

DOING THINGS
RIGHT
ISN'T A
CHOICE

IT'S A WAY
OF LIFE.
AND WE WANT
TO RECOGNIZE
YOU FOR IT.



2026 BQA AWARDS PROGRAM





BUILDING CONSUMER CONFIDENCE

By focusing the producer's attention to daily production practices that influence the safety and quality of beef through the use of science, research and education initiative, the Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) program strives to maximize consumer confidence in and acceptance of beef.

The National Beef Quality Assurance Awards recognize outstanding members of the beef industry in five categories: Cow-Calf, Feedyard, Dairy, Marketer, and Educator. The National BQA Awards are selected by a committee of BQA certified representatives from universities, state beef councils, sponsors, and affiliated groups. Nominations are submitted by organizations, groups or individuals on behalf of a U.S. beef producer, dairy beef producer, marketer or educator.



AWARD TIMELINE AND EVENTS

- Applications Due: June 17, 2025
- June 2025: The selection committee meets to determine winners in each award category. The winners are personally notified but not publicly announced.
- July-September 2025: Video crews visit each winner's operation.
- February 3-5, 2026: All winners are expected to attend the 2026 Cattle Industry Convention in Nashville, Tennessee. Travel and registration will be paid by the Beef Quality Assurance awards program for two attendees. Winners are publicly announced and honored at the BQA awards reception.

NOMINATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

The applications will be judged on the following criteria:

- BQA and/or FARM Practices, Accomplishments and Goals
- Relevant local, regional, and national BQA and/or dairy promotion group or cooperative leadership.
- The promotion and improvement of animal care practices, BQA or FARM program and consumer perception of beef or dairy industries.
- Effectiveness in promoting and implementing BQA.
- Completion of the National Dairy FARM Program Animal Care Evaluation and implementation of the program requirements.
- Applications will be judged using a points system totaling up to 100 points.

Completed application packets must be received by Midnight, June 17, 2025. Any individual, group, or organization is eligible to nominate one operation. Individuals and families may not nominate themselves, however, we expect nominees to be involved in the preparation of the application.

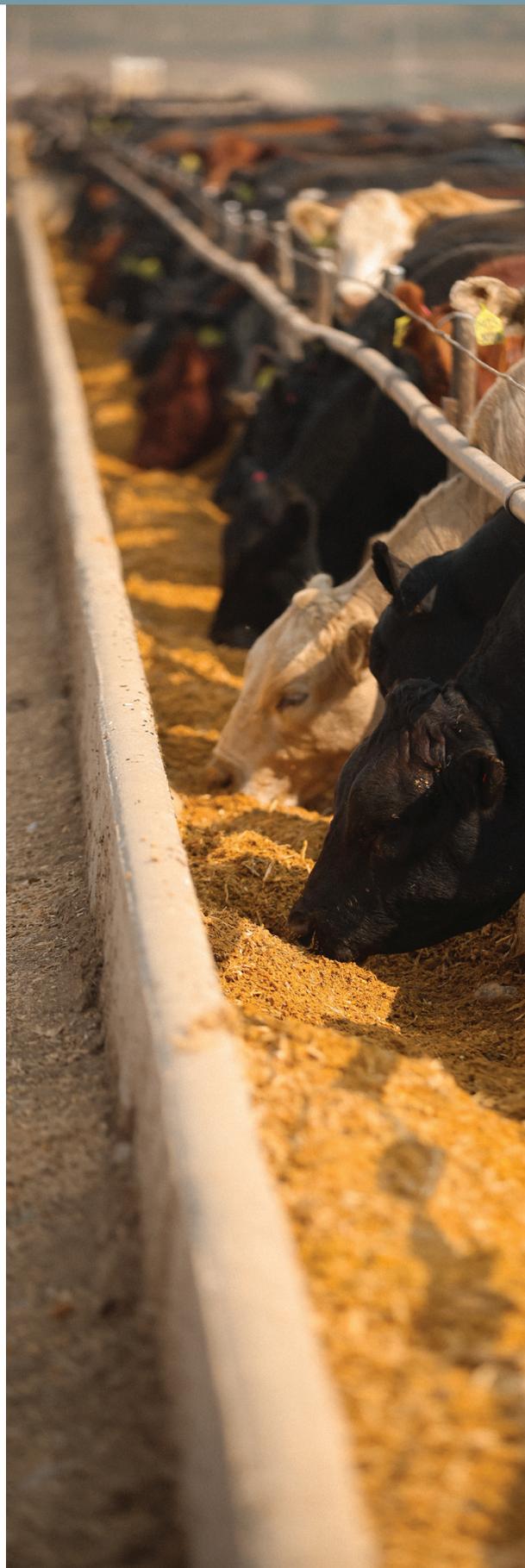
Past nominees are encouraged to submit updated versions of previous nominations. Previous winners may not reapply.

