



NEWS FROM THE DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

2320 S. DuPont Highway, Dover, DE 19901 <http://dda.delaware.gov/news.shtml>

Contact: John Petersen - (302) 698-4552 - john.petersen@state.de.us

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Locust Grove Farm in Greenwood Receives 2011 Environmental Stewardship Award

Woods Edge Farm Also Honored for Excellence in Nutrient Management Practices

HARRINGTON (Jan. 19, 2012) – Douglas and Deborah Vanderwende of Locust Grove Farm in Greenwood were honored with the 2011 Delaware Department of Agriculture (DDA) Environmental Stewardship Award during activities for Delaware Agriculture Week. The award, which comes with a \$1000 cash prize, highlights efforts by the DDA to collaborate with and recognize those poultry producers who improve water quality by implementing best management practices to reduce nutrient runoff and control soil erosion, while also honoring outstanding community service and civic involvement.

As a poultry grower for Perdue Farms, Locust Grove Farm produces more than five flocks annually of approximately 45,000 seven-week-old broilers on its 325 acres, and the farm has operated under a nutrient management plan since 2003. As part of its plan, it has conducted soil tests, followed recommended nutrient application rates, used cover crops as a water protection measure, and planted trees next to their poultry houses. They also use tissue sampling to assess nutrient needs of growing crops. Using cost-share funds, the farm built manure storage structures and a channel composter in 2005 that can handle an entire year's output as well as a whole house cleanout. In 2011, they installed heavy use area concrete pads at both ends of each poultry house and at the open ends of each storage structure.

The Vanderwendes are both members of the Delaware Farm Bureau, the Delaware State Grange, the Union United Methodist Church, and 4-H Links. Deborah ("Debbi") is a Director of the Delaware State Fair, a member of the Milford Southern States Ladies Board, Secretary-Treasurer of the National Lincoln Sheep Breeders Association, a member of the Bridgeville Fire Company Auxiliary, and a County 4-H clothing project leader.

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Runner-up for the 2011 Environmental Stewardship Award was Bill and Patty Leager’s Woods Edge Farm in Greenwood, a poultry producer for Mountaire managing up to 69,000 broilers per flock on seven acres. Three generations of Leagers live and work, on Woods Edge Farm, which has operated under a nutrient management plan since it was established in 2006. The farm has a 40’ x 60’ manure storage facility with an attached composter, and all manure from the farm is distributed to a neighbor for use on farmlands in the Greenwood area. The farm planted a vegetative buffer in 2008, added heavy use pads to all of the poultry houses, and continues to conduct extensive recycling efforts – all of which helped it earn the WMDT/Mountaire Environmental Star of the Month Award in July, 2008.

To help improve water quality, Leager and his father spent hours cleaning out a drainage ditch by hand in 2009, and then worked with community members and the Delaware Department of Transportation to replace a culvert under nearby Tea Town Road. Their environmental efforts have also attracted a variety of fish and wildlife to the two ponds on the property.

Active in the community, Leager is a member of the Delaware Farm Bureau, the Delaware Poultry Industry, and is a former member of the DPI board. The Leagers also try to practice a “good neighbor policy,” and they are known to help neighbors clean up after a storm, dig out after snow falls, and freely share produce from their large vegetable garden. Bill also helped a woman grower with her two flocks when her husband became unable to help with the chickens.



Photo 1: (from left) Perdue Farms representatives Jeff Smith and Michelle Monaghan were on hand to congratulate Deborah and Douglas Vanderwende of Greenwood’s Locust Grove Farm for receiving the 2011 Environmental Stewardship Award from the Delaware Department of Agriculture’s Nutrient Management Commission. The award also came with a \$1000 cash prize.



Photo 2:

(from left) Douglas and Deborah Vanderwende of Greenwood's Locust Grove Farm received the Environmental Stewardship Award from the Department of Agriculture's Nutrient Management Administrator Larry Towle. As poultry producers for Perdue, their farm was recognized for its excellence in nutrient management as well as the Vanderwendes' outstanding community involvement.



Photo 3:

(from left) Charles Leager, Mary Leager, Patty Leager, and Bill Leager of Greenwood's Woods Edge Farm were recognized as first runner-up for the 2011 Environmental Stewardship Award, which was presented by the Department of Agriculture's Larry Towle. The Leagers received a \$500 cash award and were congratulated for outstanding efforts in implementing nutrient management practices as poultry producers for Mountaire Farms.



Photo 4:

(from left) Charles Leager, Mary Leager, Patty Leager, and Bill Leager of Greenwood's Woods Edge Farm proudly display their award as first runner-up for a 2011 Environmental Stewardship Award. As poultry producers for Mountaire, the Leagers' farm was honored for implementing best practices in nutrient management as well as community service.