



For Immediate Release

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Partners Present Awards of Distinction

Excellent equine welfare garnered recognition for three people and the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture from the Farm Animal Council of Saskatchewan Inc. (FACS) and the Saskatchewan Horse Federation (SHF).

“The annual ‘Awards of Distinction for Equine Welfare’ honor the outstanding recipients, while serving as a reminder of the importance of providing exceptional care to animals,” says Mae Smith, SHF Executive Director.

“FACS’ continuing partnership with the SHF enables us to once again emphasize responsible animal care by recognizing some dedicated players in Saskatchewan’s strong equine industry,” says Adele Buettner, Executive Director of FACS.

Equine Welfare Young Steward of the Future – Award of Distinction.

Lacey McNutt, who at 23 has accomplished more with horses than many older and more experienced riders and trainers, received the ‘Equine Welfare Young Steward of the Future – Award of Distinction.’ This award recognizes a person between the ages of 13 and 25 who has shown, through practices as a horse owner or interaction with others, the importance of a commitment to responsible equine care.

By the age of 4 Lacey was in the Agribition show ring, under the care and supervision of her grandfather, respected Percheron showman Wayne Cozart. Her later achievements in the light horse, high school rodeo, and the draft horse show circuit demonstrate the qualities of a skilled and caring horsewoman. Lacey, who starts her own horses, believes in working with the animal’s natural ability.

Equine Welfare Communication – Award of Distinction

Another woman in Saskatchewan’s equine industry, Dr. Betty Althouse, received the ‘Equine Welfare Communication – Award of Distinction.’ This award recognizes a person, organization or company who has taken an active role in effectively conveying equine welfare issues and raising awareness of equine welfare with the general public and the agri-food industry, with factual and honest information resulting in trust and credibility for the industry and business of equines.

Dr. Althouse comes from a farm and participated in 4-H Light Horse, before studying at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine. After graduation, she worked in a farm animal practice for several years, and then operated her own piggery. In 2000, she joined the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) and now serves as Veterinary Program Specialist – Disease Control.

In that role, Dr. Althouse is a bright, high-energy professional, who responds promptly to requests for information. SHF appreciates her assistance as a resource speaker and provider of numerous facts sheets about reportable diseases. FACS also values her expertise on its board.

Equine Welfare Leadership – Award of Distinction

The 2011 ‘Equine Welfare Leadership – Award of Distinction’ went to Dr. Byrnie Rothwell for integrating animal welfare into his core business strategy and setting the bar higher for expectations regarding animal welfare.

His long and distinguished career as a veterinary practitioner, public service with CFIA and role as an avid horseman and sportsman exemplifies all that leadership signifies. Dr. Rothwell’s impact was also felt by the youth movement, and many clubs, associations and agricultural organizations, which benefitted from his expertise in livestock care and management. Respected across Canada for his volunteer contribution to equine welfare, he is a shining leader to Saskatchewan’s horse industry.

Equine Welfare Innovation – Award of Distinction

The Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture received the ‘Equine Welfare Innovation – Award of Distinction,’ primarily but not exclusively, for its timely amendments to the ‘Animal Protection Act 1999,’ and the “Animal Protection Regulations 2000.’

The ‘new law’ strengthens the legislation to provide a real deterrent to animal neglect and inhumane treatment. FACS and SHF agree with the Minister who said, “It is believed the vast majority of owners provide the necessary care for their animals, and these changes will help to reduce the number of animal neglect cases in Saskatchewan.”

FACS and the SHF strongly support and follow mandates that foster the well-being, humane care and the handling, training and use of horses in Saskatchewan. Through the Awards of Distinction they encourage and recognize outstanding achievements in these areas.

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