



# **Multiple Prairie Farms and Hiland Dairy Plants Receive Quality Awards Dubuque Plant Receives Top Award for Superior Product Quality**

by Darin Copeland

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EDWARDSVILLE - Prairie Farms Dairy and its joint venture partner, Hiland Dairy, won over 40 awards at the QCS Purchasing Cooperative Annual Leadership Conference in San Diego.

In October, QCS members from around the country gathered for educational sessions, networking events, and an awards celebration to honor member and supply partner companies. The Prairie Farms plant in Dubuque, Iowa, won the QCS Dairy Quality Excellence Fluid Milk Award (DQE). This is one of QCS' highest quality honors, trailing only behind the Irving B. Weber Award for Total Quality Excellence.

The Dubuque plant was also instrumental in working with The Chocolate Shoppe Ice Cream Company on a joint effort for a new cream program. QCS recognized this partnership with the Best Collaboration Award. "I am so proud of our quality and management teams for receiving over 40 awards at this year's conference. They work tirelessly to prioritize quality in our operations, and because of their dedication and commitment, the Prairie Farms' network of plants earned more awards than any company," said Matt McClelland, CEO/EVP for Prairie Farms.

"As a farmer-owned cooperative, the high-quality milk provided by our dairy farmers is the key component of our ability to be a leader in the industry. Despite many post-pandemic challenges for our farms and plants, together, our farmers and team members remained focused on quality, and QCS recognized their hard work with dozens of awards."

The Merit of Excellence Awards are presented in the fluid milk, cultured products, and ice cream categories. Because QCS compliance levels are well above industry standards, this creates a significant but rewarding challenge for the award recipients.

Thirteen plants within the Prairie Farms' network of companies were winners.

Fluid Milk:

Prairie Farms Dairy: Dubuque, Iowa; Olney, Illinois

Hiland Dairy: Fort Smith & Little Rock, Arkansas; Kansas City & Springfield, Missouri; Omaha, Nebraska

Cultured: Prairie Farms Dairy: Quincy, Illinois, Hiland Dairy: Norman, Oklahoma; Wichita, Kansas

Ice Cream: Hiland Dairy: Kansas City (Belfonte) & Springfield, Missouri; Tyler, Texas  
Hiland Dairy's Wichita plant received the Best Regular Egg Nog award, and the Little Rock plant won the Orange Juice Product Contest.

Finally, 26 plants within the Prairie Farms' network received QCS Quality & Food Safety Plant Assessment Awards. Plants receiving this award have demonstrated a level of organizational excellence and quality assurance that is commendable and assures that QCS Members represent the highest standards in the industry.

Prairie Farms Dairy, Inc. is one of the largest and most successful dairy cooperatives operating in the Midwest and the South. Elements of the cooperative include more than 600 farm families, 7,000 team members, 50 manufacturing plants, over 100 distribution facilities, and annual sales of over \$3.6 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, food service outlets, and warehouse distribution centers.

From L to R: Brad Suhling, Director of Quality, Prairie Farms Dairy; Greg Helbig, Director of Operations, Hiland Dairy; Stacy Wand, General Manager, Prairie Farms Dubuque; Rylee Sterrett, Quality Assurance, Prairie Farms Dairy; Chris Hackman, Senior VP of Operations, Prairie Farms Dairy; Matt McClelland, CEO/EVP, Prairie Farms Dairy