The full nomination application and directions for its completion are enclosed in this packet. Along with a typed application, one nomination letter and three letters of recommendation highlighting the nominees BQA and FARM Program efforts are expected.

APPLICATION TECHNICAL GUIDELINES

The nomination packet is limited to 20 pages total as follows: 12 pages for the application, 2 pages for each letter of recommendation (total of 6 pages), 2 pages for the nomination letter, and 8 pages for the nominee's most recent FARM Animal Care evaluation. Photos are encouraged to be included within the nomination, but no more than 5 please. A complete PDF document, submitted electronically, is suggested with all the pieces compiled in a single file. Please do not send nominations in notebooks, binders, or booklets. Please keep to traditional font standards, size 12 point. All applications will be compiled and printed in color for judges to review.

*Dairy nominations are limited to 28 pages to accommodate the 8 page completed FARM Evaluation





COW-CALF, FEEDYARD AND MARKETER

SECTION I – HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF OPERATION (5 points)

Please identify the name of the business, the individual(s) to be recognized, address, primary contact, phone, and email. Nominator name, email and phone number are also required. Provide a brief description of the operation's history, ownership and/or production practices. What sector of the cattle industry does the operation primarily participate in (cow/calf, feedyard, or marketer)? How many cattle are raised on the operation?

SECTION II – BEEF QUALITY ASSURANCE IN ACTION (50 points)

Unique BQA Implementation

What form does BQA take within the operation's unique production environment and business structure? Explain the importance of implementing BQA and the impact it has had on the operation.

Outcomes & Accomplishments: Documenting BQA Success

What are the management accomplishments and goals of your business specific to BQA guidelines? Supporting information, benchmark data and measured results are encouraged. Please be specific.

Innovative BQA Implementation

Describe specific, innovative BQA practices in detail pertaining, but not limited to, on-site implementation, employee training, transportation, etc.

SECTION III – WHAT WOULD THE CONSUMER FIND INTERESTING ABOUT THE CANDIDATES OPERATION? (200 words maximum) (20 points)

This is an opportunity to put Beef Quality Assurance in terms that the consuming public will understand and appreciate. What is unique about the operations strategies, tactics or successes that will appeal to the average consumers understanding of cattle production practices? Why should anyone care that the candidate implements BQA practices on their operation and how do their actions enhance consumer confidence in beef?

SECTION IV – ADVOCACY (20 points)

BQA winners will become spokespeople for the beef industry, carrying forth the message that dairy and beef producers are committed to responsible cattle production. How would this operation engage consumers to further beef demand? How has the candidate demonstrated the drive and ability to communicate that message to a sometimes skeptical and hostile public?

SECTION V – LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION (3 maximum) (5 points)

No more than three letters of recommendation should be included. These letters should emphasize the nominee's outstanding implementation of BQA. Recommendations can come from fellow cattle producers, local or state organizations, foundations, national organizations, neighbors, friends, extension agents, BQA state coordinators, etc. Each letter should be no longer than two pages..



BQA DAIRY FARM AWARD

SECTION I – HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF OPERATION (5 points)

Please identify the name of the dairy farm, the individual(s) to be recognized, address, primary contact, phone and email. This section would provide a brief description of the operation’s history, business model and/or unique production practices.

