

> Ontario farmers recognized for their commitment to good end of life stewardship

November 11, 2015 - Canada's leading agricultural stewardship organization, CleanFARMS has announced the winners of The Great Ontario Clean Farms Challenge, an awards program that profiles Ontario farmers who go above and beyond when it comes to managing waste generated on their farms.

Grand prize winners Cathy and Bill Vitucci, from Wellandport, demonstrated a truly integrated approach to stewardship that covers all aspect of their first-generation farm which includes grains and oil seeds farming of wheat, corn and soybeans, custom farming services and a farm based seed dealership. In addition to consistently reducing waste on their own farm, the Vituccis donated time, space and resources to the seed industry's empty seed bag collection pilots which gave their customers a convenient way to divert their seed bags out of local landfills.

Julie Simpson from Laprise Farms, a family cash crop and greenhouse business in Pain Court, placed second. Simpson stood out for her comprehensive, company-wide waste minimization program, which she makes available to her employees so that her good practices extend off the farm.

Rounding out the top three winners were Harold and Shelley McPhail whose commitment to stewardship on their 400-acre farm is complemented with a significant community awareness component.

"It is well-known that Ontario farmers want to reduce, reuse and recycle as much as possible," says Barry Friesen, CleanFARMS' general manager, pointing to the organization's increasing collection totals for its core programs, which target empty pesticide and fertilizer containers and obsolete pesticides, as an indication of this commitment.

"Our winning entries reminded us that farmers are leaders in their communities. They make a real difference by ensuring good waste management is part of their business practices, but also look beyond their farms and encourage their neighbours to get involved. We all benefit from their efforts." Friesen concluded.

Entries were evaluated by an industry panel that included the Ontario Agri Business Association, Farm and Food Care Ontario and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs.

CleanFARMS Inc. is a not-for-profit industry stewardship organization committed to environmental responsibility through the proper management of agricultural waste. The organization is best known for its award winning empty container recycling program and is expanding its services in Ontario to deliver a province wide empty seed and pesticide bag program next year

For more information about the winners, visit http://www.cleanfarms.ca/Clean_Farms_Challenge

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