



Wisconsin Beef Industry Recognizes Farmers

At the recent Wisconsin Cattlemen's Association (WCA) Winter Conference, a number of farmers and industry leaders were recognized for their various contributions. Included in that recognition were the Beef Quality Assurance Producer of the Year and the Environmental Stewardship Award, which were sponsored by the Wisconsin Beef Council.

BQA Producer of the Year: Dave Eron, Eron Beef, LLC

The 2019 Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) Producer of the Year recipient was Dave Eron, Eron Beef, LLC. Eron Beef is located near Stevens Point, WI and was featured on the 2018 WCA Summer Tour. The feedlot operation is owned and operated by Dave Eron and feeds both Holstein steers and colored cattle. Recently, Eron built a slatted floor facility to move his finishing cattle operation from dirt lots in order to have a more controlled environment for feeding cattle as well as capture more value from the manure generated. Eron utilizes a variety of by-product feeds to lower his feed costs and maintain a competitive advantage. He also focuses on technology, low-stress cattle handling and modern data and performance tracking to be competitive.

The Beef Quality Assurance award is given to producers who have implemented BQA practices on farm, have helped in promotion of the BQA program in Wisconsin, and have helped improve animal care practices for the beef and/or dairy industry. To qualify, recipients must have an up to date BQA certification.

Environmental Stewardship Award: Fred Larson, Larson Hereford Farms

The 2019 Environmental Stewardship Award was presented to Fred Larson, Larson Hereford Farms, Spring Valley, WI. The Larson Family has been raising registered Hereford cattle for 47 years and four generations, with 143 years on the same land.

The Larson Family is committed to being stewards of the land. They have focused on such practices as rotational grazing, no-till planting, maintaining wildlife habitat, and taking care of the land. One of the great examples of their management of the environment and cattle is their calving pasture, located at the bottom of a narrow valley and alongside Cady Creek (a Class One trout stream and a part of the Mississippi watershed). Cady Creek is special to the family, anglers and the local community. It is carefully managed by the Larson's to maintain its' natural beauty, tranquility and solitude. The creek has been monitored and studied by the DNR, where they have documented a thriving wild brook trout population.

About 60 acres of rotational grazing pasture is utilized as one of several units for cow/calf pairs. They practice grazing management where it is possible in their operation. In the past year they have also worked with NRCS to remodel waterways adjacent to their feedlot to better manage runoff and water quality. The Larson family has had a commitment to preserving and sustaining the land for the next generation, which is evident through their management practices.

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About the Wisconsin Beef Council

The Wisconsin Beef Council is a producer-directed not-for-profit organization funded by the \$1.00 per head assessment on all cattle sold in the state of Wisconsin per the Federal Beef Promotion and Research Act & Order. Half of one dollar remains in Wisconsin for local beef promotion, while the other half is forwarded to the Cattlemen's Beef Board. The purpose of the Council is to fund beef promotion, research and consumer education activities supporting Wisconsin's \$2.1 billion beef industry. The WBC operates under the guidance of its Board of Directors. The Board is comprised of representatives from cattle related organizations from around the state.

About the Beef Checkoff

The Beef Checkoff Program was established as part of the 1985 Farm Bill. The checkoff assesses \$1 per head on the sale of live domestic and imported cattle, in addition to a comparable assessment on imported beef and beef products. States may retain up to 50 cents on the dollar and forward the other 50 cents per head to the Cattlemen's Beef Promotion and Research Board, which administers the national checkoff program, subject to USDA approval.