



Producers Honored for Their Commitment to Milk Quality

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Recipients of the 2012 National Dairy Quality Awards (NDQA) were announced during the National Mastitis Council (NMC) 52nd Annual Meeting, January 27 - 29, 2013, in San Diego, California.

Now in its 19th year, the NDQA program's goal is to honor dairy producers from across the United States who have successfully placed top priority on producing milk of the highest quality. NMC, Hoard's Dairyman, Merial, GEA Farm Technologies, Ecolab Inc., IBA Inc., Select Sires and Elanco 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 and Extension personnel. Nearly 200 dairy farms were nominated in 2012.

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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. Applications were also evaluated for milking routine, systems of monitoring udder health, protocols for detecting and treating clinical and subclinical cases of mastitis, record keeping, strategies for overall herd health and 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. Scroll down or [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, 2013 issue of Hoard's Dairyman*, featuring the seven NDQA Platinum winners and their day-to-day strategies to produce high quality milk [\[click here\]](#).





2012 NDQA Platinum Winners

click on images for larger view



The 315 cows housed at **Beattie Farms**, Holton, Mich., are producing 25,500 pounds of milk each year, with an average somatic cell count of under 80,000. Don Beattie, owner of the operation, is pictured at the left with herdsperson Jennifer Saxton. Beattie Farms' standard plate count averaged just 1,080 during its application year. The farm has a double-16, rapid-exit, herringbone parlor. The cows lie on either free stalls bedded with sand or a bedded pack. Sand is added to the free stalls once each week and the alleys are scraped twice daily. In the bedded-pack area, chopped straw is added twice per day. "They work very hard to make sure they are shipping the best quality milk possible, consistently throughout the year," said nominator Ben Chapin of Michigan Milk Producers Association.



Tollgate Farm is owned by Jim and Karen Davenport, of Ancramdale, N.Y. The Davenports currently own 64 Holsteins and Ayrshires, along with 14 dry cows and young stock. Their Holsteins average 24,000 pounds of milk, with the Ayrshires at nearly 15,000 pounds per year. In 2011-2012, their somatic cell count reached only 67,000 in its worst month, averaging 46,750 for the year. The cows are in a tie stall barn bedded with kiln-dried pine sawdust. Nominator Ruth McCuin of Agri-Mark Cooperative said, "This farm has been Agri-Mark's top-quality producer for the last six years. Jim and Karen know that producing quality milk adds value to their milk check, benefits cow health and makes them better producers." Pictured are Jim and Karen (center), with daughters Laura (left) and Kristen (right).



As repeat winners, **the Dellar family** maintains milk quality success in their herd with over 30,000 pounds (a 3,000-pound jump from last year's winning application) of milk from 200 milking cows. Ryan and Charina Dellar are pictured with their children, Gavin and Carmen, near their Harrisville, Mich. facility. This year, Dellar Dairy lowered its somatic cell count from 53,000 to 43,333 as a 12-month average. Cattle are housed in a sand-bedded free stall barn where alleys are scraped three times per day - during each milking. The herd is milked in a double-10 parallel parlor. "Ryan and Charina pay close attention to even the finest details while constantly researching and implementing innovative ideas," says nominator Preston Cole with Michigan Milk.



An 87,000 SCC put **Circle K Farms** in the 2012 National Dairy Quality Awards winners' circle. Their farm currently has 250 Holstein cows that are milked in a double-16 parallel parlor. In the parlor, milking technicians wear gloves and follow a written protocol, with five of the six milkers being family members. The Kartes' parlor records daily milk weights and uses conductivity to detect mastitis. Circle K is owned by Brad and Debby Kartes and achieves 24,000 pounds of milk per cow in West Branch, Mich. In addition to low SCC, the farm's standard plate count averaged 1,170 in the 12-month period of the

application. Pictured are (Back, L to R) Cole, Brad, Debbie and Keith. (Front, L to R) Tucker, Adysen, Lauren, holding Duke, Heather and Hayden Kartes.



