrape alleys and add hydrated lime to the stalls. Four times a day, they groom stalls. Rubber tubs collect spilled water from water cups to prevent feed and bedding from getting wet.



Michael and George Prince, Tillamook, Oregon

The largest dairy herd among the Platinum winners, the Princes milk 585 Holsteins, Jerseys and crossbreds. Housed in a freestall barn with mattresses covered with lots of shavings, the cows are milked in a 40-stall rotary parlor. Three family members and three employees do the milking. They clean stalls twice a day during milking. DHI records help them find cows with subclinical mastitis. Nominator Bryan Gibson of Tillamook County Creamery credits the Princes for their hard work and attention to cow welfare, nutrition and barn management.



Kenneth and Ralph Schefers, Paynesville, Minnesota

Two family members and two employees milk the Schefers' 74 cows, and follow a milking routine of pre-dip, strip out foremilk, dry teats using paper towel, attach milking units and post-dip. All milkers wear gloves. The Schefers' tie-stalls, bedded with pine and aspen shavings, are swept six times a day. They culture milk and bedding. To enhance cow comfort, they keep stalls clean and use a tunnel ventilation system during the summer. Schefers use DHI monthly SCC and cowside SCC tests to detect subclinical mastitis.



Dean and Patti Tohl, Tillamook, Oregon

Four-time Platinum winners, the Tohls' herd of 103 Holsteins and Jerseys had an average SCC of just 51,000. The Tohls do all the milking themselves in their double-4 herringbone parlor. They provide plenty of bunk space and a freestall for every cow in the barn, bedding with kiln-dried sawdust. The Tohls follow a motto of attention to detail, cleanliness, meticulous record keeping and doing what's best for the cows. To detect subclinical mastitis, they use DHI SCC milk testing and run CMTs. They record cow treatment information in a drug treatment book and include some information on DHI records.



Ken, Anna, Duane and Laurie VanPolen, Marion, Michigan

With just a 12 percent turnover rate in their 192-cow Holstein herd, the VanPolens house cattle in sand-bedded freestalls and milk in a double-5 herringbone parlor. Four family members and two employees milk the cows, and follow written milking procedures and wear gloves. For the milking routine, they wipe teats and udders with a dry towel to remove debris, strip out foremilk, pre-dip, dry teats with one clean cloth towel per cow, attach units, hand strip and post-dip. Nominator Preston Cole of MMPA praises the VanPolens for their diligence, hard work, attention to detail, strong sense of purpose and desire to continually improve.

Overall Results from the 2008 National Dairy Quality Awards Program

2008 NDQA Platinum Winners

Tom & Shirley Carson, Hesperia, Mich.

Nominated by: Thomas Stakenas, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Jim & Karen Davenport, Ancramdale, N.Y.

Nominated by: David Patteson, Agri-Mark Inc.

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

Nominated by: William L. Nichols, Stewart Processing

Michigan State University Dairy Herd, East Lansing, Mich.

Nominated by: Duane Farmer, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Michael & George Prince, Tillamook, Ore.

Nominated by: Bryan Gibson, Tillamook County Creamery Association

Dean & Patti Tohl, Tillamook, Ore.

Nominated by: Richard Steel, Evergreen Vet Reproductive Services

Ken, Anna, Duane & Laurie VanPolen, Marion, Mich.

Nominated by: Preston Cole, Michigan Milk Producers Association

2008 NDQA Gold Winners

Jim & Janie Austin, Oakville, Wash.

Nominated by: Rachel Turgasen, Organic Valley

Jeremy & Deseriee Beebe, Whittemore, Mich.

Nominated by: Gerry Volz, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Dick Brokish, Hollandale, Wis.

Nominated by: Mike Thousand, Fuller's Milker Center

Siobhan Griffin, Schenevus, N.Y.

Nominated by: Rachel Turgasen, Organic Valley

Jeff & Dan Hill, Clyde, N.Y.

Nominated by: Mary Ellen Charter & Dave Wilson, Keseca Vet Clinic

Joe Machado Sr., Hanford, Calif.

Nominated by: Norm Kedrowski, Land O'Lakes

Kenneth & Kevin Mahalko, Gilman, Wis.

Nominated by: Dave Nyberg, Associated Milk Producers Inc.

Charles & Julie Nelkie, West Branch, Mich.

Nominated by: Tracy Goodroe, West Branch Veterinary Services

Kenny & Marlus Schmitz, Norwalk, Wis.

Nominated by: Bob Zielsdorf, Swiss Valley Farms

Philip & Carol Uhlenhopp, Sumner, Iowa

Nominated by: Brian Gomer, IBA

2008 NDQA Silver Winners

Alice & Laurance Allen, Wells River, Vt.

Nominated by: Rachel Turgasen, Organic Valley

Kevin & Donna Carolan, Calmar, Iowa

Nominated by: Jim Murphy, Swiss Valley Farms

Tom & Kim Fuechtmann, Melrose, Minn.

Nominated by: Lloyd Rausch, Associated Milk Producers Inc.

Rick Gierach, St. Cloud, Wis.

Nominated by: Mary Schuster, Park Cheese

Devin & Elena Johnston, Tillamook, Ore.

Nominated by: Rachel Turgasen, Organic Valley

Dennis & Sue Madejski, Chetek, Wis.

Nominated by: Dave Nyberg, Associated Milk Producers Inc.

John & Patty Schwendimann, Hartford, Wis.

Nominated by: Mary Schuster, Park Cheese

Carl & Bill Stakenas, Free Soil, Mich.

Nominated by: Preston Cole, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Andy & Linda Styger, Chehalis, Wash.

Nominated by: Rachel Turgasen, Organic Valley

Michael & Miranda Welle, Freeport, Minn.

Nominated by: Scotty Truax, IBA

Dean, Lyle & David Wesen, Bow, Wash.

Nominated by: Rachel Turgasen, Organic Valley

David, Judith & Lester Wollerman, Fond du Lac, Wis.

Nominated by: Mary Schuster, Park Cheese

Zooneveld Dairies Inc., Laton, Calif.

Nominated by: Norm Kedrowski, Land O'Lakes

