

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information:

Wisconsin Outstanding Young Farmer
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Travis and Melissa Marti named 2023 Wisconsin Outstanding Young Farmers
Wood County farmers honored for outstanding commitment to agriculture.

MANITOWOC, Wisconsin [Jan. 29, 2023] – The Wisconsin Outstanding Young Farmer (OYF) program is pleased to announce Travis and Melissa Marti, Vesper, Wisconsin, were selected as the 2023 Wisconsin Outstanding Young Farmers during the 69th Annual Awards Weekend Jan. 27-28.

When Travis joined the farm, the family milked 160 cows and had 150 replacement animals. Today the herd has grown to 535 cows with 450 replacements. Milk production has also increased, with the rolling herd average rising to 30,600 pounds of milk.

Travis credits dedicated employees and ag professionals for helping him through the farm's growing pains. He is grateful to his grandpa and Dad for sharing their knowledge and support over the years as he and Melissa gradually assumed ownership of the farm. They now own 614 acres and rent an additional 800 acres.

Animals also benefit from new technologies. A BouMatic activity and location system helps track milk weights, heat detection, rumination, eating time and cow health. A robotic calf feeder and robotic feed pusher further increase farm efficiency.

Cows have always been the center of the family's business and Travis follows his dad's advice: "Take care of the cows and they will take care of you."

Additional winners

- Brody and Carolyn Stapel were named 1st OYF Runner Up. The Stapel's farm is near Cedar Grove, Wisconsin, where they milk 260 cows in a double-eight parlor, raise their own young stock and farm about 960 acres and in 2022 purchased 600 head of Angus beef cattle and form there as Hand Creek Cattle. Brody and Carolyn were sponsored by Adell Cooperative, Dairy Doctors, Compeer Financial, Prairie Estates Genetics, EDGE.

- Mark and Vanna Leichtfuss were named 2nd Runner Up. The Leichtfuss' farm in Two Rivers, Wisconsin, where they milk 230 cows along with 200 young stock. The milk both Registered Holsteins and recently added Registered Ayreshires and are sponsored by Central Star, Country Visions, CP Feeds, Dairyland Seed, Nicolet Bank, Secura Insurance, Trans-Ova.
- Michael and Courtney Gutschenritter, were awarded the "Speak Up for Ag Award," sponsored by *Agri-View*. The Gutschenritters, who specialize in pasture-raised eggs, lamb and wool products, custom grazing and farmer-to-farmer education and were sponsored by Glacierland RC & D, Proven Power, Cashton Farm Supply, Featherman Equipment, James D Gage Consulting.

Other finalists

- Bryan and Maria Baranek, Crivitz, Wisconsin, sponsored by Greenstone FCS, Charapata Seed Sales, Driven Agriculture and Crivitz Feed Mill.
- Adam and Melissa Baumann, Marathon, Wisconsin, sponsored by Progressive Partnership in Agriculture, Citizen's Bank of Loyal, Cropping Central, Swiderski Equipment, Short Lane Ag Supply, and Bayer Crop Science.
- Brady and Lynsey Broedlow, Helenville, Wisconsin, sponsored by Wilbur-Ellis, Premier Insurance, Rural Mutual Insurance, Wyffels Hybrids.
- Tristan and Megan Swartz, Gilman, Wisconsin, sponsored by Organic Waste Connections, Gilman Feed, Chippewa Valley Dairy Supply, Corner Store, Leon Shirk Equipment, Premier Livestock, Stanley Tire.

Judges for the event included:

- Aericia Bjurstrom, Regional Dairy Educator for the UW-Madison Division of Extension for Brown, Door and Kewaunee County
- Lloyd Holterman, Rosy-Lane Holsteins, WI OYF Winner 1993 and National OYF Winner 1994
- Roger Sinkula, Ag Lender, Nicolet Bank

Our Emcee for the Saturday evening Awards Banquet was Millaine Wells, co-host of Local 5 LIVE, weekdays from 9:00-10:00 am. She is also the host of Midwest Farm Weekly, Saturday and Sunday at 5:30 am.

