

Ag champions abound at Farm & Food Care annual

The organization named three different recipients for the award this year



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In celebration of its 30th anniversary, Farm & Food Care Ontario broke with tradition and named not one but three winners of their champion award at their AGM in Milton April 11.

The award, which recognizes significant contributions to public outreach and support for Ontario's farming community, had its start as the 'Friend of OFAC' award and was originally established by the Ontario Farm Animal Council, one of Farm & Food Care Ontario's two founding organizations along with AGCare.

Durham Farm Connections is a long-standing volunteer agricultural outreach organization in Durham Region that has been actively promoting agricultural awareness and education since 2006.

Members Mary Ann Found, Brenda Metcalf and Marilyn Pearce were present to accept the award on behalf of the group.

One of their most popular projects is an annual 'Life on the Farm' day for Grade 3 students where they have a chance to learn about agriculture directly from local farmers. The program has since been expanded to include high school students, as well as an

annual open house, and an 'All About... Farming' trailer participates in activities throughout the region.

Durham Farm Connections has previously been recognized with a Premier's Award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence, as well as a Watershed Award from Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority. They were nominated for the Champion Award by Nancy Rutherford.

"The trailer went to 40 different spots last year. We'll go wherever we are asked as long as we have someone at home to look after things," said Found upon accepting the award.

"Durham Farm Connections wouldn't ever have started without OFAC and AGCare and now Farm & Food Care to support us and keep us going."

KNOWN TO thousands of online fans and followers as Farmer Tim, Tim May of Mayhaven Farms was nominated for the Champion Award by three sources, unbeknownst to him or to each other: Ann Godkin and Dr. Kerry Lissemore, Dairy Farmers of Ontario, and John Drummond.

The Wellington County dairy farmer is well-known in Canada and internationally for his willingness to share informative and entertaining descriptions of his family, cattle and farm life in a caring, down-to-earth manner with more than 27,000 Facebook fans and close to 5,000 Twitter followers.

Farmer Tim is also always willing and available for school tours and visits, as well as host-



From left to right – Farm & Food Care director Bruce Christie, Mary Ann Found, Brenda Metcalf and Marilyn Pearce of Durham Farm Connections, and nominator Nancy Rutherford.



Farm & Food Care's Bruce Christie, nominators John Drummond and Chantal Crockett of Dairy Farmers of Ontario, Tim May, and nominators Dr. Kerry Lissemore and Ann Godkin.

ing veterinary students from the University of Guelph, as well as speaking at events like

Farm Smart and others.

"My real name is Tim May but when I recently went to speak at a dairy event in Alberta, they couldn't find my reservation at the hotel until they finally found it under Tim Farmer," May said.

"I didn't think I would be up here receiving an award for doing something we should all be doing anyway."

THE THIRD Champion Award recipient was Jamie Reaume, a long-time agricultural advocate, who is now CEO of Country Heritage Park in Milton (formerly the Ontario Agriculture Museum).

Through his efforts, the 80-acre park has become a revenue-generating farming and food education and appreciation centre that features community gardens, bees, livestock and a community kitchen. Over 12,000 students from grades one to 10 take part in education-

based programming.

Prior to joining the park, Reaume was the founder and first Executive Director of the Holland Marsh Growers' Association, coining the region's nickname as 'Canada's Salad Bowl'.

He was a strong and vocal advocate for farmers in the Marsh, as well as for all fruit and vegetable growers in Ontario during his tenure as communications manager at the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association and editor of The Grower.

Reaume, who has also chaired the Ontario Food Terminal, the Greater Toronto Area Agricultural Action Committee and the Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Alliance, was nominated by Susan Powell, Janet Horner and Anna DeMarchi Meyers.

The Champion Award has been presented annually since 1999 to worthy agricultural advocates.



From left to right – Farm & Food Care director Bruce Christie, nominator Susan Powell, Jamie Reaume, and nominators Janet Horner and Anna DeMarchi Meyers.