



'Best of Beef' Awards Presented

Annual breakfast honors individuals for outstanding accomplishments within the beef industry.

by Kindra Gordon, field editor

More than a dozen awards were presented honoring beef industry members for their involvement and accomplishments during an awards breakfast Friday, Jan. 29, at the 2016 Cattle Industry Convention & NCBA Trade Show in San Diego, Calif. The "Best of Beef" event was emceed by farm broadcaster Russell Nemetz with the Northern Ag Network. Here is a recap.

Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) Award winners. In the cow-calf division, Frank Stoltzfus of Masonic Village Farm in Pennsylvania was recognized. The farm has 180 cow-calf pairs and farms about 600 acres, while also providing retirement living, personal care and nursing services to more than 1,500 residents.

Nodaway Valley Feeders, owned by Todd and Kristi Drake of southwest Iowa, was presented the BQA award for the feedyard division, and Brook-Corner LLC, a registered Holstein operation owned by Reid, Diane and Brad Hoover of Pennsylvania, was presented the Dairy BQA award.

Nebraskan Scott Mueller, owner of Samson Inc., was recognized with the BQA Marketer Award, and North Dakota State University BQA Specialist Lisa Pederson received the BQA Educator of the Year award.

"Our 2016 award winners are exemplary models for promoting beef as a quality product from the local to the national level," says Chase Decoite, associate director of BQA for the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA). "They are working diligently to implement the newest, safest, most efficient animal health, handling, daily management and recordkeeping practices. They are truly examples of sharing the BQA story!"

The BQA awards are sponsored by Cargill, Boehringer Ingelheim Vetmedica Inc., NCBA and the beef checkoff. You can watch videos for each BQA award winner on the BQA YouTube page at <http://bit.ly/4cattlemenBQA>.

Communications. Receiving awards for excellence in communications and public relations were Carson Horn, director of communications with the Arkansas Cattlemen's Association, and KayDee Gilkey, an ag radio reporter with the Ag Information Network in Washington State.

BEEF Magazine's Trailblazer Award was presented to A.E. "Bud" Sloan, Sloan Ranch, Ventura County, Calif. He founded the Ventura County CoLAB, which stands for Coalition of Labor, Agriculture and Business. Sloan says agriculture is 15-20 years behind the environmental and no-growth groups in land use and regulatory effects that determine how ag functions on a daily basis.

"We've got to turn that around," he said.

BEEF Magazine's National Stocker Award was presented to Homer and Larry Buell, Shovel Dot Ranch, Bassett, Neb. The Buells have been dedicated to recordkeeping and cost analysis and have a focused commitment to the land and the grass it grows.

Farm Journal Media's 40 Under 40 Awards. Beef industry winners included Jaclyn Wilson, Flying Diamond Genetics; Patrick Bray, Arizona Cattle Growers' Association; Tracy Woods, 44 Farms; Larry Keenen, Red Angus Association of America; Joe Kovanda, Bartlett Cattle Co. and Ryan Meyer, Creekstone Farms.

Max Deets Leadership Award. Cody Norton, a senior beef pricing analyst for JBS Swift, has been awarded the Max Deets Leadership Award for 2016 by the National Cattlemen's Foundation for demonstrating outstanding leadership in the cattle industry.

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 the president of the NCBA in 1997. He died in May, 2014. The award was established through contributions from the Kansas Livestock Association and NCBA.

Norton grew up on a small family quarter horse operation in Spring Hill, Tenn., and studied agriculture economics at the University of Tennessee at Martin. He was involved in FFA throughout high school and college, serving as a state officer his freshmen year. After finishing his undergraduate

program Norton attended Texas A&M University where he received a graduate degree in agriculture economics.

Norton joined JBS in June 2012 through the company's Ascend leadership training program. Some of his projects while in that program were carcass utilization optimization, packaging cost reduction, retail beef optimization and sale reporting efficiencies. In addition to his current role with JBS, Norton has spent time working as a packing supervisor in the Greeley beef plant, special project analyst for the beef pricing unit, and sales representative.

CME Group Beef Industry Scholarships. Ten \$1,500 scholarships were awarded to outstanding students pursuing beef industry careers. Recipients were: Case Hendrix, Texas; Denton Diggs, Missouri; Sierra Jepsen, Ohio; Kacey Koester, North Dakota; Abby Marion, Florida; Garrett Nichols, Iowa; Michael Olson, Kansas; Lena Sanchez, New Mexico; Will Schaffer, Missouri; and Alexis Strickland, Florida.

