

# New dairy sustainability awards created

By Jim Massey

Editor

**MADISON** — Dairy farmers are being encouraged to apply for a new award that officials say many farmers will qualify for without doing anything differently than what they're already doing on their farms.

The Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy recently announced the creation of the U.S. Dairy Sustainability Awards program, a program to recognize dairy farms, businesses and collaborative partnerships for efforts that deliver economic, environmental and/or social benefits. The idea is that those efforts advance the sustainability of the dairy industry.

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**To nominate someone or submit a self-nomination form, visit [www.USDairy.com/Sustainability/Awards](http://www.USDairy.com/Sustainability/Awards).**

Nominations will be judged by a panel of experts from academic institutions, federal agencies, the media and the dairy industry.

The Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy is collaborating with the Dairy Research Institute on the awards program. Both organizations were established by dairy

farmers through their checkoff dollars sent to the National Dairy Board.

The awards will include the Elanco Award for Outstanding Dairy Farm Sustainability; the U.S. Dairy Export Council Award for Outstanding Dairy Processing and Manufacturing Sustainability; and the Center for Advanced Energy Studies/Idaho National Laboratory Award for Outstanding Achievement in Energy.

Three farms will be honored in the dairy farm sustainability category. Competition organizers say the three farms will illustrate that "the highest standards of excellence can be achieved regardless of farm size, location or type of operation."

Steve Maddox, a California dairy farmer, was at the World Dairy Expo earlier this month and encouraged dairy farmers to nominate a friend or neighbor or self-nominate themselves.

"Dairy farmers have been doing many of these things since the turn of time," Maddox said. "With these awards, people don't realize how simple it is, just telling what you're already doing."

Winners of the U.S. Dairy Sustainability Awards will be announced in February 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](http://USDairy.com/Sustainability).

All nominations will be evalu-

ated 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.

Deadline for applications is Dec. 1, 2011. There is no fee to enter.

Two of the 15 judges are from Wisconsin and one is from Minnesota. The Wisconsin judges are Molly Jahn, a genetics and agronomic professor at the UW-Madison; and Steve Larson, managing editor of Hoard's Dairyman. James Linn, a professor of dairy nutrition at the University of Minnesota and president of the American Dairy Science Association, is the Minnesota representative on the panel.