



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

February 11, 2019

Dairymen's, PDMP, Center Honors Dairy Industry Leaders with Awards

Barleys, Hosterman, Zepp, Turner Honored at Summit

Harrisburg – The Pennsylvania Dairymen's Association, Center for Dairy Excellence and the Professional Dairy Managers of Pennsylvania joined together to launch an industry-wide awards program that recognizes and showcases leadership, stewardship, and excellence in Pennsylvania's dairy industry, through four awards presented at the 2019 Pennsylvania Dairy Summit in Lancaster, Pa.

All applications received were reviewed by a committee comprised of two Pennsylvania Dairymen's Association board members, two Center for Dairy Excellence board members, two Professional Dairy Managers of Pennsylvania board members and one representative from the Penn State Extension Dairy Team.

The three awards recognized at the 2019 PA Dairy Summit include:

- 1. Pennsylvania Distinguished Dairy Producer Award** – Recognizes dairy producers (either individual or farm enterprise) who have demonstrated superior management capabilities within their own dairy business and provide outstanding leadership and service to the dairy industry.
- 2. Pennsylvania Dairy Service Award** – Recognizes individuals in the industry who has distinguished him or herself in serving the greater interest of Pennsylvania's dairy industry and its individual dairy farms.
- 3. Pennsylvania Dairy Innovator Award** – Recognizes an individual or business entity that has provided tremendous innovation to progress Pennsylvania's dairy industry toward a brighter future, either by advancing the marketplace or creating new opportunities for innovation on the dairy farm.

Tom, Rob and Abe Barley of Star Rock Dairy, Inc., were presented with the Pennsylvania Distinguished Producer Award. Star Rock works to operate a profitable dairy operation while producing quality milk in an efficient, well-managed, progressive manner.

Brothers Rob and Tom and cousin Abe, who together manage dairy, beef finishing, hog and broiler enterprises and crop farm more than 11,000 acres of owned and rented land. The three operated under the Star Rock Farms, LLC name from 1995 until 2003, when they changed the name of the dairy operation to Star Rock Dairy, Inc.

The Barleys maintain a safe, friendly environment for employees, evident in the low turnover they see at their farm. The farm continues to be available for school tours, farm-related tours and to anyone who wants to experience a modern dairy and learn more about Star Rock Farms.

Rob manages finances and livestock along with his involvement in Lancaster County Ag Council, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, Dairy Farmers of America and his recent appoint as chairman of the Pennsylvania Milk Marketing Board. Rob also serves as a board member to the national Milk Processors Education Program. Tom oversees the 1,450 cow dairy herd and is involved in the Lancaster County and Pennsylvania Holstein Associations, Pennsylvania Farm Bureau and DFA. Abe's role as CEO involves all aspects of the operation



with a focus on cropping and maintenance oversight along with his involvement on the Lancaster County Farm Service Agency Committee and Pennsylvania Farm Bureau.

The Barleys continue to look to the future, as many of the next generation work full or part time for Star Rock. The families include Abe and wife Jennifer and their three children: Abigail, Ellie and Jack. Rob and wife Shelly and their four children, son in law and two grandchildren: Ethan, Michaela, Laurel, Amelia and husband Michael Lewgood along with their two children Leighton and Barrett. Tom and wife Elizabeth and their four children Emma, Jonah, Colt and Ivy.

The Pennsylvania Dairy Service Award winners this year included Michael Hosterman with AgChoice Farm Credit and Alan Zepp from the Center for Dairy Excellence.

Hosterman has spent the last 29 years working for Ag Choice, primarily serving the dairy industry. For 18 years, he was a loan officer, until he transitioned to an Ag Business consultant, where he continues to work today. Over the years, he has helped numerous families with financial planning, cash flows, transition planning, management decisions, feasibility studies, expansion and transformation plans, leadership development, organizational structure and retirement planning.

