

2011 “Larry Payne” Farmer of the Year

This year’s winning farm began milking cows for Carnation Milk Company in the 1930’s with only 15 cows. Milking must have been profitable back then because they were able to get electricity on the farm in 1948. In the next several years the farm increased the herd to 35 cows and received a Grade A Certification. The father and son team expanded the herd to 100 milk cows and built a milking parlor in 1972 and the son took over the milking operation. Through the years more buildings were added and the dairy size was expanded. In 1989 an electrical fire destroyed 2 barns and 2 tractors. With all cows saved, buildings were rebuilt and tractors were replaced. In the early nineties the milking parlor was renovated and expanded so that the milking operation could continue to grow. The farm was once again about to become a father son team. Not that all the kids didn’t help on the farm growing up but the current partnering son was about to graduate and wanted to come work on the farm full time. This would make the 3rd

generation milking cows. The farm now manages over 400 head of dairy cattle and 700 acres of crops or pasture. Both father and son serve on numerous local and state agricultural boards. This dairy farm has had a Natural Resource Conservation Plan of Operation since 1959. Best Management Practices have been installed and implemented throughout the years which the family continues to maintain. This farm has also placed an emphasis on educating the young people about conserving our natural resources and taking care of the land and animals around us. Each year for the last 15 years, every 5th grade student in the county has participated in the Soil and Water Environmental Field Day here on this farm.

Possibly the most touching part of this farm's story is that this is truly a family farm. Each generation has put in countless hours to make the farm what it is today. Just as surely as Donald ran around the farm following behind Woodrow and helping him milk the cows, there was then Myles working on the farm learning from Donald and now there's

Cade matching Myles step for step every chance he gets. Donald has a saying "Take Care of the Land, and It Will Take Care of You". Donald we believe you have done just that. With these accomplishments and many, many more, we are glad to present the 2011 Larry Payne Farmer of the Year Award to Payne Dairy. Donald would you now come forward.