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Aherne Innovation Prize at 2019 Banff Pork Seminar shared by two winners

Banff, Alta. Jan. 10, 2019: Developers of a tool for automating hog tattooing and another who designed a simple approach for protecting piglets in the farrowing area of loose housing systems, shared the podium as winners of the F. X. Aherne Prize for Innovative Pork Production at the 2019 Banff Pork Seminar, Jan. 8 to 10, Banff, Alta.

Winners for the Tattoo Master were Daniel and Justin Maendel of Rosebank Colony in Miami, Man. Winners for the piglet creep protection device were Brett, Jamie and Carl Israel of Carl Israel Farms Ltd. in Mapleton Twp., Ont. Awards were presented by Dr. Ben Willing, University of Alberta, chair of the F. X. Aherne Prize committee.

Tattoo Master is an automatic tattooing solution designed to ease the burden of everyday hog tattooing while protecting animal welfare and legibility of tattoo. Mounted on automatic hog sorters the only thing that needs to be done is add ink every 400 hogs. The stainless steel unit can be easily washed with a power washer when required.

The piglet creep protection device is designed for loose housing farrowing. The triangular plastic divider slides over pen creep dividers establishing a defined safe creep area under the heat lamp away from the reach of the sow. Piglets are trained to find the safe unit within the first 48 hours. Fewer piglet crushings increases weaning rates per litter.

"This prize recognizes individuals who have developed either original solutions to pork production challenges or creative uses of known technology," says Willing. "Industry thrives on innovation and the Banff Pork Seminar is pleased to acknowledge these grassroots innovations in the pork industry."

The award is named after the late Dr. Frank Aherne, a professor at the University of Alberta and a major force for science-based progress in the Canadian pork industry.

The Banff Pork Seminar is coordinated by the Department of Agricultural, Food and Nutritional Science, University of Alberta, in cooperation with Alberta Pork, Alberta Agriculture and Forestry and other pork industry representatives from across Canada.

More complete details and photos of the winners are available in the Inside BPS Special Report available by link from the 2019 Seminar website www.banffpork.ca.

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