His strong passion and desire to see the Pennsylvania and Northeast dairy industry grow and prosper are evident in all he does. He has also been integral in developing and overseeing the Dairy Success & Profitability Review benchmark and worked to co-chair and develop the internal Ag Choice Dairy Team to develop and train Ag Choice staff in dairy knowledge. He also co-authored the Ag Choice Dairy Outlook beginning in 2000 and helped to make it available on their website in 2016.

Hosterman continues to facilitate the Progressive Dairy Benchmark program, progressive producer discussion groups, farm tours, dairy education opportunities through Penn State, Cornell, Northeast Dairy Challenge and has served on the PA Dairy Summit program planning committee. He has served on the PDMP board and was recently appointed to the Center for Dairy Excellence board. His work to help producers make better decisions to help them grow and prosper drives his passion to live out the AgChoice tag line, "Knowing You Makes a Difference."

After 30 years as a dairy farmer from New Oxford, Adams County, Alan Zepp chose to give back to the industry he loves by taking on the role of Risk Management Program Manager with the Center for Dairy Excellence. Over the past 10 years of volatile milk prices, he has provided counsel to countless dairy farm families and to the broader industry.

Zepp has challenged farmers to think strategically about their business, know their cost of production, and make decisions that are in the best interest of their farm and financials long term. He has offered a realistic perspective on dairy markets and has cut through the clutter to help farmers understand the dynamics in play. He has been able to build strong connections with both industry and farmers, leaning on his past experience and perspective with risk management programs as a farmer who used them.

Through his role at the Center, Zepp has authored a weekly column, the Markets & Management Update in Farmshine, presented a monthly webinar, Protecting Your Profits, and oversaw the annual Dairy Financial and Risk Management Conference. He also led the Risk Management Peer Group calls twice a year and served on the Pennsylvania Grow Ag Economic Development Committee. He has served on many leadership roles within Adams



County, including as a board member of his local township planning commission. He also was a 4-H dairy club leader for many years.

Chuck Turner of Turner Dairy Farms, Inc., was the winner of the Pennsylvania Dairy Innovator Award. Turner is President of Turner Dairy Farms, a company founded by his grandfather in 1930 and still owned and managed by the Turner family today. Turner joined the family business in 1986 and today his responsibilities include managing strategic planning, marketing, new product development, operations management, accounting, safety, quality control, and more.

Turner Dairy Farms' products have high visibility in their area, receiving multiple national honors for high quality and taste. Beyond that, the Turner family continues to innovate their product line through offering new products, like lactose-free milk and limited-edition flavored milks and by redesigning their labels to offer an attractive product that appeals to today's consumers. However, their biggest honor is from consumers who seek out Turner's milk for their family because the Turner family has earned their trust.

In recent results of a partner survey, 99 percent of Turner customers surveyed said they were satisfied or very satisfied with their partnership with Turner Dairy Farms. About 98 percent considered Turner's products to be high quality or very high quality. Their focus on customer satisfaction is captured in their mission: Perfect Products, Perfect Service, Treat People Right. Chuck is quick to add that the last part of that mission includes not just customers, but their team members, dairy farmers, supplier and neighbors. Turner's is very involved in their community through donations to the local food bank, various events, organizations and school boosters.

Turner has served in various leadership roles, including the board of the Center for Dairy Excellence, president of the Pennsylvania Association of Milk Dealers, president of Titusville Dairy, a managing member of Pittsburgh Special-T Dairy, LLC, and along with his wife Zeta, on the Heart Auxiliary Board of Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh Foundation.

For more information about the Pennsylvania Dairy Industry Awards, contact Jayne Sebright at the center at 717-346-0849 or visit www.centerfordairyexcellence.org.

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The Center for Dairy Excellence is a non-profit organization initiated by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture in 2004. Bringing together people from more than 40 different dairy organizations in Pennsylvania, the center's mission is to enhance the profitability of the dairy industry by empowering people, creating partnerships, and increasing the availability and use of resources. Learn more about the center at www.centerfordairyexcellence.org.

Cutline: Winners accepting the 2019 Pennsylvania Dairy Industry Awards included Rob and Tom Barley, representing Star Rock Dairy Inc., Michael Hosterman, Alan Zepp, and Chuck Turner.