In addition to the important networking events and the awards portion of the program, OYF finalists participated in ag forums learning about the history of Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center presented by Abigail Martin, Riesterer & Schnell spoke with the group and the Jean Brokish with AFT presented on Land Preservation. They also toured Henning Cheese Store and Museum and Farm Wisconsin Discovery Center.

The 2023 event was held at the Holiday Inn Manitowoc, Wisconsin. Next year, the Marti's will host the Wisconsin OYF Awards Weekend in January 2024, location TBD.

Wisconsin has finalists for the 2023 National OYF Awards to be held in Appleton, WI February 16-19, 2023. WI OYF 2022 Winners, Kyle and Rachel Zwiig, Ixonia, Wisconsin, are finalists for the 2023 National OYF Award. Please wish these two fine young farmers good luck at National OYF.

Sponsors for 2023 the Wisconsin OYF event included:

- **Premium:** Riesterer & Schnell
- **Diamond:** Agri-View, Citizen's State Bank of Loyal, Compeer Financial, , Richard & Mary Jane Herrmann, Northside Elevator, Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin, Swiderski Equipment Inc., USAgNet
- **Platinum:** Lloyd & Daphne Holterman, Ron's Cheese/Pagel's Ponderosa, Ken & Ann Reckelburg
- **Gold:** Adell Cooperative, BMO Harris, CP Feeds, Dairy Business Association, Dairyland Seed Co., Finger Family Farm, LLC, Green Bay Insurance Center, GreenStone Farm Credit Service, Leedstone Inc., Keller Inc., Kuhn North American Inc., Kwik Trip, Dan & Barb Natzke, Nicolet State Bank, Organic Waste Connections, Prairie Estate Genetics, Pure Production Consulting, Trans Ova Genetics
- **Silver:** Country Visions Cooperative, Cropping Central, Dairy Doctors Veterinary Services, Fox Communities Credit Union, Jauquet Hillview Dairy, Shannon Linderoth, McFarlandale Dairy LLC, Meijer, Patz Corporation, Premier Insurance Solutions LLC, Seehafer Refrigeration, Timothy F Finger Agency LLC, Wilbur – Ellis, Wisconsin Farmers Union Foundations, Inc., Wyffels Hybrids, Zwiig's Maple Acres
- **Bronze:** CentralStar Cooperative, Lakeshore Farm Management, Charapata Seed Sales, Jerry & Peggy Miesler, Eau Claire Energy Cooperative, ProVision Partners Cooperative, Tim & Lisa Evert, Rural Mutual Insurance, Gilman Corner Store LLC, Salentine Homestead Dairy LLC, Glacierland RC & D Council, Salmon's Meat Products, Just Orthodontics, Uncle Mike's Bake Shoppe

About Wisconsin OYF:

The Outstanding Young Farmer Program began in 1954 as a National Program for the US Jaycees. Wisconsin's first winner was named in 1952 and 69 state programs have been held since. Wisconsin has had 21 national winners during the program's history. Visit www.wi-oyf.org to learn more or submit a nomination or an application form.

Marti phone # 715-323-0138

Stapel phone # 920-946-2410

Leichtfuss phone # 920-517-0765

Gutschenritter phone # 262-470-4229

Please reach out if you need one of these photos, as files were too large to send all.
Thank you!

Photo: All 2023 WI OYF Finalists

Front row: Melissa Marti, Maria Baranek, Melissa Baumann, Megan Swartz, Lynsey Broedlow, Vanna Leichtfuss, Carolyn Stapel, Courtney Gutschenritter

Row two: Travis Marti, Bryan Baranek, Adam Baumann, Tristan Swartz, Brady Broedlow, Mark Leichtfuss, Brody Stapel, Michael Gutschenritter

Photo: 2023 Speak Up For Ag Winner

Michael & Courtney Gutschenritter

Photo: 2023 WI OYF 2nd Runner Up

Mark & Vanna Leichtfuss

Photo: 2023 WI OYF 1st Runner Up

Brody & Carolyn Stapel

Photo: 2023 WI OYF Winner

Travis & Melissa Marti

Photo 9650: WI OYF Award Winners

L-R: Travis & Melissa Marti, Brody & Carolyn Stapel, Mark & Vanna Leichtfuss, Michael & Courtney Gutschenritter