W.D. Farr Scholarships. Each \$12,000 scholarship is awarded to graduate students to further their study in fields that benefit the cattle and beef industry. Recipients were Whitney Crossland, Texas A&M University, who is studying the feeding application of ethanol byproducts and the effects of commercial feed additives on the ruminant microbiome, and Greta Krafur, Colorado State University, who is working to identify the biomarkers associated to predict brisket disease.

Recognition was also given to the Collegiate Beef Quiz Bowl Teams, the Environmental Stewardship Award regional winners, and the Top Hand Membership Recruiters and State Affiliates.



Editor's Note: Kindra Gordon is a freelancer and cattlewoman from Whitewood, S.D. This article was written as part of Angus Media's online coverage of the Cattle Industry Convention & NCBA Trade Show. For additional coverage, visit the Newsroom at www.4cattlemen.com.

Nevada Ranch Honored for Commitment to Environment

Maggie Creek Ranch takes home Environmental Stewardship Award Program's top national award.

Maggie Creek Ranch and the Searle family of Elko, Nev., were named national winners of the 2015 Environmental Stewardship Award. The award recognizes ranchers for their commitment to outstanding land management practices that create healthy, balanced ecosystems.

"Maggie Creek Ranch exemplifies environmental stewardship in the beef community, illustrating how ranching families work every day with the land, natural resources and cattle to better the environment," said Philip Ellis, president of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA). "When cattlemen and women, like the Searle family, dedicate themselves to conservation efforts the entire industry benefits."

Raising cattle in sagebrush country since 1975, Maggie Creek Ranch operates on two-thirds owned land and one-third permitted federal land. Ranch manager Jon Griggs has worked for many years to build trust with various partners and collaborate on conservation



projects. One of those key partners is the Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

"We have had a common vision of the watershed and what the land should look like," said Carol Evans, fisheries biologist, BLM. "Never mind the land boundaries, we just get to work."

The ranch works to improve habitat for wildlife, including threatened and endangered species. One project of particular success was the installation of irrigation diversions and a fish passage to protect the Lahontan cutthroat trout. Protective structures in

the stream ensure the fish can move up and down the creek, spawn and access food sources. A healthy habitat at Maggie Creek Ranch is an ecosystem to support fish, wildlife and cattle in a sustainable manner, which is part of a family tradition that started nearly 40 years ago with Sally Searle and her late husband, Bill.

"This award is such a personal thing for us with my grandfather being gone," said Bekah Klarr, granddaughter of the Searles.

"He really lives on through environmental stewardship and that heritage that he passed to us, which means a lot."

Celebrating its 25th anniversary, the Environmental Stewardship Award Program (ESAP) was created to recognize beef producers who make environmental stewardship a priority on their farms and ranches while improving production and profitability. The award is presented by the National Cattlemen's Foundation (NCF) and NCBA, and is sponsored by Dow AgroSciences, NRCS, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

"The Searle family and each of our 2015 regional winners are examples of the best in American agriculture," said Dave Owens, U.S. Range and Pasture Marketing manager for Dow AgroSciences. "These winners make a living from the land and leave it better than when they started. We are proud to honor these outstanding environmental stewards."

See more at www.beefusa.org/newsreleases1.aspx?NewsID=5567#sthash.uHQaoPub.dpuf.

Editor's Note: This article was provided as a news release by NCBA.



► **Above:** Maggie Creek Ranch and the Searle family of Elko, Nev., were named national winners of the 2015 Environmental Stewardship Award.

► **Right:** Kopriva Angus and the Kopriva family of Raymond, S.D., were honored with one of seven regional awards.



Buzzer Beaters

University of Minnesota wins 2016 National Collegiate Beef Quiz Bowl.

University of Minnesota (U of M) students took home the gold at the National Collegiate Beef Quiz Bowl Wednesday, Jan. 27, at the 118th annual Cattle Industry Convention & NCBA Trade Show in San Diego, Calif. The competition was sponsored by Farm Credit Services and presented by the American Society of Animal Science (ASAS) and the National Cattlemen's Foundation (NCF).

