



Producers Honored for Their Commitment to Milk Quality

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Recipients of the 2014 National Dairy Quality Awards (NDQA) were announced during the National Mastitis Council (NMC) 54th Annual Meeting, February 1-3, 2015 in Memphis, Tennessee.

Now in its 21st 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. National Mastitis Council, Hoard's Dairyman, Merial, GEA Farm Technologies, Ecolab Inc., IBA Inc., and Select Sires 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. More than 160 dairy farms were nominated in 2014.

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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, 2015 issue of Hoard's Dairyman*, featuring the six NDQA Platinum winners and their day-to-day strategies to produce high quality milk [click here](#).





2014 NDQA Platinum Winners

click on images for larger view



The Bailey family moved in to the Platinum award's category after receiving Gold in the 2013 NDQA contest. The Tomah, Wisconsin dairy, owned by Florieda Gorham and Mike, Jean, Brent, Brock and Nelda Bailey, milks 165 cows averaging 23,682 pounds of milk. Over the course of the application year, the Holstein/Jersey herd averaged a somatic cell count of 74,080. Cows are housed in a freestall barn and milked in a stall barn with eight units. Nominator Bob Zielsdorf, Swiss Valley Farms, notes, "They do a very good job of milking in a stall barn with no take-offs; they do things correctly on this dairy." Pictured (L to R): Mike and Jean Bailey; Nelda and Brock Bailey, with daughters, Josie, Blair and Teagan, and Brent Bailey.



One of two repeat winners, RKB Dairy, owned by Randy and Kathy Bauer, Faribault, Minnesota, maintains milk quality success with a 31,468 SCC (somatic cell count). RKB Dairy's SCC average in the application year was 3,754 cells/mL lower than in 2013. The dairy's 100 Holsteins and Jerseys are milked in a double-9 parabone parlor. Kathy and an employee milk in the mornings, while Kathy and son, Glen, milk in the evening. "Attention to detail and consistency," are the two reasons nominator Brandon Balzer, with IBA, notes when asked why the dairy deserved to be recognized. "The Bauers understand the importance of producing high-quality milk and never waiver from that goal," he continues. Pictured (L to R): Melisa, Randy, Kathy and Glen Bauer.



Double B Dairy, Whittemore, Michigan, milks 114 Holsteins, averaging 20,130 pounds of milk with an 85,083 SCC. The dairy is owned by Jeremy Beebe, who is quick to note that employees are critical to achieving the dairy's milk quality goals. Nominator Ashley Herriman, with Michigan Milk Producers Association, notes, "This farm strives to produce milk of the finest quality. Their continued efforts deserve recognition." Pictured (L to R): Eric, Alessandra and Jeremy Beebe, Josh Lanning, Donald Stephenson, Alexis Mckenthaler, Bob Leiber, Joanne Beebe, Eric Knoellinger, Larry Stephenson, Roger Beebe and Garrett Beebe. Missing from the photo is Stuart Wilson.



Located in Kiel, Wis., Kleinhans Dairy Farm administers a J-5 vaccine to every heifer before calving. The dairy's 150 cows are milked in a flat barn parlor and housed in sand-bedded freestalls that are bedded every 10 days. The herd averages 28,748 pounds of milk per cow with a 68,000 SCC. The dairy was nominated by Roger Hallberg, Land O' Lakes, who adds, "Kleinhans Dairy Farm has been recognized for their outstanding milk quality by Land O' Lakes for the past 19 years in a row. Excellent production of top-quality milk is due to consistency in milking routine, feeding, cow comfort and strict monitoring. Mike is an excellent example of a quality dairy manager." Pictured (L to R): Tore Loritz, Judy Schema, Alex, Mike and Ryan Kleinhans, Crystal Casper and Tanner Duchow.



The second repeat winner in 2014 is End Road Farm, owned by Duane and Janet Molhoek of Falmouth, Mich. The dairy milks in a double-4 herringbone and works with its milking equipment dealer to perform maintenance on a life expectancy basis, rather than waiting for a breakdown or failure. In the application year, the herd averaged 28,014 pounds of milk and an 81,000 SCC. Nominator Deb Navarre, Michigan Milk Producers Association, says, "End Road Farm takes great pride in maintaining high-quality milk production and a healthy herd through their very intensive management style, where each cow is monitored daily for signs of injury and illness. Pictured (L to R): Duane, Paula, Kevin and Janet Molhoek, Olegario Bazan-Mendez, David Mendoza, Carlos Lopez and Jorge Gonzalez.



Of the 2014 Platinum winners, Wilson Centennial Farm LLC had the highest herd average at 30,490 pounds of milk per cow. The Carson City, Mich. dairy is owned by Brent, Nancy, Tyler and Ben Wilson. The farm's 625 cows are milked in a double-20 parabone parlor. Brent is quick to credit the dairy's employees for the herd's overall milk quality success. Nominator Sarah Michalek, Michigan Milk Producers Association, says, "As their farm expands, the family's top priorities reside in cow health and comfort. Their attention to detail in pursuit of top-quality milk is reflected in their day-to-day practices of caring for their cows." Pictured, front row (L to R): Tomas Pacheco, Narcedalia Gazgy, Antonio Soriano, Lucerita Alonso and Nancy Wilson. Back row (L to R): Brent Wilson, Jeremy Gillson, Lucerito Alonso, Butch Blackmer and Ben and Tyler Wilson.