Another familiar winner is the **Michigan State University Dairy Field Lab**, overseen by Bob Kreft. The Lansing, Mich. farm houses nearly 175 Holsteins and produces over 25,000 M. On this university dairy, students rotate through shifts in the farm's double-7 parlor. The herd's somatic cell count averaged 91,333 for the 12-month period, with a standard plate count of 1,417 during the same time. Pictured are (Front row, L to R) Dave Brady, MMPA Member representative (nominator); Todd Worden, Chelsey Clemens, Cora Watts, Shelbie Britton and Bruce Kurzhals. (Middle) Dr. Ted Ferris, Jacob Bontrager, Steven Openlander, Rob West, Randy Bontrager and Bob Story. (Back) Chad Geoit, Calvin Meyer, Jared Lyzenga, Michael Frazee, Jake Gillis, Fred Openlander and Bob Kreft, farm manager.



The site called "Farm 2" at **True Farms**, Perry, N.Y., is owned by Jeff, Brian and Glenn True, and it houses 380 Holstein and Brown Swiss cows, which averages nearly 26,000 M and a 78,000 SCC. Pictured are (Front, L to R) Trenten and Taryn True. (Back) Andrea, Brad, Stacia, Tucker, Jeff and Chris Tue; Noemi and Zeferina Garcia; Diane and Brian True. They milk in a double-10 parallel parlor and cows lie on sand-bedded free stalls with bedding added twice each week. Farm 2 has rubber belting in the entire feed alley and pushes up feed 12 times per day. Donna Walker, nominator from Dairylea Cooperative, says, "True Farms does an exceptional job balancing the production of high-quality milk. They thoughtfully create protocols and follow them for consistent results."

Overall Results from the 2012 National Dairy Quality Awards Program

2012 NDQA Platinum Winners

Don Beattie, Holton, Michigan

Nominated by: Ben Chapin, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Jim and Karen Davenport, Ancramdale, New York

Nominated by: Ruth McGuin, Agri-Mark, Inc.

Ryan and Charina Dellar, Harrisville, Michigan

Nominated by: Preston Cole, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Bradley, Robert and Deborah Kartes, West Branch, Michigan

Nominated by: Preston Cole, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Bob Kreft, Lansing, Michigan

Nominated by: Dave Brady, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Jeff, Brian and Glenn True, Perry, New York

Nominated by: Donna Walker, Dairylea Co-op.

2012 NDQA Gold Winners

Tim Berry and Dale Armbrustmacher, Fowler, Michigan

Nominated by: Andrew Rupprecht, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Jeremy Beebe, Whittemore, Michigan

Nominated by: Preston Cole, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Mark Boehm, Rawson, Ohio

Nominated by: Jeff Rohlf, Dairy Farmers of America

Ron Brooks, Waupaca, Wisconsin

Nominated by: Lynn Thornton, Grande Cheese Company

Brad Crandall, Battle Creek, Michigan

Nominated by: Elyse Wilcox, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Gordon Dick, McBain, Michigan

Nominated by: Preston Cole, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Randy and Cindy Dragt, Howard City, Michigan

Nominated by: Kendra Kissane, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Randy and Becky Dreier, Norwalk, Wisconsin

Nominated by: Bob Zielsdorf, Swiss Valley Farms

Larry and Nancy, Brent and Polly, Ross and Vicky Greden, Altura, Minnesota

Nominated by: Dale Heintz, Land O'Lakes, Inc.

Andy and Laura Hecht, Cumberland, Wisconsin

Nominated by: Dave Nyberg, Associated Milk Producers, Inc.

