



Castleton Area Beef Farmer Wins 2019 Mapleseed Pasture Award

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 20, 2019 (Toronto, ON) - The Beef Farmers of Ontario, Mapleseed and the Ontario Forage Council, sponsors of the Mapleseed Pasture Award, are pleased to announce that Doug Gray and his life and farming partner Bonnie Wilson, of Piper Creek Farms from the Castleton area in Northumberland County are the recipients of the 2019 Mapleseed Pasture Award. The award was presented today at the Beef Farmers of Ontario Annual General Meeting in Toronto. For their environmental improvements and exceptional pasture management, they received a cash award of \$500 and a bag of forage seed, courtesy of Mapleseed.

Piper Creek Farms consists of 105 acres, which are in pasture and most of the management system utilizes a form of strip grazing that Doug calls “modified mob grazing”. The system utilizes 10 paddocks of approximately 5 acres each and one extended rest area that is continuously grazed when needed. Two other paddocks may or may not be needed in the rotation depending on rainfall. If they are not required, the hay is used as stored feed or stockpiled for fall grazing. The extensive use of frost seeding to rejuvenate the pastures, has been a major benefit, resulting in a wide variety of grasses and legumes in the pastures. The mix of species would include timothy, brome- both tall and soft, bluegrasses, orchard, trefoil, red and white clover, and persistent alfalfa from previous seeding. The remote pastures are watered from a creek or pond, but as Doug states, as a matter of farm policy, they do not water any of the herds in surface water. The water is pumped by solar powered systems to provide water to these pastures through an above ground water line, which has a number of drops that allows for shorter trips to water, and quick and easy movement of stock tanks.

Doug comments that their strength is the mob grazing technique and to that end, it is their goal to eventually have the complete herd on that system. It would be an advantage that would save time and utilize the pasture ground more efficiently.

As Steve Hughes, District Sales Manager with Mapleseed comments, “This year’s recipient is another great example of a producer who is a leader in maximizing their pasture and beef management in the operation”.

Ray Robertson, Manager of the Ontario Forage Council, recognized Piper Creek Farms as a worthy recipient of the 2019 pasture Award, and it’s always a pleasure to recognize producers who are portraying another excellent image of the agricultural industry.

The deadline for applications for the 2020 Mapleseed Pasture Award is November 30, 2019.

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For more information:

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