

Cattlemen and Women Honored

Awards presented at the 2015 Cattle Industry Convention

More than 8,100 cattlemen and women from across the United States attended the 2015 Cattle Industry Convention & National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA) Trade Show in San Antonio, Texas, Feb. 4-7. Throughout the week, several individuals and ranches were honored with prestigious awards.

Environmental stewardship

Rock Hills Ranch and the Perman Family of Lowry, S.D., were named national winners of the 2014 Environmental Stewardship Award. The award recognizes ranchers for their dedication to exceptional land-management practices, which serve to improve soil, air and water quality for all.

"The Perman family serves as a shining example to farmers and ranchers across the country, illustrating what is possible when we aspire to improve the land for future generations," said Forrest Roberts, CEO of the NCBA. "Their efforts to improve their pastures have created wide-reaching benefits that extend far beyond the boundaries of their ranch. When cattlemen and women dedicate themselves to conservation efforts, such as those found on Rock Hills Ranch, we all benefit."

The Perman family's stated goal is not to simply sustain what they have, but regenerate what was once there. To accomplish the goal of regenerating the natural state of the land in their care, Luke and Lyle Perman have spent years studying the ranch and working to improve pastures, reduce rainwater runoff and create wildlife habitat, all of which contribute a positive benefit to the ranch's profitability. The family has also shifted to rotational grazing, no-till farming techniques and planting cover crops to increase the amount of water soaking into the soil after precipitation.

During the growing season on Rock Hills Ranch, the use of a rotational grazing system means cattle move to fresh pastures frequently and a pasture may only be grazed once or twice per year. To accomplish this, the Permans have installed an extensive cross-fencing system, which includes about 60



► Lyle (center) and Garnet (second from left) represent the Perman family of Rock Hills Ranch, Lowry, S.D., which won the national Environmental Stewardship Award.

miles of permanent fence. Temporary fence is used to split many of the 40 permanent paddocks into smaller paddocks for grazing depending on conditions.

The Perman family's responsible management practices extend to their ranch succession plan. Three years ago Lyle and Garnet leased the ranch, equipment and cows to their son, Luke, and his wife, Naomi. This arrangement allows Luke to make most of the decisions about the ranch. Lyle, who also operates an insurance business on the ranch, works for Luke and they confer on managing and marketing. Giving Luke and Naomi the responsibility of ranch operations helps ensure continuity of ownership from one generation to the next.

The Permans were selected from a field of seven regional finalists. Other regional winners announced in August 2014 included:

- Sherwood Acres Farm, LaGrange, Ky;
- Two Rivers Ranch, Thonotosassa, Fla.;
- Nichols Farms Ltd., Bridgewater, Iowa;
- Rocosa Ridge Ranch, Bosque County, Texas;
- The Wineinger-Davis Ranch, Ordway, Colo.; and
- Conlan Ranches California and True Grass Farms of Valley Ford, Calif.

The Environmental Stewardship Award Program (ESAP), now in its 24th year, was created to recognize beef producers who make environmental stewardship a priority on their farms and ranches while improving production and profitability. The ESAP

award is sponsored by Dow AgroSciences, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Tyson Foods, NCBA and the National Cattlemen's Foundation (NCF).

"The Perman family and each of our 2014 regional winners represent the best of American agriculture. They're making a living from the land and leaving it in better shape than they found it," said Dave Owens, U.S. Range & Pasture Marketing manager for Dow AgroSciences. "That's true environmental and economic sustainability, and their efforts should be showcased for the world."

Five BQA Awards presented

Three producers were honored with the checkoff's annual national Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) award and Dairy Beef Quality Assurance (DBQA) award, which were created to recognize outstanding beef and dairy producers from across the country who incorporate BQA principles as part of the day-to-day activities on their operations. In addition, key cattle industry influencers who promote BQA principles on a daily basis were honored. One individual was recognized with the BQA Marketer Award, and one individual received the BQA Educator of the Year Award.

2015 winners were:

- **BQA Cow-Calf Award:** Ira and Kim Brackett, Brackett Ranches from Castleford, Idaho;
- **BQA Feedyard Award:** Bill and Nancy Couser, Couser Cattle Co., Nevada, Iowa;





► Seedstock Angus operation Rocosa Ridge Ranch, Bosque County, Texas, represented by Barbara (left) and Bruce Berg (second from right), won the ESAP Region 4 award.



► Seedstock Angus operation Nichols Farms Ltd., Bridgewater, Iowa, represented by Phyllis (second from left) and Dave Nichols (second from right), won the ESAP Region 3 award.

- **BQA Dairy Award:** Tim and Maria Forry and Chad and George Hurst, Oregon Dairy Farm, Lititz, Pa.;
- **BQA Marketer Award:** Joe Wright, Corey Rozenboom, Jeff Ewing and Bub Hoskins, Knoxville Regional Livestock Market, Knoxville, Iowa; and
- **BQA Educator of the Year Award:** Dan Thomson, the Beef Cattle Institute at Kansas State University.

