

Maryland & Virginia Honors Top Quality Producers

April 6, 2011 (Reston, Va.) - Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative honored four farm families for achieving the highest quality standards throughout the entire cooperative for 2010. The cooperative recognized each farm at its 91st Annual Meeting during the Member Recognition Luncheon. The honorees include:

Federal Order 1 - Producing Less than Three Million Pounds

Alson & Mary Louise Zimmerman, Roaring Springs, Pa.

66,052 Somatic Cell Count, 1,167 Standard Plate Count, 2,475 Preliminary Incubation Count

Alson and his wife, Mary Louise, have made it a goal to ship quality milk for many years. The couple, along with their young children, Annalisa, 7, Jennalyn, 5, and Damian, 2, farm about 120 acres in Roaring Spring, Pa. The Zimmermans, both from dairy farms, started out in 2004 when they purchased their own farm. They have a herd of 55 Holsteins and they milk in a very clean and tidy tie-stall barn. Alson says he wants the barn to look as good on every day as if he were having visitors. The Zimmermans also raise about 45 replacement heifers.

Federal Order 1 - Producing More than Three Million Pounds

Jimmy & Denise Carmack, Detour, Md.

95,529 Somatic Cell Count, 1,667 Standard Plate Count, 4,992 Preliminary Incubation Count

According to Jimmy Carmack, his secret to achieving high quality results is figuring out what works for your operation. With the help of his wife Denise and several employees, Jimmy milks close to 200 Holsteins, raises 200 replacement heifers and farms 400 acres in Detour, Md. Both Jimmy and Denise grew up on dairies and both families have farmed for more than five generations. "Whether it be milking procedures, equipment cleanliness or the condition of the pastures, Jimmy is very particular," says Denise. "There is no one thing that gives us good quality," explains Jimmy, "it's all of the little things and finding what works for you." Some of the protocols the Carmacks rely on include a co-pulsation system, using quality detergents and soaps, clean equipment and cooling their milk as fast as possible.

Federal Orders 5 & 7 - Producing Less than Three Million Pounds

Guffey Farms LLC, Albany, Ky.

93,178 Somatic Cell Count, 1,250 Standard Plate Count, 5,727 Preliminary Incubation Count

Paying attention to details is Shelby Guffey's secret weapon when it comes to producing the highest quality milk possible. A native of Albany, Ky., Shelby focuses on the finer points to ensure that his cows are happy and cell counts are low. He farms with his wife Kelly, parents Bill and Frances and brother and sister-in-law Colby and Sarah. Shelby and Colby are the seventh generation on the farm, which has been in the family since the 1790's. Everyone chips in to manage their 700 acres of crops, but Shelby mainly focuses on the 50-head herd of grade Holsteins. He uses sand bedding which helps to keep the cows clean and comfortable, and he does his best to keep cows out of mud holes between milkings. "We spend a little extra money but we get it back plus some in our quality premiums," Shelby said. "We don't have a new facility. I just consider us an average farm but it proves that anyone can achieve quality."

Federal Orders 5 & 7 - Producing More than Three Million Pounds

John O. Hardesty & Son, Harvue Farm, Berryville, Va.

140,008 Somatic Cell Count, 1,750 Standard Plate Count, 2,172 Preliminary Incubation Count

Family is often the root of success on dairy farms and the Hardestys in Berryville, Va. would certainly agree that without their family, they would not have earned Quality Producer of the Year recognition. Harvue Farm is in the process of adding in the next generation with Danny and Matt. Their father David is moving to a general manager position while their grandfather Jack can enjoy more of a retirement role. Of course the glue that keeps everyone together is David's wife Debbie who cares for the show calves, fills in where ever necessary and of course keeps everyone well fed. With the boys back on the farm, David feels that their family has been able to focus more on the small details that allow them to produce high quality milk. He also credits the hard work of his six employees. "You can't do it without good people," explains David. "We've been very fortunate to have good people."

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Maryland & Virginia Milk Producers Cooperative is a milk marketing and processing cooperative that represents 1,500-plus dairy farmer-owners from Pennsylvania to Georgia. The cooperative includes three fluid processing plants: Marva Maid in Newport News, Va., Marva Maid of Landover, Md., and Maola Milk and Ice Cream in New Bern, N.C.; manufacturing plants in Laurel, Md., and Strasburg, Va.; and a farm supply warehouse in Frederick, Md.

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