

Environmental winners to be honored at EFD



CHIEF MILK BUCKET CARRIER: Bob Gray, executive director of the Council of Northeast Farmer Cooperatives, was recently praised by Pennsylvania ag secretary Dennis Wolff and New York ag commissioner Pat Hooker for getting a precedent-setting feed cost adjuster provision in the farm bill's Milk Income Loss Contract safety net program.

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ON Wednesday, Aug. 6, New York's 15th annual Agricultural Environmental Management Award will be presented to Tim Fessenden, King Ferry, N.Y. Fessenden Dairy and the Cayuga County Soil and Water Conservation District will be honored during the New York Ag Leadership Luncheon ceremonies at Empire Farm Days at Seneca Falls.

The Ag Environmental Management awards program bolsters public awareness of exceptional efforts by farmers in preserving the environment. It's jointly sponsored by New York Department of Agriculture and Markets, Empire State Potato Growers and *American Agriculturist*.

Fessenden and the conservation district each will receive \$1,000 checks from Empire State Potato Growers and Ag and Markets, respectively.

In announcing the award, Ag Commissioner Patrick Hooker noted that Fessenden Dairy "has been in the forefront of environmental innovation for many years. We're pleased to honor this farm family and the conservation district as an outstanding example of New York agriculture."

Fessenden's latest innovation is a polymer-covered manure lagoon to trap methane and odor. Anaerobic-generated methane will be piped off the top and flared to reduce greenhouse gases and earn carbon credits. It's one of five such systems being constructed in New York. Catch more details on the concept under "Web Exclusives" at www.AmericanAgriculturist.com.

Other 2008 finalists

This year's finalists included:

■ **Birch Creek Farm, Woodville, N.Y.** Sponsored by Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Key Points

- Innovations earn Cayuga County dairy and district awards.
- These dairies employ many environmental tools to boost profits.
- Five farms competed for this year's AEM award.



TIM FESSENDEN AND FAMILY

Durwood and Lois Bast set the stage for growing their farm into a 1,300-acre crop operation with 825 dairy cows. Today, son Jason manages cows while son-in-law Curt handles crops. They use cover crops, composting, liquid manure storage, wastewater treatment and a comprehensive nutrient management plan to meet concentrated animal feeding operation requirements and achieve Tier 5 compliance in the state's Ag Environmental Management program.

■ **Emerling Farms, Perry, N.Y.** Sponsored by Wyoming County Soil and Water Conservation District. John and Betty along with Michael and Elizabeth Emerling are partners in this 1,750-acre operation that milks 1,100 cows. With extensive use of cover crops, conservation tillage, comprehensive nutrient management plans, recycled manure solids beddings and a methane manure digester, this farm completed AEM Tier

4 implementation. Their innovations helped generate information needed to develop the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority grant program for manure digesters.

■ **Stanton Farms, Coeymans Hollow, N.Y.** Sponsored by Albany County Soil and Water Conservation. With more than 1,000 acres of cropland in production, Mark and Neil Stanton have focused on expanding their dairy business to milk more than 600 cows. The brothers completed Tiers 1 and 2 of the AEM program, developed a comprehensive nutrient management plan for their CAFO, and constructed a silage leachate control system as part of Tier 4 implementation. Developing heavy-use-area protection and filtering areas made it easier to keep the cows clean, plus reduce mastitis and hoof problems.

■ **Trinder Farm, Fabius, N.Y.** Sponsored by Onondaga County Soil and Water. Tom and Elaine Trinder are on schedule to begin marketing certified organic milk from their 127 cows as early as this year. Their 400-acre farm was the first in the region to strip-crop. Now, it's converted to pasture and hay as part of their organic transition. Trinder's innovations include spring development plus pipelines to their pasture grazing systems for cows and young stock, on-demand hot-water heaters, an on-demand variable-speed vacuum pump, and a planned wind turbine for energy production.

Judges for this year's competition included Jackie Moody-Czub, deputy commissioner of the Department of Ag and Markets; Michael Latham, assistant director of the state Soil and Water Conservation Committee; John Matthews, president of the Empire State Potato Growers; and John Vogel, editor of *American Agriculturist*.



CARBON CAP: Fessenden Dairy is installing this polymer lagoon cover as a manure odor reducer at no cost to the Fessendens.



Keep up on ag news in the region; check out www.AmericanAgriculturist.com. We feature updates on a wide range of topics, marketing data and weather information you can put to work in your operation.

POSTMASTER: Please send address corrections to *American Agriculturist*, 191 S. Gary Ave., Carol Stream, IL 60188.