



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Prairie Farms and Hiland Dairy Win Multiple Awards at QCS Leadership Conference

Leading Quality Services Organization Recognizes both Companies for Quality and Production Excellence

Edwardsville, Ill. (October 19, 2020) - Prairie Farms and its joint venture partner, Hiland Dairy, took home multiple awards for production excellence, collaboration, and quality during the 2020 QCS Leadership Conference held virtually on October 13 – 15th. Quality Checkd Dairies, Inc. (QCS) provides dairy organizations with services that help improve their business processes and product quality.

Hiland Dairy's Little Rock plant is this year's winner of the conference's top award, the Quality Checkd Irving B. Weber Award for Quality Excellence. The Irving B. Weber Award is modeled after the Association for Manufacturing Excellence Award and represents the highest honor for overall quality throughout the Quality Checkd organization. Finalists are judged based on effective implementation of quality in all areas, from processes and products to customer service and satisfaction at a single plant location.

Hiland Little Rock is also this year's Production Excellence Award winner in the Fluid Milk category, with Prairie Farms' Olney, Illinois plant placing as one of the finalists. Prairie Farms' Jefferson City, Missouri, plant is this year's winner in the Cultured Products Category, with Prairie Farms Quincy, Illinois plant as a finalist. The QCS Production Excellence Award recognizes outstanding processors in three categories: Fluid Milk, Cultured Dairy, and Ice Cream. Each category's winners were decided based on selection criteria that include a plant audit, evaluation of all plant processes, and systems for assuring product quality evaluation results.

Prairie Farms Dairy and Swan Packaging, Inc. won the QCS Collaboration Award for their work on the successful introduction of Prairie Farms Pouch Sour Cream. This award honors initiatives that deliver excellence through the joint efforts of a member and supply partner working together to either solve a problem or achieve the desired outcome. The award criteria can include new packaging innovation, new product launch, cost savings, regulatory compliance, supply chain efficiency/effectiveness, operational improvement, process improvement, etc.

Multiple Prairie Farms and Hiland Dairy plants took home QCS Merit Awards in the Milk and Cultured product categories. Hiland Dairy plants in Little Rock, Arkansas, and Omaha, Nebraska combined with the Prairie Farms plants in Dubuque, Iowa; Olney, Illinois; and Rockford, Illinois, as winners of Milk Merit Awards. Hiland Dairy Plants in Norman, Oklahoma; Tyler, Texas; and Wichita, Kansas, shared Cultured Merit Awards with Prairie Farms plants in Carbondale, Illinois; Fort Wayne, Indiana; Jefferson City, Missouri; Quincy,



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Illinois; and Orville, Ohio. QCS Merit Awards recognize outstanding processors for consistently achieving high quality standards

Quality Check Plant Assessment Excellence Awards were awarded to Prairie Farms Dairy plants in Anderson, Indiana; Battle Creek, Michigan; Carbondale, Illinois; Carlinville, Illinois; Decatur, Illinois; Dubuque, Iowa; Jefferson City, Missouri; Kosciusko, Mississippi; Olney, Illinois; Rockford, Illinois and Somerset, Kentucky. Highland Dairy plants Chandler, Oklahoma; Fayetteville, Arkansas; Fort Smith, Arkansas; Kansas City, Missouri; Little Rock, Arkansas; Norfolk, Nebraska; Norman, Oklahoma; Omaha, Nebraska; Springfield, Missouri; Tyler, Texas and Wichita, Kansas. Plants receiving the Excellence Awards were required to have an audit score of 96% or higher to qualify.

"I'm proud of our dairy farmers and plants for the hard work that goes into capturing these awards," said Ed Mullins, CEO and Executive Vice-President for Prairie Farms. "Quality starts at the farm and must make it all the way through to the plants to have success like this. I congratulate all for the great showing."

Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc. is one of the largest and most successful dairy cooperatives in the Midwest and parts of the South. Elements of the cooperative include more than 800 farm families, 8100 employees, 51 manufacturing plants, over 100 distribution facilities and annual sales of over \$3 billion. Prairie Farms is a nationally recognized leader in the dairy industry known for setting the standard for milk flavor innovations and producing award-winning milk, cheese, and cultured dairy products. With headquarters in Edwardsville, Ill., the Prairie Farms distribution footprint covers over 30 percent of the United States; products are available in grocery chains, mass merchandiser stores, club stores, convenience stores, dollar stores, drug stores, schools, foodservice outlets and warehouse distribution centers. Prairie Farms charitable giving program, [Our Caps, Your Cause](#), supports a variety of non-profit organizations.



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