The team of five students, including Rebecca Church, Sarah Marketon, Troy King and Trevor Otte, competed against Pennsylvania State University (Penn State) and Oregon State University, ultimately moving ahead of both teams to win the competition.

Jason Ahola, Colorado State University professor of beef production systems, moderated the competition.

"The event provides students with a venue where college students can compete with all things beef," he said.

The teams earned a spot in the competition by first participating in and winning their region's ASAS Academic Quadrathlon.

Students attending land-grant institutions are eligible and encouraged to participate in academic quadrathlons within their animal science departments. Students first form teams and compete in regional competitions sponsored by the ASAS. Winners from each region are awarded a sponsorship to attend the Cattle Industry Convention & NCBA Trade Show to compete in the quiz bowl.

At this year's competition, Oregon State represented the Western Region; Penn State represented the Eastern region; and



PHOTO BY SHAUNA ROSE HERMEL

the U of M represented the Midwest Region. The Southern Region was not represented.

"It's a friendly competition among students," Ahola said. "It brings a number of students to a major event and gives them the opportunity to meet beef industry leaders. It's a great opportunity for networking."

The tradition began 25 years ago in Nashville at the 1990 National Cattlemen's Convention.

— by **Shelby Mettlen**, assistant editor

NCBA Affiliates Awarded New Holland Leases for Recruitment Efforts

The Missouri Cattlemen's Association and the California Cattlemen's Association each earned use of a piece of equipment from New Holland for their outstanding efforts to recruit new members to the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA). Each of these affiliates will get its choice of a one-year lease on either a New Holland Roll-Belt™ 560 Specialty Crop round baler or a New Holland T6 175 tractor.

For the second year in a row, the Missouri Cattlemen's Association automatically earned one of these leases for the most recruits for the contest period, which lasted from Oct. 1, 2015 to Dec. 31, 2015. Also in the top five state affiliates for NCBA membership recruitment were: Kansas Livestock Association, Texas and Southwestern Cattle Raisers Association, California Cattlemen's Association and Tennessee Cattlemen's Association.

California Cattlemen's Association was the winner of the drawing of the 11 qualifying affiliates, which included: California Cattlemen's Association, Colorado Cattlemen's Association, Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Indiana Beef Cattle Association, Kansas Livestock Association, Michigan Cattlemen's Association, Minnesota State Cattlemen's Association, Nebraska Cattlemen, Ohio Cattlemen's Association, Utah Cattlemen's Association, and Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association.

Editor's Note: This article is adapted from a news release provided by NCBA.

NCBA Members Elect Officers

The 2016 Cattle Industry Convention & NCBA Trade Show wrapped up Jan. 30 with the NCBA board of directors meeting. Tracy Brunner was officially elected to succeed Philip Ellis as president of the National Cattlemen's Beef Association (NCBA). Brunner, a fourth-generation cattleman from Ramona, Kan., expressed optimism about the organization's momentum, saying he would continue to build on the organization's success of the prior year.

It's an honor to take the reins of NCBA for the next year," said Brunner. "We have a great organization and the strong presence of cattlemen and women gathered this week is a demonstration of several things: the interest we have in improving our businesses, our desire to have fun and fellowship, our belief in the power of dialogue to move things forward and our commitment to making this an even greater industry."

Craig Uden, Elwood, Neb., was elected as NCBA president-elect, and Kevin Kester, Parkfield, Calif., is the new NCBA vice president. Steve Hanson, Elsie, Neb., was elected chairman of the NCBA Federation Division, and Jerry Effertz, Velva, N.D., is the new Federation vice chairman. The new NCBA Policy Division chairman is Jennifer Houston of Sweetwater, Tenn. Joe Guild, Reno, Nev., is the new policy vice chairman.

"The American beef industry is stronger than it has ever been," said Brunner. "We have the right people growing the right product in the right way. And, we have the right organizational culture and structure. We have promotion and advocacy; research and education. We have public policy efforts to ensure beef producers are represented in the halls of Congress and at the table as laws are made. We are committed to not only protecting and promoting the beef business of today, but even more importantly, the beef business of tomorrow."

As president of NCBA, Brunner will lead the organization's policy work and oversee efforts undertaken as a contractor to the Beef Checkoff Program. To learn more about the organization visit the website: www.beefusa.org/.

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