



## Bridport farm wins dairy award



Kevin Ponticelli of Dairy Management, Inc. awards Marie Audet of Blue Spruce Farm with the Elanco Award for Outstanding Dairy Farm Sustainability. Photo by Stephanie Horton

By Stephanie Horton

Bridport — Blue Spruce Farm in Bridport is one of only three farms throughout the country that has been chosen for the Elanco Award for Outstanding Dairy Farm Sustainability. This achievement is a result of Blue Spruce Farm's commitment and dedication to reducing energy use and greenhouse gas emissions.

The farm was awarded at a special ceremony in Washington D.C.

The U.S. Dairy Sustainability Awards is a program that recognizes dairy farms, dairy companies and collaborative partnerships for efforts that advance the sustainability of the dairy industry.

Since the farm's start in 1958, the Audet family has put an emphasis on caring for natural resources and the environment.

As the largest employer in Bridport, the Audets strive to increase their labor and energy efficiency, provide the best in cow health and comfort and produce the highest quality milk for their farmer-owned Cabot cheese brand.

"I am so proud to receive this award on behalf of our family. It is a public affirmation of our desire to produce quality milk, in a way that is good for our animals, good for the environment and good for our community," said Marie Audet, a member of the Audet family who own and operates Blue Spruce farm with her husband, Eugene. "We love our jobs. We love our families, and we are passionate about our animals, land and resources."

Today, Blue Spruce Farm is admired as a pioneer in operational efficiency.

It was one of the first farms in the country to install a variable speed vacuum pump control, reducing energy used during milking by nearly 60 percent, and is probably best known for being the first dairy to participate in Central Vermont Public Service's ground-breaking Cow Power program, which allows consumers to purchase renewable energy generated on dairy farms.

By implementing new technologies in lighting, milking, milk cooling, barn construction, ventilation and water heating, the farm has significantly reduced energy use and greenhouse gas emissions over the years

"As early pioneers of operational efficiency, Blue Spruce Farm continues to lead the way and has been a model for the future of sustainable farming across the country," said Erin Fitzgerald, senior vice president of sustainability for the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, which was founded by dairy producers. "We are inspired by their commitment to continuous improvement."

The Audet family has been a role model for other farmers, not only for Vermont, but for communities across the country for many years.

Blue Spruce Farm was recognized with the Gov. Jim Douglas' Award for Environmental Excellence in 2006.

Other Blue Spruce awards include Vermont's Sustainable Agriculture Farm of the Year, Conservation Farmer of the Year and Farm Bureau Family of the Year.

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