SECTION II – BEEF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND FARM PROGRAM IN ACTION (55 points)

Unique BQA Implementation/FARM Implementation

What form does BQA and/or FARM Animal Care take within the operations unique production environment and business structure? What are the nominees trying to accomplish by implementing BQA and FARM?

Outcomes & Accomplishments: Documenting BQA/FARM Success

What are the management accomplishments and goals of your business specific to BQA and FARM guidelines? Supporting information, benchmark data and measured results are encouraged. Please be specific.

Innovative BQA and FARM Program Implementation

Describe specific, innovative animal care practices in detail pertaining, but not limited to, on-site implementation, employee training, transportation, etc. Be sure to focus on what makes this operation unique related to BQA and FARM guidelines.

Industry Perception of BQA and FARM

How does your business contribute to a positive public perception of the impact of BQA and FARM in the beef and dairy industry? Has there been involvement in cooperative research, demonstration, education or industry programs that promote BQA or the FARM Program?

SECTION III – WHAT WOULD THE CONSUMER FIND INTERESTING ABOUT THE CANDIDATES OPERATION

(200 words maximum) (15 points)

This is an opportunity to put both Beef Quality Assurance and the FARM Program in terms that the consuming public will understand and appreciate. What is unique about the operations strategies, tactics or successes that will appeal to the average consumers understanding of milk production practices? Why should anyone care that the candidate implements BQA and FARM practices on their operation and how do their actions enhance consumer confidence in beef?

SECTION IV – ADVOCACY AND CONSUMER CONFIDENCE (15 points)

Award winners will become spokespeople for the both the beef and milk industry, carrying forth the message that dairy producers are committed to responsible milk production. How does this operation engage consumers to further milk and beef demand? How well would the candidate serve as spokesperson for the dairy cattle industry?

SECTION V – LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION (3 maximum) (10 points)

No more than three letters of recommendation should be included. These letters should emphasize the nominee’s outstanding implementation of BQA and FARM Animal Care. Recommendations can come from fellow dairy producers, local or state organizations, foundations, national organizations, neighbors, friends, extension agents, BQA state coordinators, FARM Animal Care evaluators, cooperative staff and leadership. Each letter should be no longer than two pages.

CURRENT FARM ANIMAL CARE EVALUATION

Please attach the PDF version of the nominee’s FARM Animal Care Evaluation in addition to signed nominee information release form.

Name (printed): _____ Name (signed): _____

Farm Name: _____ Farm Address: _____



BQA EDUCATOR AWARD

SECTION I – INTRODUCTION OF NOMINEE (5 points)

Please identify the name of the individual(s) to be recognized, their affiliation, business, or employer, address, primary contact, phone and email. Nominator name, email and phone number are also required.

Remember to keep this as a brief introduction as many of these topics will be addressed at a more in-depth level in the details of the nomination.

SECTION II – INDIVIDUAL INVOLVEMENT IN BQA (30 points)

Please address the following questions in a meaningful and in-depth manner.

- Biography of the nominee, with specific attention to relevance within the Beef Quality Assurance program and model.
- Describe the nominee's history and involvement with BQA. • Describe individual BQA practices implemented within the education system or at the operation.

SECTION III – BQA LEADERSHIP WITHIN THE COMMUNITY AND THE INDUSTRY (30 points)

- How does this educator contribute to a positive perception of the impact of BQA for the beef industry?
- Does the nominee have a national reach?
- What impact have they made on BQA locally and nationally?
- What Involvement in cooperative research, demonstration, education, or industry programs has this educator been involved in to promote BQA?

SECTION IV – ADVOCACY AND CONSUMER CONFIDENCE (25 points)

BQA winners will become spokespeople for the beef industry, carrying forth the message that dairy and beef producers are committed to responsible cattle production. How does this educator engage consumers to further beef demand? How has the nominee demonstrated the drive and ability to communicate that message to a sometimes skeptical and hostile public?