Josh White, executive director of producer education, who coordinates the national BQA efforts, says, "Our 2015 award winners are exemplary models for promoting beef as a quality product from the local to the national level.

"They are working diligently to implement the newest, safest, most efficient animal health, handling, daily management and recordkeeping practices," says White. "Sharing the words of one nominator: Integrity, honesty, hard work and a sense of producing

a quality product is what drives them all to be successful in this industry and create a sustainable operation for the next generation."

For more information about the beef checkoff or BQA program, visit www.bqa.org, www.dbqa.org or www.MyBeefCheckoff.com.

Max Deets Leadership Award

Keith Nantz of Maupin, Ore., has been awarded the Max Deets Leadership Award by the NCF for demonstrating outstanding leadership in the cattle industry. Nantz was recognized for his achievement at the Best of Beef Breakfast Feb. 6.

The Max Deets Leadership Award is presented each year to the Young Cattlemen's Conference chairman the previous year. It is named for Max Deets, a Kansas cattleman and industry leader who served as NCBA president in 1997. He died in May 2014. The award was established through contributions from the Kansas Livestock Association (KLA) and the NCBA.

Nantz grew up in the small town of Imbler in Northeast Oregon, active in 4-H and FFA and dreaming of his own cattle operation. He is now in his sixth year as a cow-calf producer and hay grower in Maupin. Along with seedstock and commercial cow-calf enterprises, the operation produces 3,500 tons of retail and feeder hay for local and export markets.

A graduate of Eastern Oregon University in ag business, Nantz worked for the Forest Service as a wild-land firefighter for eight years before starting his ranching business with partner John Dillon. He is active in his state and county cattlemen's associations and is also involved with the Oregon Agri-business Council with their Adopt-a-Farmer program. Among his passions in the cattle industry are genetics, nutrition, ecology, sustainability, business and policy.

Swan Family Leadership Award

JoAnn Smith of Micanopy, Fla., was

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► Dan Thomson (right), the Beef Cattle Institute at Kansas State University, won the BQA Educator of the Year Award.



► Bill and Nancy Couser (left and center), of Couser Cattle Co., Nevada, Iowa, won the BQA Feedyard Award.



► Joe Wright (left) accepted the BQA Marketer Award for Knoxville Regional Livestock Market, Knoxville, Iowa.

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awarded the Swan Family Leadership Award at the Best of Beef Breakfast Feb. 6. This award recognizes worthy individuals who have made a difference during a lifetime of dedication and leadership to the beef industry.

Smith has spent her entire life in service to the beef industry. Her son Marty and her grandchildren now work cattle on the Smith Brothers Operation in Wacahoota, Fla., primarily a cattle and timber operation that has been around since the 1850s. Her grandchildren are the sixth generation to be on the ranch.

Starting in the 1970s she became active in industry leadership roles, starting as a member of the Florida Beef Council. She became the first female president of the NCBA in 1985 and made countless appearances before Congress on behalf of the cattle industry. She also had an impact on opening the Asian markets to U.S. beef while traveling to Japan and China. One of the successes that Smith is remembered for is helping to get the Beef Checkoff Program off the ground in the mid-1980s. She was the first chair of the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board in 1986.

Smith also held numerous positions with the USDA, serving as that agency's assistant secretary for Marketing Inspection Services from 1989 to 1993.

The Swan Family Leadership Award is in honor of Bill Swan and his son George, beef industry champions who served in leadership positions at the local, state and national levels, including as presidents of NCBA. The Swan Family Leadership Award was instituted by the NCBA and the Idaho Cattle Association.

2014 Top Hand Club winners

The NCBA's Top Hand Club celebrated recruitment of 1,340 new NCBA members recruited by NCBA members during the past year.

The Top Hand Club was initiated in 1982 as NCBA's member-recruit-a-member program. It recognizes volunteer leaders for their commitment in growing a strong national association. To become a Top Hand Club member, individuals must recruit at least three new NCBA members. To

remain in the club, members must recruit two new members each subsequent year. The Top Hand Club recruitment year runs Oct. 1 through Sept. 30. The program is sponsored by Case IH.

Each year, three high-achieving Top Hands are recognized for their recruitment efforts, as those members who signed on the most new NCBA members. Again this year, the Top Hand Club sponsored an additional award, which recognizes the Top Hand who recruited the most in dues revenue. Recognized Feb. 6 were:

2014 Top Hand Club

Champion: With 109 recruits, the 2014 Top Hand Club Champion is Regina Rose, Kentucky Cattlemen's Association, of Flemingsburg, Ky. In only her second year as a Top Hand, Rose blew away her competition, recruiting an additional 30 members. Last year, Rose brought in more than 30 new members, bringing her all-time recruit count to nearly 150 NCBA members. She's earned awards including \$1,000 in Cabela's gift cards, as well as airline tickets, housing and registration for the 2015 Cattle Industry Annual Convention & NCBA Trade show.

