



Award of Distinction – 2010

for
Communication

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 Communication honours those who have taken an active role in effectively 'getting the message out' about livestock issues and informing the public and agri-food industry about farm animal care in a factual and honest way, to build trust and credibility. The 2010 Alberta Farm Animal Care Award of Distinction for Communication goes to Pam Miller, Bashaw, Alberta.

For over 14 years, Pam Miller has been the voice that answers calls and responds to concerns of callers to the ALERT Line 24 hours a day.

Pam lived on a farm for years raising Black Angus cattle and race horses. When she moved to the city she became the manager of the Western Stock Growers (WSGA). It was during her time at WSGA that Pam became involved in the creation of AFAC and a member of its original board of directors.

When Pam left her position as manager of the WSGA in 1996, Susan Church, the manager of AFAC approached her and asked if she wanted to work with AFAC responding to ALERT Line calls. Pam felt that animal welfare was a concern to consumers who were watching the industry carefully. She felt that working with the ALERT Line would be a great opportunity to help educate these people about livestock production practices. Pam admits that her knowledge of some livestock production practices was quite high while in other areas she did a lot of "on the job" learning. She gratefully acknowledges the help of skilled livestock personnel who responded to her requests and also helped educate both producers and members of the public.



Pam admits that there have been challenges with the ALERT Line and educating the public. - Primarily with the public's perception of "factory farms" and trying to convince them that such practices are not found on an average farm. It has been key to let the public know that producers want to look after their animals well. Pam feels that through educating both consumers and producers, the ALERT Line has made industry more aware of animal welfare and has led to producers doing a better job. The biggest success of the ALERT Line has been that the public now has confidence that the livestock industry has heard their voice and is prepared to act. The ALERT Line and AFAC can also be the biggest advocate for producers when the concern is unfounded, by taking the time to educate the caller about industry's production practices.

Ray Fenton, who has worked with Pam responding to many ALERT Line calls says, "Pam has a great ability to answer the call, ask questions, sort out legitimate concerns and educate the others. Her passion for AFAC, ALERT and the animals are what has made it a success."

Congratulations from AFAC to Pam Miller for your commitment to communicating with the public and industry and helping to educate them about farm animal welfare in Alberta.