

CCA Announces National Environmental Stewardship Award recipient from Nova Scotia

August 21, 2024

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan - The Canadian Cattle Association (CCA) is pleased to announce Holdanca Farms, located near Wallace Bay, Nova Scotia, as the recipient of The Environmental Stewardship Award (TESA) for 2024.

Holdanca Farms is owned and operated by father-daughter duo, John and Maria Duynisveld, who focus on ensuring that their management practices are economically sustainable while also enhancing the environment, which is home to many wildlife species.

They raise grass-fed beef cattle, sheep, pastured pigs and poultry, and can custom graze up to 150 head of beef cattle, depending on the year. They manage the land to benefit both livestock production and environmental sustainability – of their 500 acres, 250 acres is a managed, biodiverse native woodlot, and the other 250 acres is in long-term (30 plus years) pasture production.

Nova Scotia's North Shore is a key stopping point and breeding location for migratory birds. They've recorded over 1000 wild species on the farm, and over thirty of those are threatened or endangered. The Duynisvelts ensure that there are spaces in the barns and sheds for barn swallows to safely enter and exit during breeding seasons and protect the nests from damage. During nesting periods, they avoid cutting forages and put fences around the nests to prevent livestock from unintentionally damaging the nests. John and Maria believe that gaining knowledge of these endangered species and protecting their habitat is critically important to the longevity and success of native species.

The award was presented in-person by Mike Duguid, Co-Chair of CCA's Environment Committee and Kelleen Tait, Agriculture Services Leader and Food and Beverage Processing Leader with MNP, during the Canadian Beef Industry Conference (CBIC). Holdanca Farms was one of six regional nominees from across Canada vying for the prestigious national award.

"The Duynisvelts truly demonstrate land and wildlife stewardship," said Duguid. "Holdanca Farms is a testament to how responsible farming practices can go hand in hand with success and their importance to protecting and preserving our land and wildlife. We want to congratulate all provincial and regional nominees for their outstanding dedication to environmental stewardship and for setting a remarkable example for sustainable farming practices across Canada."

Thank you to our Platinum Sponsor, MNP, and our Foundational Partners, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Birds Canada, and the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB), for supporting this year's TESA program. CCA would also like to recognize the contributions of our judging committee, Karli Reimer with Ducks Unlimited Canada; Norine Ambrose with Cows & Fish; Doug and Linda Wray, 2023 TESA recipients; and Brad Downey with the Alberta Conservation Association, who had the difficult task of selecting this year's recipient.

About TESA

CCA's TESA recipient is named annually during the Canadian Beef Industry Conference and has recognized the outstanding stewardship efforts of Canadian beef producers since 1996.

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