



For Immediate Release

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Photo Caption: Greg Harding (left), Judy Harding Ligo, and Jeff Harding (right) recognize Cara Trotter Itle (second from left) with the 2025 Janet Harding Ruslavage Memorial Service & Promotion Award.

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CARA ITLE RECOGNIZED AS 2025 RECIPIENT OF JAN HARDING RUSLAVAGE MEMORIAL SERVICE & PROMOTION AWARD

The Award Was Established to Honor Service of Janet Harding Ruslavage

Harrisburg, Pa. – Cara Trotter Itle, field representative and FARM Program inspector for United Dairy, was recently recognized as the 2025 recipient of the Janet Harding Ruslavage Memorial Service & Promotion Award. The award program was created in 2024 to honor the memory and distinguished service of Janet Harding Ruslavage to Pennsylvania’s dairy industry by recognizing an individual between the ages of 18 and 30 who demonstrates exceptional service to and promotion of Pennsylvania dairy.

“My mom was a promoter for dairy all of her life, and she was a role model for many young ladies over the years. She felt promotion and service to the industry was pretty important, and we are proud that this award was established with donations from many individuals across the industry to recognize exemplary service and promotion to the industry,” said Jeff Harding on behalf of the Harding family.

“We are proud to present this award to Cara. She is extremely active in the dairy industry. Along with working as a field representative and FARM Program inspector for United Dairy, Cara volunteers countless hours to advocate for and promote the Guernsey breed, Golden Guernsey Milk, and the broader dairy industry,” said Judy Ligo, who joined her brother Jeff in presenting the award.

Itle grew up on her family’s farm in Enon Valley, Lawrence County, and now lives with her husband Simon and their three daughters in Loretto, Cambria County. In addition to her role as a field representative, she advocates for and promotes the Guernsey breed, Golden Guernsey Milk. Itle serves as secretary and acting treasurer for Naturally Golden Family Farms, a small cooperative that markets “Naturally Golden” branded milk, cheese curds and yogurt from local Guernsey breeders, co-packed by local dairy processors. In her role, she handles invoicing and paperwork, product sales, and marketing for the cooperative.

“Receiving the Jan Harding Memorial Award is an incredible honor that deeply humbles me. To be recognized in the spirit of someone who gave so much with quiet strength and compassion means more than words can express,” Itle shared. “I hope to carry forward Jan’s legacy by continuing to lead with integrity, kindness, and a commitment to community. I also want to thank my family for their unwavering support in everything I do — your encouragement means the world to me.”

Itle spearheaded the first-ever dairy product competition hosted by the American Guernsey Association’s Golden Guernsey Committee, created a Facebook discussion group for Guernsey milk producers, and always looks for ways to increase use of the Golden Guernsey trademark among Guernsey breeders who directly market their milk. She also represented Naturally Golden Family Farms in the Northeast Dairy Product Innovation Contest, where they were a Top 10 finalist with their All Natural A2 Creamer. She volunteers in many other capacities across the dairy industry, including as the Guernsey breed representative and secretary for the All-American Dairy Show.

Itle received a \$3,000 cash award and was recognized at the annual Pennsylvania Dairy Princess State Pageant in September. To qualify for this award, individuals must be a Pennsylvania resident, must be between the ages of 18 and 30 years old, and must be a high school graduate and pursuing a career in or related to the dairy industry.

To learn more about the award, visit www.centerfordairyexcellence.org/janet-harding-ruslavage-award. The Dairy Excellence Foundation helps to manage the Harding Fund, award and nomination process. Contact Jayne Sebright, Executive Director of the Dairy Excellence Foundation, at jsebright@centerfordairyexcellence.org with questions about the award.

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The Center for Dairy Excellence Foundation of Pennsylvania is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax deductible organization that is Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) approved. Established in 2010, the foundation’s mission is to build and invest in programs that cultivate and empower the next generation of producers, consumers, and advocates for the Pennsylvania dairy industry. Learn more at centerfordairyexcellence.org/our-foundation/.

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