



For immediate release

Ontario potato producers David and Wendy Brenn honoured with W.R. Motherwell Award from Canada's Outstanding Young Farmers

Ancaster, ON [December 3, 2008] – Nearly 20 years since they were first recognized by Canada's Outstanding Young Farmer (OYF) program, David and Wendy Brenn recently received the organization's highest award as 2008 recipients of the W. R. Motherwell Award.

David and Wendy operate Brenn-B Farms Ltd., – a Waterdown, Ontario potato, mixed vegetable and cow/calf operation – and were honoured at OYF's national event in Calgary in late November for their long-standing contributions to agriculture, the OYF organization and their community.

The award recognizes outstanding service to an individual or couple dedicated to Canada's OYF program. "David and Wendy are staunch and enthusiastic supporters of the OYF program, contributing both individually and jointly on regional and national levels, while operating a large farming operation and participating on Ontario and North America potato grower marketing boards," says nominator Jack Gilliland, retired John Deere executive and OYF board member.

David and Wendy first crossed paths with OYF in 1989 when they were named Ontario's Outstanding Young Farmers, operating a third generation vegetable farm. That was the start of their tireless contributions to the OYF organization. David has held numerous positions with the organization – Board of Trustees, member of the restructuring team that saw OYF ownership transferred from Canada's Jaycees (program founders) to the OYF alumni, national hosting committee, hosting chairperson, tireless recruiter, and regional and national judging. Wendy's OYF contributions double the couples' commitment. She served as secretary treasurer of the national board for seven years, four years on the hosting committee in various roles including treasurer, and more than 15 years on the Ontario OYF committee.

Back at Brenn-B Farms, David and Wendy farm 1,300 acres of potatoes, broccoli, turnips, herbs, cash crops and a 200 head cow/calf operation, together with two of their three children. They also captured an interesting market opportunity in 1993 and now process 5.5 million pounds of potatoes a year for the potato salad industry. They strive to incorporate leading-edge technology to keep their operation competitive in the ever-changing agricultural landscape – computerized equipment, auto-steer tractors and GPS systems.

In between volunteering their time at OYF and operating their family farm, David and Wendy still have energy left for involvement in community sports and the local fair. And David has been involved in the potato marketing industry, provincially and nationally, for more than 20 years including a 12-year stint representing Ontario on the Potato Marketing Board of North America.

David and Wendy have three grown children – sons Chris and Shawn who are involved in the family farm, their daughter Nikki and a young granddaughter.

Dr. Motherwell – the namesake of the W.R. Motherwell Award was born near Perth, Ontario in 1860. His leadership in Canadian agriculture spanned more than 50 years and he is regarded by many as the “grand old man of Canadian agriculture.” His career highlights include minister of agriculture in Saskatchewan’s first provincial government, and minister of agriculture for Canada in the 1920s. Having attended agricultural college in Guelph, Ontario, his move to Saskatchewan resulted in his instrumental role in establishing the agriculture facility at the University of Saskatchewan. Dr. Motherwell died in 1943 at the age of 83.

Celebrating its 29th year, Canada’s Outstanding Young Farmers’ program is an annual competition to recognize farmers that exemplify excellence in their profession and promote the tremendous contribution of agriculture. Open to participants 18 to 39 years of age, making the majority of income from on-farm sources, participants are selected from seven regions across Canada, with two national winners chosen each year. The program is sponsored nationally by CIBC, John Deere, Bayer CropScience and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and supported nationally by AdFarm and the Canadian Farm Business Management Council.

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