



For immediate release:

Leaders in farm animal care honored at Livestock Care Conference

Calgary, AB, March 30, 2010: As Alberta's livestock industry entered a new chapter of progress in farm animal care, it paused to salute two champions of livestock care who have helped to drive the industry to where it is today.

Susan Church and Pam Miller were recognized with Awards of Distinction at the Livestock Care Conference, March 26 in Red Deer, Alta., hosted by Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC). AFAC is a partnership of Alberta's major livestock groups, with a mandate to promote responsible, humane animal care within the livestock industry.

Church, who served for 15 years as the manager of AFAC through to 2009, was honored with an Award of Distinction for Leadership. This award honors those who set the bar higher for expectations regarding animal welfare, and demonstrate leadership and commitment in doing so.

“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,” says AFAC Chair Doug Sawyer, who runs a cow calf and backgrounder operation in the Pine Lake, Alta., area.

Church managed AFAC from its inception until last spring. Under her tenure, AFAC members have worked together to build a framework for continual improvements for livestock care. This has included progress in livestock care at the farm level and transport level, along with progress in education, research and more. In accepting the award, she noted that while the Alberta livestock industry has shown leadership and made strong progress, it's critical to ensure that animal care continues to evolve with the livestock industry.

“Don't let up,” she told the over 180 industry representatives, producers and students in attendance. “I marvel at your energy, your determination, your guts and your good sense. You lead and shape the agriculture and livestock industry in this province and in Canada, and I believe no more so than on the animal care front. I ask that the momentum of AFAC, the collaboration and that collective voice, continue to make a distinctive impact on responsible animal care.”

Miller, who for over 14 years has been the voice that answers calls and responds to callers of the ALERT Line, 24 hours a day, was honored with an Award of Distinction for Communication. The ALERT line is a confidential call line set up by AFAC for

anyone to report livestock care concerns, with an aim to assist before animals are in distress. The award for communication honors those who take a strong, active role in 'getting the message out' about livestock care issues in an honest way that builds trust and credibility.

"Pam has been a part of AFAC right from the beginning and has been a great voice for our industry," says AFAC board member David Hyink, a Lacombe, Alta., area chicken farmer. "One of the many examples of this is the extensive network of knowledgeable people she has developed around her to carry the message of animal care and help people learn about our industry. This has made an invaluable impact."

In her acceptance remarks, Miller emphasized the importance of the ALERT line, not only in providing a resource to support animal welfare but also as a signal to the general public that ensuring livestock care is a top priority for Alberta's livestock industry. "It shows that we are here, we are listening and we are prepared to act. Many people are involved who allow the ALERT line to accomplish this. This award is about them."

Last year's Livestock Care Conference was a milestone event for AFAC, marking 15 years in the history of the organization. As the page is turned toward a new era of continued progress, AFAC is strengthened by the examples set by true livestock care champions such as Church and Miller, says Sawyer.

"It is important we continue to keep livestock care front and centre in our industry," says Sawyer. "This year's Award of Distinction honorees are people who lead by example. That's what we must continually strive to accomplish as an industry."

AFAC has long hosted the Livestock Care Conference as a leading education and awareness event in support of ongoing knowledge and progress in livestock care. More information on AFAC and the Livestock Care Conference, including additional feature articles capturing key information and perspectives from 2010 presentations, is available at www.afac.ab.ca.

-30-

For more information contact: Lorna Baird
Alberta Farm Animal Care Association (AFAC)
Phone: (403) 932-8050 lorna@afac.ab.ca

ALERT Line 1-800-506-2273

Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC) Association
Cambrian PO Box 75028, Calgary AB T2K 6J8
Phone: 403-932-8050 Fax: 403-932-8052
Email: info@afac.ab.ca Website: www.afac.ab.ca