



NEWS RELEASE

IOWA BEEF INDUSTRY COUNCIL

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Beef Producer Receives Iowa Beef Quality Assurance Award

Iowa BQA award winner provides high- quality and safe beef products

AMES, IOWA - An exceptional cattle producer and livestock auction market operator was named the 2010 Iowa Beef Quality Assurance (BQA) Award winner for his focus on animal care practices. Morris Larson, Spencer Livestock Sales, of Spencer, Iowa, was honored at the Iowa Cattlemen's Association Annual Convention in Ames, Iowa on January 5th.

"As a beef producer and livestock market operator, I believe quality beef begins with quality care, which is why I work hard to keep my animals healthy, safe and secure," said Morris Larson.

The winner must be a BQA-certified beef producer who is committed to raising cattle in a safe, caring manner. Morris requires all of his employees at Spencer Livestock Sales to be BQA certified as well.

BQA is a national program for beef cattle production that assures the highest standards of animal care and treatment. It was developed with guidance from leading animal health and well-being experts and outlines essential elements for cattle care. More than 90 percent of all U.S. beef is raised under the BQA program.

"BQA has become as much of a public perception issue as an animal health and welfare issue in my mind," said Morris. "We do the best we can to make sure the public perception of what we do is positive. Our goal was never to try to win anything, but just to do our best. I've always thought any job worth doing was worth doing well."

Morris has hosted an annual BQA certification meeting for the past five years. He is also committed to low-stress cattle handling techniques. For example, electric prod use has been eliminated and replaced with flags as the approved method of moving cattle. Cattle are handled with as little pressure as necessary to get the desired response which keeps them calm and comfortable.

Morris was nominated for the Iowa BQA Award by the Northwest Iowa Preconditioning Committee. "Morris' dedication to the investment in BQA for employees and beef producers will continue as will his commitment to making sure the general public has a positive perception of livestock handling practices," said Dennis DeWitt, Iowa State University Extension Livestock Field Specialist. "Morris is committed to the BQA program and strives to provide his own livestock, as well as the livestock at Spencer Livestock Sales, with the best care possible."

A common trait among all contest entrants was a strong desire to continually improve BQA on their operations while encouraging others to implement the program. Judges for the BQA award considered, among other attributes, adherence to "on-site" BQA principles, leadership activities and the sustainability of the business as a whole.

The Iowa BQA program is funded by the Beef Checkoff Program.

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Producer-directed and consumer-focused, the Iowa Beef Industry Council is funded by the \$1-per-head beef checkoff. Checkoff dollars are invested in beef promotion, consumer information, research, industry information and foreign market development, all with the purpose of strengthening beef demand. For more information, visit www.iabeef.org