

CCA Announces National Environmental Stewardship Award Recipient from New Brunswick

September 10, 2025

Levis, Quebec — The Canadian Cattle Association (CCA) is pleased to announce Don and Geraldine Bettie, Passekeag Holdings Inc, located near Passekeag, New Brunswick as the recipient of The Environmental Stewardship Award (TESA) for 2025.

Don and Geraldine Bettie have been farming for nearly 50 years at Passekeag. Together, they run Passekeag Holdings Inc., a 70-head Angus-based cow herd on a land base next to the Kennebecasis River. Since Don's youth, the river has been a vital part of the farm, inspiring his dedication to protecting the water, riparian areas, and wildlife habitat.

The Betties use a paddock rotational grazing system to promote forage regrowth and soil health, along with soil testing, lime application, and winter bale grazing to improve marginal land. In response to changing climate patterns, they've adapted forage species and grazing timing.

The Betties have set aside 300 acres of wetland in collaboration with Ducks Unlimited and the Kennebecasis Watershed Restoration Committee to promote conservation. Waterfowl have been encouraged with the installation of duck nesting boxes. The protection of natural habitats helps to support hawks, swallows, beavers, otters, mink, and various fish species. Wildlife corridors have naturally developed through land clearings between wooded areas, allowing animals to move safely while reducing pressure on fencing and encouraging habitat continuity.

To learn more about the Betties and their operation, visit <https://cancattle.wixsite.com/cattle/post/2025-tesa-nominee-profile-maritimes-don-and-geraldine-bettie>

The award was presented in-person by Mike Duguid, Co-Chair of CCA's Environment Committee and Lisa Miller, Partner, with MNP at the banquet during CCA's semi-annual meeting. Passekeag Holdings Inc was one of seven regional nominees from across Canada vying to be named the national recipient.

"The Betties show incredible respect for the land and environment and demonstrate every day how Canadian beef producers support grasslands and protect homes for birds, wildlife, pollinators and fish," said Duguid. "We had seven very worthy nominees who show outstanding leadership and dedication to environmental stewardship and sustainable farming practices. We congratulate and celebrate all of their practices and efforts."

CCA thanks our Platinum Sponsor MNP, and our Foundational Partners, Ducks Unlimited Canada, Birds Canada, and the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef (CRSB), for supporting this year's TESA program. CCA would also like to recognize the contributions of our judging committee, Karli Reimer with Ducks Unlimited Canada; Brad Downey with the Alberta Conservation Association; Ian Cook with Birds Canada; Norine Ambrose with Cows & Fish; Monica Hadarits with the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef; John and Maria Duynisveld, the 2024 TESA recipients from Nova Scotia; and Lynn Grant, CCA Environment Committee Co-Chair.

About the Regional Nominees

British Columbia — Barnett Land and Livestock: Duncan and Jane Barnett of Barnett Land and Cattle along the Cariboo Gold Rush Trail were nominated in recognition of their innovative efforts in ecosystem protection, water conservation, and rotational grazing. Their operation also prioritizes fire and forest management, collaborates with University of British Columbia on research, and has seen a positive return of wildlife due to their sustainable practices.

Learn more at <https://cancattle.wixsite.com/cattle/post/2025-tesa-nominee-profile-bc-duncan-and-jane-barnett-barnett-land-livestock>

Alberta — Plateau Cattle Co: Laura Laing and John Smith of Plateau Cattle Co near Nanton were nominated for their commitment to sustainable ranching, animal welfare, and innovative herd health practices. Their operation combines environmental advocacy, community involvement, and science-based cattle management to enhance both land and livestock while supporting education and wildlife conservation.

Learn more at <https://cancattle.wixsite.com/cattle/post/2025-tesa-nominee-profile-alberta-john-smith-and-laura-laing-plateau-cattle-co>

Saskatchewan — Elford Ranch: Mark and Karin Elford of Elford Ranch near Killdeer were nominated for their dedication to preserving native grasslands and practicing thoughtful, site-specific grazing management. With a philosophy of giving more than they take, the Elfords focus on sustainable ranching while actively contributing to the cattle industry and leading by example within their community.

Learn more at <https://cancattle.wixsite.com/cattle/post/2025-tesa-nominee-profile-saskatchewan-mark-and-karin-elford-elford-ranch>

Manitoba — Breault Ranching Ltd: Clayton and Shauna Breault of Breault Ranching Ltd. near Ste. Rose were nominated in recognition of their commitment to regenerative agriculture and sustainable land management across 22,000 acres. By adopting zero-till practices, eliminating synthetic fertilizers, implementing rotational grazing, and adjusting calving dates, they have significantly improved soil health, reduced animal treatments, and increased organic matter, all while actively engaging with sustainability-focused organizations.

Learn more at <https://cancattle.wixsite.com/cattle/post/2025-tesa-nominee-profile-manitoba-clayton-and-shauna-breault-and-family>

Ontario — Van Osch Farms Ltd: Van Osch Farms in Middlesex County, operated by the Van Osch family, combines large-scale cattle and crop production with sustainable practices, earning certifications from the Canadian Roundtable for Sustainable Beef and Ontario Corn Fed Beef Quality Assurance Program. Through innovations like solar energy, regenerative crop management, upcycling cattle feed, and data-driven technologies, the farm continues to improve soil health, animal welfare, and environmental impact.

Learn more at <https://cancattle.wixsite.com/cattle/post/2025-tesa-nominee-profile-ontario-van-osch-farms-ltd>

Quebec — A l'Herbe: First-generation farmers Frédéric Lebel and Dominique Dumas of A l'Herbe, a grass-finished beef farm west of Quebec City, transformed former crop land into diverse forage pastures, built community through a local butchery co-op, and contributed to research on carbon sequestration through the *Racines d'avenir* Living Lab project. They take a regenerative approach to soil health and intensive rotational grazing of 122 Angus-Simmental

cross steers.

Learn more at <https://cancattle.wixsite.com/cattle/post/2025-tesa-nominee-profile-quebec-frederic-lebel-and-dominique-dumas-a-l-herbe>

About TESA

Since 1996, TESA has recognized producers who go above and beyond standard industry conservation practices and set positive examples for other cattle producers and the general public. At the local level, a producer receives provincial recognition for their outstanding contributions. These recipients move forward as nominees for national recognition from the CCA. The national TESA recipient is announced during the CCA semi-annual meeting. CCA will celebrate the 30th anniversary of the TESA program in 2026.

For further information, contact:

Tina Zakowsky, Communications Manager
Canadian Cattle Association
403-451-0931 | zakowskyt@cattle.ca