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NEWS RELEASE

Winners announced for inaugural Ontario Goat Advocate Award

Dairy and meat goat producers recognized for dedication and leadership

(GUELPH, ON – April 8, 2015) At the Ontario Goat (OG) Annual General Meeting held in February, the winners of the inaugural Ontario Goat Advocate Award were announced. This award, newly created by OG, recognized both a dairy and meat producer, as a result of their demonstrated passion, dedication and leadership in the Ontario goat industry.

“Ontario Goat felt strongly that it was important to recognize those that make a difference in shaping our industry and helping to build the foundation for the future. These awards are one way to recognize those producers who have dedicated a lot of time and worked tirelessly for the betterment of the Ontario goat industry” stated OG Executive Director Jennifer Haley.

Peter Kerkvliet, a dairy goat producer from St. Thomas, was announced as the first Ontario Goat Advocate Award (Dairy) winner. Pete has been involved with the goat industry since 2007 and together, with his family, they milk around 500 Saanen and Alpine goats. Not only is he a producer, but Peter remains actively involved with many aspects of the goat industry. Peter has served as a Director with the Ontario Dairy Goat Cooperative and is currently serving on the Board for the Center of Excellence for Goat Research and Innovation. Peter is a proven leader in the goat industry who is an advocate for on-farm goat dairy research, always looking to improve his own herd and kid management.

“I am very privileged to be honoured with this award,” stated Kerkvliet. “I see great potential for the dairy goat industry and the best way we can continue to grow and improve is by working together and sharing knowledge,” he added.

OG also recognized Ryan and Christie Prins of Wooler with the Ontario Goat Advocate Award (Meat). Ryan and Christie are meat goat producers “who wear their hearts on their sleeve” when it comes to the Ontario goat industry. As established Boer goat breeders, they have clear goals and breeding objectives, ensuring that they are on track to reach their herd objectives. They have been strong advocates for performance testing, participating in various programs including the Goat Herd Improvement program through Kentucky State University and being a pilot herd in the Ontario Goat Meat Traceability program. They are also involved in various other aspects of the industry, having both served on boards for Ontario Goat and the Canadian Meat Goat Association.

“We were humbled, surprised and honoured when we were told about winning this award,” stated Christie Prins. “The meat goat industry offers a lot of opportunity for young people starting out, there is nowhere to go but up; the sky’s the limit,” she added.

About Ontario Goat

Ontario Goat is dedicated to enhancing the goat industry through education, collaboration, innovation and strategic alliances. OG continues to focus on sustainable growth, industry development and profitability in order for all sectors of the Ontario goat industry to reach their full potential.

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