

Evans Poultry Recognized for Environmental Excellence

Evans Poultry of Dorcas, W.Va., was one of five farms across the United States to receive the Family Farm Environmental Excellence Award during the 2010 International Poultry Expo held recently in Atlanta. The U.S. Poultry & Egg Association, based in Tucker, Ga., sponsors the annual awards in recognition of exemplary environmental stewardship by family farmers engaged in poultry and egg production.

Evans Poultry is owned and operated by Allen and Beverly Evans. They started in 1972 with five acres and built their first chicken house in 1977. They eventually built five more houses, raising broiler chickens, and now own 800 acres with forage, row crops and cattle.

West Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture Gus R. Douglass congratulated the Evans family on the honor.

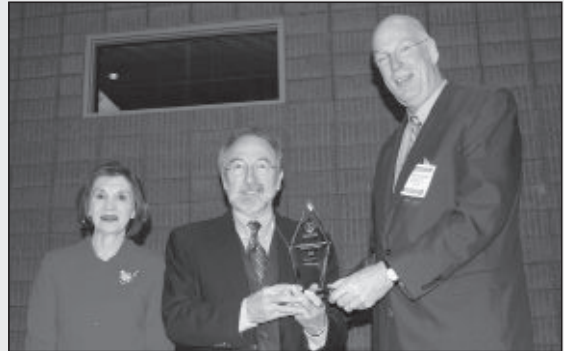
"Allen and Beverly are well known among poultry farmers for their excellent operation and their efforts to preserve the environment," said Commissioner Douglass. "Through his work in the West Virginia Legislature, Allen has been an ambassador for agriculture in the Mountain State. This award will help draw even more positive attention to the great farmers living and working in West Virginia."

Applicants were rated in several categories, including dry litter or liquid manure management, nutrient management planning, community involvement, wildlife enhancement techniques, innovative nutrient management techniques, and participation in education or outreach programs.

The Evans use a nutrient management plan for applying litter to their land, along with a composter for chicken mortality. Also, rainwater running off the roofs of the chicken houses and other buildings goes through grass buffers or sediment traps before reaching surrounding streams. To help enhance wildlife, several areas of the Evans' land are designated as permanent woodlands with trees and ponds.

Evans Poultry grows chickens for Pilgrim's Pride Corporation.

Steve Willardsen, 2010 chairman of the board of U.S. Poultry & Egg Association, and president of Cargill Value Added Meats, Wichita, Kansas, presented the award to Evans Poultry.



L-R: Beverly and Allen Evans accept the Environmental Excellence Award from Steve Willardsen (far right), 2010 chairman of the board of the U.S. Poultry & Egg Association, and president of Cargill Value Added Meats, Wichita, Kansas.

GENETIC TESTING FOR SCRAPIE & AVIAN INFLUENZA TESTING FOR BACKYARD POULTRY

With lambing season coming up, West Virginia sheep producers are again encouraged to have their ram lambs and breeding ewes tested for a genetic susceptibility to an illness called Scrapie. The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) is offering the service free of charge as part of a national program aimed at eradicating Scrapie. The long-term goal of the program is the nationwide eradication of Scrapie, which annually causes significant loss of production in infected flocks and limits export marketing.



Scrapie is a fatal, degenerative disease affecting the central nervous system of sheep and goats. First documented in Great Britain and other countries of Western Europe more than 250 years ago, Scrapie has been reported throughout the world.

Only two countries are recognized by the United States as being free of Scrapie: Australia and New Zealand. Scrapie

has been diagnosed in more than 1,000 flocks in this country.

"A simple blood test can determine if a ram carries the genetic susceptibility to the disease, or if it has a genetic resistance to Scrapie," said State Veterinarian Gary Kinder. "A resistant ram is good breeding stock because he won't pass along susceptibility to his offspring."

In addition, the USDA has provided funding to test backyard poultry flocks for Avian Influenza. Contact the WVDA Animal Health Division if you would like to have your birds tested, or if you observe health problems in your birds.

To participate in either voluntary testing program, producers should call the WVDA Animal Health Division at 304-558-2214 to schedule on-farm testing.