Timothy and Janice Mater, Deckerville, Michigan

Nominated by: Kristin Rawlings, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Duane and Janet Molhoek, Falmouth, Michigan

Nominated by: Preston Cole, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Charles and Julie Nelkie, and Abigail O'Farrell, West Branch, Michigan

Nominated by: Preston Cole, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Darius and Sherry Simler, Pearl City, Illinois

Nominated by: David Bergemann, Lena Veterinary Clinic

Edward, Clara, Carl and William Stakenas, Free Soil, Michigan

Nominated by: Ben Chapin, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Philip and Carol Uhlenhopp, Sumner, Iowa

Nominated by: Brian Gomer, IBA Inc.

Brent, Nancy and Tyler Wilson, Carson City, Michigan

Nominated by: Steve Lehman, Michigan Milk Producers Association

2012 NDQA Silver Winners

Nathaniel Barron, Dansville, New York

Nominated by: Walker, Dairylea Co-op

Tim, Laura and Ross Blotz, Dodgeville, Wisconsin

Nominated by: Roger Dingbaum, Associated Milk Producers, Inc.

Michael Bosscher, McBain, Michigan

Nominated by: Preston Cole, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Mark Diemer, McBain, Michigan

Nominated by: Preston Cole, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Philip Fisher, Fort Jennings, Ohio

Nominated by: Jeff Rohlf, Dairy Farmers of America

Jim and Steve Fontaine, Strykersville, New York

Nominated by: Sara Gillette, Upstate Niagara Co-op, Inc.

George Haier, Eden, New York

Nominated by: Robert Herren, Upstate Niagara Co-op, Inc.

Craig, Barb, Tom and Rob Harkins, Wyoming, New York

Nominated by: Sara Gillette, Upstate Niagara Co-op, Inc.

Curt, Maren and Jeremy Holst, Lake City, Minnesota

Nominated by: Don Schweisthal, Land O'Lakes, Inc.

Nick, Linda and Kenny Hurliman, Cloverdale, Oregon

Nominated by: Bryan Gibson, Tillamook Cheese

Paul Kehl, Waterloo, Wisconsin

Nominated by: Joshua Luth, Foremost Farms USA

Timothy Klahn, West Valley, New York

Nominated by: Robert Herren, Upstate Niagara Co-op, Inc.

Robert Koithan, North Tonawanda, New York

Nominated by: Donna Walker, Dairylea Co-op

Brad Krantz, Prescott, Michigan

Nominated by: Dave Clark, Dairy Farmers of America

Ron, Beth and Kevin Litwiller, Perrinton, Michigan

Nominated by: Steve Lehman, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Joe Machado, Hanford, California

Nominated by: Arvid Fristad, Land O'Lakes, Inc.

Mike, Cheryl and Brian Meier, Glen Haven, Wisconsin

Nominated by: Jim Schmitz, Swiss Valley Farms

Andrew Odeen, Black River Falls, Wisconsin

Nominated by: Bob Hoeritz, Associated Milk Producers, Inc.

Arne and John Peterson, Lena, Wisconsin

Nominated by: Tom McCaulley, Land O'Lakes, Inc.

Edward Rau, Winchester, Ohio

Nominated by: David Moore, Dairy Farmers of America

Mark and Robert Rau, West Branch, Michigan

Nominated by: Preston Cole, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Dean and Darin Strauss, Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin

Nominated by: Jr Neu, Sartori

Dan Stuart, Lowell, Michigan

Nominated by: Nathan Lippert, Dairy Farmers of America

David and Karen VanderZanden, Casnovia, Michigan

Nominated by: Kendra Kissane, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Marco Verhaar, Bad Axe, Michigan

Nominated by: Steve Steely, Dairy Farmers of America

John Verhaar, Bad Axe, Michigan

Nominated by: Steve Steely, Dairy Farmers of America

Monroe Zimmerman, Liberty, Kentucky

Nominated by: Eddie Hasty, Dairy Farmers of America

Jim, Jeff and Mark Rupp Families, Sterling, Ohio

Nominated by: Will Moore, Dairy Farmers of America
