

SUSTAINABILITY 12

Dairy processors and farmers are honored for curbing energy use and recycling in a new contest from the Innovation Center of U.S. Dairy.

**MARKETING 15**

Peanuts, Cracker Jacks and ice cream make an unbeatable combination. We list the official ice cream companies of Major League Baseball teams.

ALL STAR DAIRY 16

Bareman Dairy, Holland, Mich., is the All Star Dairy Association's member of the year. The association issued other awards at its annual conference.

MARKET TRENDS 18

The dollar value of natural cheese sales rose 7% in a recent 52-week period. But unit sales of the dairy food were sluggish. The shredded cheese segment outperformed the category.

NEWSLINE

Trends, marketing, regulations and people in dairy processing.

Darigold, Oakhurst Dairy Honored For Sustainability Efforts

**Darigold reduced water use by 15% and improved fuel usage per unit by 50%.
Oakhurst leaves a smaller carbon footprint by using solar energy and bio-diesel fuel.**

Darigold Inc., a dairy cooperative based in Seattle, is the first recipient of the U.S. Dairy Export Council Award for Outstanding Dairy Processing & Manufacturing Sustainability. The award program is administered by the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, Rosemont, Ill.

The dairy processor received the award at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., in March during the Innovation Center's Sustainability Council spring meeting.

Award judges were impressed by Darigold's efforts to reduce water, waste and diesel fuel. Specifically, the company stated that it has:

- reduced water usage by more than 15%, equal to more than 130 million gallons
- recycles 50% of its waste
- improved fuel usage per unit by nearly 50%, equal to more than 216,000 gallons of diesel fuel annually.

The dairy processor has completed more than 20 sustainability-driven packaging redesigns, which have reduced costs by more than \$1 million and greatly reduced corrugated and plastic usage. (Read about Darigold's caseless milk jug in the March *Dairy Foods*.)

Another processor, **Oakhurst Dairy**, Portland, Maine, received an honorable mention for its efforts. The Innovation Center also recognized dairy producers (see box at right).

After evaluating its sustainability performance in 2008, Darigold committed to implementing both operational and innovative approaches that would allow it to effectively address global sustainability challenges. Sustainability touches nearly every aspect of Darigold and is central to how it does business. The co-op monitors 28 performance areas and sets goals for improvement.

Reducing greenhouse gas emissions

Oakhurst Dairy, owned by the Bennett family, was one of the first companies in Maine to accept the governor's Carbon Challenge. The Bennetts developed a sustainabil-

ity roadmap with long-term reduction goals throughout the operation. Oakhurst is a processor of milk, cream and cottage cheese.

From 2008-2010, Oakhurst reduced its plant energy, greenhouse gas emissions, water use and transportation fuel use by roughly 10% each — achieving half of its overall goal. Other sustainable practices include the installation of a solar energy system and the use of hybrid delivery trucks. Bio-diesel fuel meets 14% of the company's overall fuel needs. The hybrid delivery trucks use 25% less fuel. Hybrid vehicles make up 45% of the company's auto fleet.

Meet the Sustainability Award Winners

U.S. Dairy Export Council Award for Outstanding Dairy Processing & Manufacturing Sustainability

- Darigold Inc., Seattle, Wash.
- Oakhurst Dairy, Portland, Maine, (honorable mention)

Elanco Award for Outstanding Dairy Farm Sustainability

- Blue Spruce Farm, Bridport, Vt.
- Holsum Dairies LLC, Hilbert, Wis.
- Werkhoven Dairy Inc., Monroe, Wash.

Center for Advanced Energy Studies/Idaho National Laboratory Award for Outstanding Achievement in Energy

- Brubaker Farms, Mount Joy, Pa.
- DF-AP, LLC, Gooding, Idaho

For more information about the winners, visit USDairy.com/Sustainability/Awards ■



■ Winners of the inaugural U.S. Dairy Sustainability Awards program are (from left): Mike Brubaker of Brubaker Farms, Mount Joy, Pa.; Kenn Buelow of Holsum Dairies, LLC, Hilbert, Wis.; Bill Bennett of Oakhurst Dairy, Portland, Maine; Andy Werkhoven of Werkhoven Dairy, Inc., Monroe, Wash.; Marie Audet of Blue Spruce Farm, Bridport, Vt.; Bob Joblin of DF-AP, LLC, Gooding, Idaho; and Steve Rowe of Darigold, Inc., Seattle.

A third dairy processor, **Dean Foods Co.**, was recognized for its collaboration with AP LLC, of Gooding, Idaho, in the category Outstanding Achievement in Energy. This partnership of Dean Foods Co. and AgPower Partners, known as DF-AP, led to the creation of what is considered the first major third-party-owned and -operated dairy digester project in the nation. The methane-fueled renewable energy system produces enough energy to provide the power needs of approximately 900 homes and produces 34,000 cubic yards of ammonia-free fiber that is sold at retail as a landscape fertilizer.

From the very first year in operation, the project has been financially self-sustaining and has paid a return to its investors, while lowering operational costs for the dairy, improving manure management and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Public and private-sector partners

The awards program has widespread support from key organizations, including Elanco, U.S. Dairy Export Council, the Center for Advanced Energy Studies/Idaho National Laboratory, United States Department of Agriculture, World Wildlife Fund, MilkPEP and the Dairy Research Institute.

Following the awards ceremony, Sustainability Council members and award winners met with administration officials in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building at the White House. Cecilia Munoz, director of the White House Domestic Policy Council, told the group that Washington “can’t be effective policy makers without the expertise and knowledge of people working in the industry.”

The awards are part of the U.S. Dairy Sustainability Commitment, an industry-wide effort to measure and improve the economic, environmental and social sustainability of the dairy industry. Launched in 2008, the Sustainability Commitment is supported by hundreds of organizations, including universities, government agencies and nongovernmental organizations.

“Across the supply chain, the dairy industry continues to demonstrate leadership in meeting consumer demand for great-tasting, wholesome and nutritious dairy products, while finding new ways to preserve our planet’s precious resources,” said Barbara O’Brien, president of the Innovation Center for U.S. Dairy, which was founded by dairy producers.

Dairy processors and producers submitted completed entry forms that were evaluated on three criteria:

1. Specific and measurable results against sustainability objectives
2. Learning, innovation and improvement
3. Potential for adoption by other dairy farms or businesses.

An independent panel of judges selected the winners.

“In reviewing more than 40 nominations and selecting the ‘best of the best,’ the Sustainability Award judges were impressed by the model programs and processes that deliver real benefit to the business, community and the environment,” said Molly Jahn, who serves as special adviser for Sustainability Science at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and as the U.S. Commissioner on Sustainable Agriculture and Climate Change.

Nominations will be open for this year’s program beginning in September through November 2012. See USDairy.com/Sustainability/Awards. ■

— *By Jim Carper, editor-in-chief*