SECTION V – LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION (3 maximum) (10 points)

No more than three letters of recommendation should be included. These letters should emphasize the nominee's outstanding implementation of BQA. Recommendations can come from fellow cattle producers, local or state organizations, foundations, national organizations, neighbors, friends, extension agents, BQA state coordinators, etc. Each letter should be no longer than two pages.

PREVIOUS WINNERS

2025		
Cow-Calf	Parker Ranch	Hawaii
Feedyard	Grimmius Cattle Company	California
Marketer	Producers' Livestock	Utah
Dairy	VanBedaf Dairy	North Dakota
Educator	Dr. Keith Belk	Colorado

2024		
Cow-Calf	VanWinkle Ranch	Colorado
Feedyard	Dotterer Dairy	Pennsylvania
Marketer	Adams Land & Cattle	Nebraska
Dairy	Power Genetics	Nebraska
Educator	Dr. John Wenzel	New Mexico

2023		
Cow-Calf	Wilson Flying Diamond Ranch	Nebraska
Feedyard	Darr Feedlot	Nebraska
Marketer	Fresno Livestock Commission	California
Dairy	Temme Agribusiness	Nebraska
Educator	Dr. Tom Noffsinger	Nebraska

2022		
Cow-Calf	River Bend Ranch	Colorado
Feedyard	Kuner Five Rivers	Colorado
Marketer	W&J Carpenter	Nebraska
Dairy	Langeland Farms	Michigan
Educator	Dr. Deb VanOverbeke	Oklahoma

2021		
Cow-Calf	IX Ranch	Montana
Feedyard	Bledsoe Cattle Company	Colorado
Marketer	Western Video Market	California
Dairy	Boadwine Farms	South Dakota
Educator	Curt Pate	Montana

2020		
Cow-Calf	Matador Cattle Company	Kansas, Texas, Montana
Feedyard	Buffalo Feeders	Oklahoma
Marketer	Equity Cooperative Livestock Sales Association	Wisconsin
Dairy	Scattered Acres Inc.	Pennsylvania
Educator	Dr. Temple Grandin	Colorado State University

2019		
Cow-Calf	Bently Ranch	Nevada
Feedyard	BLAC-X Farms	South Dakota
Marketer	Central Livestock	Minnesota
Dairy	Kraft Family Dairies	Colorado
Educator	Dr. Ron Gill	Texas

2018		
Cow-Calf	Wulf Cattle	Minnesota - Nebraska
Feedyard	Magnum Feedyard	Colorado
Marketer	IMI Global	Colorado
Dairy	Hoffman Farms	Pennsylvania
Educator	Dr. Bob Smith	Oklahoma

2017		
Cow-Calf	Masonic Village Farm	Pennsylvania
Feedyard	Nodaway Valley Feeders	Iowa
Marketer	Samson, Inc. Scott Mueller	Nebraska
Dairy	Brook-Corner, LLC	Pennsylvania
Educator	Lisa Pederson	North Dakota State University

2016		
Cow-Calf	Brackett Ranches – Ira & Kim Brackett	California and Idaho
Feedyard	Couser Cattle Company	Iowa
Marketer	Knoxville Regional Livestock Market	Iowa
Dairy	Oregon Dairy Farm	Pennsylvania
Educator	Dr. Dan Thomson	Kansas State University

2015		
Beef	TZ Cattle Company	Texas
Marketer	King Livestock Company, Inc.	Kentucky
Dairy	Merry-Water Farms	Wisconsin
Educator	Dr. Clyde Lane	University of Tennessee

2014		
Beef	Kempfer Cattle Co.	Florida
Marketer	Stockmen's Livestock Exchange	North Dakota
Dairy	Family Tree Enterprises	Florida
Educator	Dr. John Maas	University of California, Davis

2013		
Beef	Padlock Ranch	Wyoming
Marketer	Spencer Livestock Sales	Iowa
Dairy	Pleasant View Farms	Pennsylvania
Educator	Dr. Dee Griffin	University of Nebraska

2012		
Beef	Lykes Brothers	Florida
Dairy	LiTerra Farm	Pennsylvania