Oak River Dairy LLC, owned by the Zagata family, is the fourth 2014 Platinum Award winner from Michigan. The dairy milks 535 cows, averaging 27,490 pounds of with an 82,000 SCC. Cows are milked in a double-12 parallel parlor and housed in sand-bedded freestalls that are hand groomed every eight hours. Nominator Angelee Kirsch, Michigan Milk Producers Association, adds, "Oak River Dairy LLC demonstrates a continuous commitment day in and day out of endless attention to detail, the care of their animals and the care of their employees. They strive to be progressive in what they do concerning milk quality and they take new programs that our cooperative offers very seriously." Pictured, front row (L to R): Lorene and Bobbie Zagata. Back row (L to R): Mike and Andrew Zagata.

Overall Results from the 2014 National Dairy Quality Awards Program

2014 NDQA Platinum Winners

Randy and Kathy Bauer, Faribault, Minnesota

Nominated by: Brandon Balzer, IBA

Jeremy Beebe, Whittemore, Michigan

Nominated by: Ashley Herriman, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Florieda Gorham and Mike, Jean, Brent, Brock and Nelda Bailey, Tomah, Wisconsin

Nominated by: Bob Zielsdorf, Swiss Valley Farms

Michael Kleinhans, Kiel, Wisconsin

Nominated by: Roger Hallberg, Land O'Lakes, Inc.

Duane and Janet Molhoek, Falmouth, Michigan

Nominated by: Deb Navarre, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Brent, Nancy, Tyler and Ben Wilson, Carson City, Michigan

Nominated by: Lindsay Green, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Mike, Lorene, Andrew and Bobbi Zagata, Sebewaing, Michigan

Nominated by: Angelee Kirsch, Michigan Milk Producers Association

2014 NDQA Gold Winners

Darren Charles, Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Nominated by: Bridget Griffin, Lancaster Veterinary Associates

Lowell J. Jr. and Karen Davenport, Ancramdale, New York

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

Randy and Cindy Dragt, Howard City, Michigan

Nominated by: Ben Chapin, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Randy and Becky Dreier, Norwalk, Wisconsin

Nominated by: Bob Zielsdorf, Swiss Valley Farms

Andrew and Darienne Frickson, Dakota, Minnesota

Nominated by: Bob Zielsdorf, Swiss Valley Farms

Taylor and Alan Henderson, Schaghticoke, New York

Nominated by: Jessie Vandergrift and George Pfeiffer, Archdale Agricultural Products

Bradley and Deborah Kartes, West Branch, Michigan

Nominated by: Ashley Herriman, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Ronald R. Kelm, Markesan, Wisconsin

Nominated by: Mary Schuster, BelGioioso Cheese, Inc.

Robert and Terri Ketchum, Utica, Minnesota

Nominated by: Bob Zielsdorf, Swiss Valley Farms

Bruce Lewis, Jonesville, Michigan

Nominated by: Dave Brady, Michigan Milk Producers Association

David Miller, Millersburg, Ohio

Nominated by: Will Moore, Smith Dairy Products Company

Andrew, Michele and Steven Nienhuis, Zeeland, Michigan

Nominated by: Violet Lombard, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Glen, Andy and Casey Sparks, Fremont, Michigan

Nominated by: Lindsay Earl, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Donald, David and Michael Tellak, Little Valley, New York

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

David and Karen Vander Zanden, Casnovia, Michigan

Nominated by: Lyndsay Earl, Michigan Milk Producers Association

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

Nominated by: Deb Navarre, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Rob West, Lansing Michigan

Nominated by: Dave Brady, Michigan Milk Producers Association

2014 NDQA Silver Winners

Larry, Brad, Mark and Monica Crandall, Battle Creek, Michigan

Nominated by: Elyse Martin, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Mark Diemer, McBain, Michigan

Nominated by: Deb Navarre, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Harold and Ruth Ann Dodde, Falmouth, Michigan

Nominated by: Deb Navarre, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Phyllis and Frederick Haier, Lawtons, New York

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

Bill and Jason Hardy, Stanton, Michigan

Nominated by: Ben Chapin, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Ken Haubenstricker, Birch Run, Michigan

Nominated by: Andrew Rupprecht, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Nathan and Morgan Kliebenstein, Darlington, Wisconsin

Nominated by: Molita Salzmann, Platteville Veterinary Clinic

Jerome Kostanciak, Akron, New York

Nominated by: Rick Locke, Upstate Niagara Co-op, Inc.

John, Maynard and Mary Mallonee, Curtis, Washington

Nominated by: Scott Benedict, Organic Valley Co-op

Wynn Nielsen, Weston, Idaho

Nominated by: Richard Norell, University of Idaho

Tjerk and Ramona Okkema, Blanchard, Michigan

Nominated by: Ben Chapin, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Jeff Orr and Paige Mier, Prescott, Michigan

Nominated by: Dave Clark, Dairy Farmers of America

Leroy, Jeff, Andrew and Vicky Paulen, Howard City, Michigan

Nominated by: Ben Chapin, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Erik Peterson, Filer, Idaho

Nominated by: Roland Wood, Dairy Farmers of America

Robert and Mark Rau, West Branch, Michigan

Nominated by: Ashley Herriman, Michigan Milk Producers Association

Dan and Sandra Stuart, Lowell, Michigan

Nominated by: Nathan Lippert, Dairy Farmers of America

Marco Verhaar, Bad Axe, Michigan

Nominated by: Steve Steely, Dairy Farmers of America
