



CENTER FOR
DairyEXCELLENCE

For Immediate Release

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2022 PENNSYLVANIA DAIRY INDUSTRY AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

The Bartch Family, Brubaker, and Troutman Were Recognized at the 2022 PA Dairy Summit

Harrisburg, Pa. – At this year’s Pennsylvania Dairy Summit, the Professional Dairy Managers of Pennsylvania, Center for Dairy Excellence, and Pennsylvania Dairymen’s Association awarded four dairy professionals with the 2022 Pennsylvania Dairy Industry Awards. The annual awards program recognizes dairy professionals who showcase leadership, service, and excellence across the state’s dairy industry.

All applications were reviewed by an awards committee of dairy producers and industry professionals. Nominees were evaluated for their contributions to the industry and letters of support from their peers and fellow dairy producers.

“The Pennsylvania dairy industry is a close-knit community that enjoys recognizing one another’s strengths and talents. This year’s award recipients are a true testament to our industry’s commitment to service, innovation, and community. We enjoyed recognizing them and celebrating their accomplishments last week at the Dairy Summit,” said Melissa Anderson, Programs and Operations Manager at the Center who oversees the award program.

Congratulations to the following dairy professionals who were honored at the 2022 PA Dairy Summit:

Donny and Shari Bartch of Merrimart Farms LLC in Perry County received the Pennsylvania Distinguished Dairy Producer Award. Donny and Shari Bartch own and operate Merrimart Farms, milking approximately 260 cows and farming 1,000 acres. Shari is the fourth generation of the Martin family farming in the area, and together, she and Donny have been able to continue the farm that was started three generations earlier. Shari and Donny have been partners in her family farm for 18 years and became sole owners in 2018. During their involvement on the farm, they have focused on high-quality feeds and intensive double cropping. This has allowed the farm to invest in additional feed storage and housing for additional animals.

Donny and Shari are also passionate about innovation and automated technology. They have diversified their operation with finished steers, custom farming, and crop sales, which has added additional income sources. With an eye on efficiency, they have added automated technology such as a robotic calf feeder and are in the process of building a robotic milking barn. After growing their business in size and scale, as well as quality and efficiency, Donny and Shari continue to seek out ways to improve their herd and overall business. Their desire to grow and improve is one of their greatest strengths. They are open to

new approaches and are not afraid to try something new if it benefits their farm, their family, the animals, and the community. Donny and Shari are outstanding Pennsylvania dairy producers with a commitment to their employees, family, community, and the dairy industry at large.

Wayne Brubaker, Senior Account Supervisor at MSC Business Services, received the Pennsylvania Dairy Service Award. Wayne Brubaker has dedicated his career to serving the Pennsylvania dairy industry and helping dairy farmers grow their businesses and improve profitability. When PA Farm Bureau's MSC Business Services determined the need to offer consulting services to dairy farm clients approximately 10 years ago, Wayne led the way in this endeavor, providing valuable consulting expertise in feasibility studies, profitability studies, business planning and estate planning. Wayne has enjoyed a long career helping PA dairy producers manage their farms, and he has been involved with more than 300 dairy farms in the 42 years he has worked in the dairy industry.

Wayne began his career as an Account Supervisor before advancing to a Senior Account Supervisor and Consulting Supervisor. Wayne is also an Enrolled Agent, which enables him to represent clients before the Internal Revenue Service. As a consultant, Wayne's goal is to build caring, trustworthy relationships with his dairy clients and provide sound, unprejudiced advice. His clients are confident in the advice he provides and consider him an essential part of their management teams. In addition to the services and consulting he provides his clients, Wayne is also a member of the Dairy Benchmark program sponsored by Farm Credit East and helps organize their annual meeting to discuss the reports he prepares for dairy farms. Wayne supervises the publication of the MSC Business Services' Dairy Profitability Comparison, which is a two-page summary of data for dairy farms across Pennsylvania. Wayne has received the Master Award two times, which is the highest award given annually to staff members of MSC Business Services.

Nelson Troutman of Oakenbound Dairy in Lebanon County received the Pennsylvania Dairy Innovator Award. Nelson Troutman has devoted his entire life to the Pennsylvania dairy industry by helping others, mentoring young people, and promoting dairy in a positive, innovative and practical manner. He has served as a 4-H leader and regularly opened his farm, Oakenbound Dairy, to youth judging practices, dairy community picnics, and educational workshops. In recent years, he has partially retired from dairy farming and found a young couple who were desiring to be dairy farmers and transitioned the herd to them. He was also instrumental in helping his son and daughter-in-law fulfill their dreams of becoming dairy farmers.

In December of 2019, Nelson created the first "baleboard" to help promote whole milk and drive the dairy industry in a new direction. After painting "Drink Local Whole Milk - 97% Fat Free" on one of his wrapped round bales and displaying it at the intersection of his farm, the simple idea quickly took off. It led to the creation of hundreds of more bales, a website, media attention, merchandise, a social media presence, corn mazes, car magnets, banners, and grocers reporting large increases in whole milk sales. The campaign has helped energize dairy farmers who continue to navigate volatile milk prices as well as educate consumers who are purchasing dairy products at their local grocery stores. Nelson's positive nature, can-do attitude, and strong work ethic have made him instrumental behind the scenes of this campaign. His innovation and service have become an inspiration for others in the dairy industry and beyond.

The Dairy Industry Awards are offered annually to Pennsylvania residents. Qualified applicants stay in the nomination pool for three years after being submitted for consideration. Nominators can update the nomination each of the two years following their original submission. Once a candidate is honored as a

winner in an award category, they or individuals representing them are not eligible to win in any other category for two subsequent years. Nominations for next year's award program will open in the fall of 2022.

For more information about the awards program, visit www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/awards or call the Center at 717-346-0849.

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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 at centerfordairyexcellence.org.

The Pennsylvania Dairymen's Association is a non-profit organization with a focus on supporting Pennsylvania dairy farms, agricultural scholarships, youth programs and educational programs across the state. Learn more at padairymens.com.

PDMP is a not-for-profit, farmer-driven organization advancing the State's dairy industry through improved productivity and economic viability with continued stewardship of our animals, environment and community. Programs offered by PDMP are designed by dairy producers for dairy producers. For more information on PDMP, visit their website at pdmp.org.