

NEWS RELEASE

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Lynn Leavitt Receives Award in Recognition of Environmental Stewardship *The 2023 Ontario Environmental Stewardship Award Recipient*

February 22, 2023 (Toronto, Ont.) – The Beef Farmers of Ontario (BFO) is pleased to announce Lynn Leavitt of Leavitt’s Black Angus Beef as the 2023 recipient of The Environmental Stewardship Award (TESA), sponsored by the RBC Royal Bank. The award was presented to Leavitt at BFO’s 2023 Annual General Meeting Banquet, which was held in Toronto, this week.

Located on the north shore of East Lake in Prince Edward County, Leavitt’s Black Angus Beef consists of 200 acres owned and 300 acres rented, while also purchasing 100 acres of standing hay each year. Of the total operated acres, 175 acres of these are used for grazing the farm’s Angus brood cows and calves that are fed and finished on farm.

Similar to other farmers in Ontario, Leavitt was looking for an environmentally friendly solution to dispose of his used bale wrap, silage bags and twine. His drive and innovation led Lynn to develop and create the Pac-It compactor and U-Pac AgriServices to assist farmers, initially in the Quinte region, to recycle farm plastics. Since then, the service has expanded across the province and has been able to gather about 225,000 pounds of scrap bale wrap and transport it to a licenced recycle plant in Ontario. Of that amount, approximately 30,000 pounds have been compacted at his own farm. The compactors, as well as blueprints for the compactors are available to farmers across the province.

“This tool has the potential to change the way ag plastic is recycled on farms. It makes recovery, transport, and recycling significantly more efficient and cost effective,” says Christine Lajeunesse, Eastern Director of Cleanfarms, a non-profit organization committed to environmental responsibility through the proper management of agricultural plastics. “Borne out of Lynn’s ingenuity, the compaction unit allows the producers to manage the plastic in a safe and efficient manner.”

Lynn has also consulted with other groups in Ontario through a northern Ontario pilot project, a Bruce County pilot project, as well as Municipalities in Quebec. He continues to share information on the Pac-It compactor and U-Pac AgriServices, speaking and making presentations regularly at events across the province. Leavitt’s Black Angus Beef was also awarded the Premier’s Award for Agri-Food Innovation for their work on farm plastic recycling and re-purposing, as well as the 2022 Don Hill Legacy Award, recognizing creative and innovative solutions to environmental challenges faced on farm.

“Lynn has dedicated countless hours to educating farmers, organizations, end-users and policy makers about the obstacles and opportunities in collecting and recovering this plastic,” says Steph Vanthof, Member Service Representative, Ontario Federation of Agriculture. “This type of innovative work can be difficult, and Lynn has persevered through it all, culminating in some significant movement regarding plastic recovery in Ontario.”

TESA recognizes the outstanding environmental stewardship of an Ontario beef farmer. Special consideration is given to farmers who have taken innovative approaches to environmentally sustainable beef production.

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For More Information and Photos

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