

Sustainability awards to highlight excellence across dairy supply chain

The Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, in affiliation with the Dairy Research Institute, recently announced the

U.S. Dairy Sustainability Awards, a new program to recognize dairy farms, businesses and collaborative partnerships for efforts that deliver outstanding economic, environmental and/or social benefit, thus helping to advance sustainability of the dairy industry.

The awards are divided into three categories: dairy farm, dairy processing/manufacturing and energy conservation/generation. Nominations are being accepted at USDairy.com/Sustainability/Awards through Dec. 1.

"Consumers are increasingly interested in choosing nutritious, responsibly made products," says Larry Jensen, president, Leprino Foods, and chair, Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy. "The U.S. Dairy Sustainability Awards highlight the dairy industry's long-standing commitment to healthy people, healthy products and a healthy planet, while showcasing that sustainability makes good business sense, as well."

Winners of the U.S. Dairy Sustainability Awards will be announced in Feb. 2012. In addition, honorees will share their stories and passion for sustainability on a national scale in forums and venues, and will be featured on USDairy.com/Sustainability.

The awards are part of the U.S. Dairy Sustainability Commitment, an industrywide effort to measure and improve the economic, environmental and social sustainability of the dairy industry. Launched in 2008 under the leadership of dairy producers, the Sustainability Commitment has the support and participation of hundreds of organizations across the industry as well as others from academic, government and nongovernmental organizations.

Nominations are open to all segments of the U.S. dairy value chain—from farm to table—for the following awards:

Elanco Award for Outstanding Dairy Farm Sustainability: This award will recognize dairy farm businesses for demonstrating outstanding achievement in sustainability. Three farms will be honored to illustrate that the highest standards of excellence can be regardless of farm size, location or type of operation.

U.S. Dairy Export Council Award for Outstanding Dairy Processing

& Manufacturing Sustainability: This award will recognize dairy processing and manufacturing businesses for demonstrating outstanding achievement in sustainability.

Center for Advanced Energy Studies/Idaho National Laboratory Award for Outstanding Achievement in Energy: This award will recognize outstanding achievements in energy conservation and/or renewable energy generation.

All nominations will be evaluated based on the program's or project's results as measured by triple bottom-line success—economic, environmental and social. Judges also will assess the potential for adoption of the idea by other dairy farms and businesses; demonstrated learning, innovation and improvement; and scalability.

Judging will be completed by an independent panel representing the full spectrum of the dairy supply chain, as well as academia, government, media, business and nongovernmental organizations. The distinguished panel of judges will be announced in October.

Deadline for applications is Dec. 1. There is no fee to enter. For more information or to nominate, go to USDairy.com/Sustainability/Awards.