

DAIRYBUSINESS

Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy launches second year of 'dairy sustainability' awards program

The Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy® is now accepting nominations for the second year of the U.S. Dairy Sustainability Awards. The award program recognizes dairy farms, businesses and collaborative partnerships for their contributions to healthy people, healthy products and a healthy planet and showcases that sustainability makes good business sense.

Nominations are open through Nov. 15, 2012, to all segments of the U.S. dairy value chain — from farm to table — for the following categories:

- Outstanding Dairy Farm Sustainability
- Outstanding Dairy Processing & Manufacturing Sustainability

Two new categories are open this year:

- Outstanding Achievement in Renewable Energy
- Outstanding Achievement in Energy Efficiency

Deadline for applications is Nov. 15, 2012. There is no fee to enter. For more information or to nominate, go to USDairy.com/Sustainability/Awards.

Winners of the U.S. Dairy Sustainability Awards will be announced in April 2013. 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.

"It is a commitment to continuous improvement and leadership that sustains dairy farms and businesses from one generation to the next, regardless of unpredictable weather or economic conditions," said Paul Rovey, owner of Rovey Dairy and chair of Dairy Management Inc.™ "Through the U.S. Dairy Sustainability Awards, we want to recognize individuals across the dairy supply chain for their successes as a result of innovation, ingenuity and persistence."

An independent panel of judges will evaluate all nominations 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 practices by other dairy farms and businesses; demonstrated learning, innovation and improvement; and scalability.

"According to research conducted on behalf of the Innovation Center, sustainability isn't about the size, age or location of a dairy operation. It's the management practices that make the difference," said Barbara O'Brien, president of the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy. "Shining a light on best management practices helps ensure that consumers can continue to feel good about choosing their favorite dairy foods and beverages."

The inaugural U.S. Dairy Sustainability Awards recognized seven dairy operations in March 2012 from across the dairy supply chain.

One of the seven winners was [Blue Spruce Farm](#), which has reduced energy use, costs and greenhouse gas emissions by implementing new technologies in lighting, milking, milk cooling, barn construction, ventilation and water heating. It was the first dairy farm to participate in the successful Central Vermont Public Service's Cow Power™ program, which allows consumers to purchase renewable energy generated on a dairy farm.

"We feel a sense of satisfaction and pride when we enter a grocery store and see shelves stocked with affordable, nutritious, safe dairy products," said Marie Audet of Blue Spruce. "We are proud that we are able to deliver all this while being good stewards of the land, being good neighbors, and helping to keep America's working landscape vital and productive."

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, 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.

This year's gold-level sponsors include the Center for Advanced Energy Studies/Idaho National Laboratory, DeLaval, DVO Anaerobic Digesters, Elanco, MilkPEP, Pfizer Animal Health, and World Wildlife Fund. Silver-level sponsors include Dolphin WaterCare, quasar energy group, Syngenta and U.S. Dairy Export Council®.

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