



# Award of Distinction – 2010

*for*  
*Leadership*

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**AFAC seeks to honour individuals, companies or organizations who demonstrate their positive contribution to the goals of AFAC. It is important we recognize those who work hard to advance the welfare of livestock in Alberta through innovative ideas and management practices and by communicating to others that farm animals must be raised humanely.**

**AFAC's Award of Distinction for Leadership honours those who set the bar higher for expectations regarding animal welfare. Our honourees demonstrate leadership and commitment to dealing with issues relevant to animal care. They lead by example. The 2010 Alberta Farm Animal Care Award of Distinction for Leadership goes to Susan Church, Calgary, Alberta.**

For over 15 years as the manager of Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC), Susan Church has served Alberta's livestock industry with an energy and enthusiasm that is admired by all.

Susan obtained her B.Sc. in Agriculture at the University of Manitoba and since then has held numerous positions with Alberta Cattle Commission (Alberta Beef), Alberta Agriculture and Fieldstone Marketing and Public Relations. The experiences she gained led her to the position of Manager of Alberta Farm Animal Care - a post she held for over 15 years.

In 1993, Susan was hired by the new Alberta Foundation for Animal Care. "To us, she was the obvious choice as a manager at the time. She had been working with us on a contract basis and she had the passion for animal welfare" notes Will Verboven, a founding member of AFAC. Susan had her challenges in establishing a new organization and beginning the process of communicating the messages of animal agriculture to the public. At the time many people wanted to fight the messages coming from other organizations like PETA. Susan was convinced that the messages coming from agriculture needed to be proactive and positive. Her success with these messages has stood the test of time and they are just as relevant today.



"Susan had an innate understanding that first and foremost, actions speak louder than words, that confrontation is not the answer, that the public needed to be educated about the livestock industry, that the industry itself needed to clean up its act, and that the youth needed to be engaged. She felt that AFAC could be the best advocate for this," says Pam Miller, dispatch coordinator for the ALERT Line.

Ray Fenton who was also one of the founding members of AFAC points to a number of milestones that were achieved during Susan's tenure as manager. "Susan was instrumental in getting the first ever review of livestock transportation completed. She also pushed to create the Care and Handling of Compromised Animals procedure manuals for all species, which became a great tool for trucking firms and law enforcement as well as industry."

Without a doubt, because of Susan's passion and the livestock industry's support, AFAC has become one of the leading voices, in this country and arguably across North America, for the welfare of animals.

Congratulations and thank you from AFAC to Susan Church for her leadership initiatives in the continual improvement of farm animal welfare in Alberta and beyond. Thanks also to her family for the support they gave her in building AFAC to what it has become today.