2014 Top Hand Club Reserve Champion and Top Recruiter for Revenue:

From Sunol, Calif., and the California Cattlemen's Association, Timothy Koopmann earned 2014 Top Hand Club Reserve Champion honors. Koopmann not only recruited 76 new members this year, but he also earned honors as the Top Recruiter for Revenue with a total of \$11,150 in recruited dues revenue. This is Koopmann's first year as a Top Hand Club member. He received Top Hand prizes including a registration for annual convention, a pair of Roper/Stetson boots and an exclusive personalized Top Hand Club belt buckle by Red Bluff Buckles.

2014 Top Hand Club 3rd Place

Recruiter: Greg West, of Pangburn, Ark., and the Arkansas Cattlemen's Association, was honored as the third-place recruiter for 2014. Recruiting 55 members in his second year as a Top Hand Club member, West also earned a paid trip to the Cattle Industry Convention.

In addition to being the 2014 Top Hand



► Winning quiz bowl team members for Penn State were (from left) Olivia Rush, Amy Kraus, Chad Horst and Stephen Smith.



► Regina Rose (center), Flemingsburg, Ky., was the 2014 NCBA Top Hand Club Champion.

Club sponsor, Case IH added an additional incentive for recruiters — a Scout Utility Vehicle. Those who recruited 15 or more members were entered into a drawing for this grand prize, and for every five additional recruits, they received an extra entry into the contest. This year's winner, drawn on stage at the annual Best of Beef awards breakfast, was Gene Manuello of the Colorado Cattlemen's Association.

Case IH will sponsor this same promotion for the 2015 recruitment year.

CME Beef Industry Scholarship

Ten outstanding college students were awarded \$1,500 CME Beef Industry Scholarships Feb. 6. The scholarship is sponsored by the CME Group and administered by the National Cattlemen's Foundation. The overall essay winner, Laura Gorecki of Farewell, Neb., was awarded a trip to the convention in San Antonio.

The CME Beef Industry Scholarship was introduced in 1989 to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Live Cattle futures contract on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange. It





► Kim (second from left) and Ira Brackett (right) and family, Brackett Ranches, Castelford, Idaho, won the BQA Cow-Calf Award.



► JoAnn Smith (center), Micanopy, Fla., won the Swan Family Leadership Award.

recognizes and encourages talented students who will one day be industry leaders.

“The CME Beef Industry Scholarship enables us to invest in the next generation of our nation’s food producers, while helping them understand the importance of risk management to the beef industry,” said Tim Andriesen, CME Group Managing Director of Agricultural Commodities. “For more than 25 years, NCBA has been a key partner in advancing risk-management education to future beef industry leaders through this important scholarship program.”

Essay winner Gorecki is a junior at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, majoring in animal science and business with minors in agricultural leadership and communication, as well as leadership and entrepreneurship. She grew up on a cow-calf operation and was involved with 4-H and FFA. Her essay was on using our voices to reach consumers through technologies such as Facebook and Twitter. In the future, Gorecki hopes to pursue a graduate degree in animal behavior and welfare.



► Laura Gorecki (left), Farewell, Neb., won the \$1,500 CME Beef Industry Scholarship.

Other 2015 CME Scholarship winners were:

- Jessica Beer, Texas A&M University College Station, Texas;
- Sierra Jepson, The Ohio State University Amanda, Ohio;
- Kacey Koester, North Dakota State University Steele, N.D.;
- Jenna Lansing, Iowa State University Ames, Iowa;
- Kierra Leddy, South Dakota State University Stockholm, S.D.;
- Maci Lienemann, University of Nebraska–Lincoln Princeton, Neb.;
- Patrick Linnell, Colorado State University Fort Collins, Colo.;
- Katie Miller, Blackhawk College Cambridge, Ill.; and
- Kate Schaffer, Redlands Community College Carthage, Mo.

Both the NCF and the CME Group have missions that stress commitment to the future of the cattle industry and continued



► Keith Nantz (left), Maupin, Ore., won the Max Deets Leadership Award.

recognition and support of outstanding youth in the beef community.

Penn State wins quiz bowl

A team of students from Pennsylvania State University took top honors in the 2015 National Collegiate Quiz Bowl Feb 6. The competition was sponsored by Farm Credit Services and presented by the National Cattlemen’s Foundation and the American Society of Animal Science (ASAS).

The annual quiz bowl is designed to help develop future leaders through industry-oriented education and competition, while also offering students the opportunity to be part of the annual cattle convention. Participating teams earn the right to compete in the national competition by winning their ASAS section’s competition of the Academic Quadrathlon.

The Collegiate Beef Quiz Bowl is a double-elimination competition, with each round consisting of 25 questions about various aspects of the beef industry. Every fourth question answered correctly allows for a bonus question.

Moderator for the San Antonio competition was Jason Ahola of Colorado State University.

Students on the winning team for Penn State were Chad Horst, Amy Kraus, Olivia Rush and Stephen Smith. The team’s advisors were Dale Olver and Dan Kniffen.

Other teams in the competition were Texas A&M University (Southern Region) and Montana State University (Western Region).

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Editor’s Note: This article was compiled using news releases from the National Cattlemen’s Beef Association and the Cattlemen’s Beef Promotion and Research Board.