

Northeast Gets Triple-Win On Dairy Sustainability

Vermont's Blue Spruce Farm, Pennsylvania's Brubaker Farms and Maine's Oakhurst Dairy earn U.S. Dairy Sustainability Awards.

Compiled by staff

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On Wednesday, a special agricultural award ceremony in Washington, D.C. The Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy honored the 2012 winners of the inaugural U.S. **Dairy** Sustainability Awards. The inaugural program recognizes dairy farms, dairy companies and collaborative partnerships for efforts that advance the sustainability of the dairy industry.

Blue Spruce Farm of Bridport, Vt., was one of three winners of the Outstanding **Dairy** Farm Sustainability Award. Operated by the Audet family, this farm was one of the first in the country to install a variable-speed vacuum pump control, reducing energy used during milking by nearly 60%. Blue Spruce also was the first farm to participate in the successful Central Vermont Public Service's Cow Power program, which markets renewable energy generated on **dairy** farms. By implementing new technologies in lighting, milking, milk cooling, barn construction, ventilation and water heating, the farm reduced energy use from an average of 1,000 kWh per cow per year, to 500 kWh per cow per year. These savings reduced greenhouse gas emissions by an estimated 500 pounds of CO₂e per cow per year.



Brubaker Farms

Brubaker Farms of Mount Joy, Pa., took the Outstanding Achievement in Energy Award. This **dairy** and poultry farm has mastered energy efficiency by creating a successful new revenue stream via its anaerobic digester system. It produces its own electricity plus enough surplus electricity to power approximately 200 homes. Three solar panels, totaling 10,000 square feet, produce an additional 130 to 150 kWh on sunny days. Surplus electricity is sold to the local utility.

Oakhurst Dairy of Portland, Maine, received honorable mention for the U.S. **Dairy** Export Council Award for Outstanding Dairy Processing and Manufacturing Sustainability. This family-owned processor was one of the first companies in Maine to sign on to the governor's Carbon Challenge and developed a sustainability roadmap with long-term reduction goals. Over a two-year period, Oakhurst reduced its plant energy via solar energy, greenhouse gas emissions, water use and transportation fuel via hybrid delivery trucks by roughly 10% each — achieving half of its overall goal.



Blue Spruce

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