

Farming duo from Lincolnshire win sustainability award for egg production

In RSPCA Assured's first-ever Pig and Poultry Awards

*****Strictly embargoed until 9 am on Saturday 2 October 2021*****

Clive and Elizabeth Patrick, a married couple from Lincolnshire, have today beaten off stiff competition from 28 nominees to win the 'excellence in sustainability and higher farm animal welfare' category, in RSPCA Assured's first-ever awards for pig and poultry members.

Their family's 650 acre is home to 16,000 laying hens and a herd of 50 cattle, in addition to an abundance of wildlife, including lapwings, owls and hares.

They put this explosion of wildlife down to zero tillage, which is at the heart of agriculture conservation. Zero tillage means less compact soil which

allows for better drainage. It also increases the retention of organic matter, boosts worm life and reduces greenhouse gas emissions. Their approach to soil management, including the overwintering of stubble, also makes an attractive habitat for wildlife.

The Patrick's impressed RSPCA Assured's independent panel of judges with their dedication to sustainability, whilst farming to higher welfare standards. One of the judges, Andrew Joret, chair of BEIC, the Lion Technical Committee and senior director of The International Egg Commission, explains:



Rebecca Lenik
RSPCA Assured PR Manager
01403 821752
rebecca.lenik@rspcaassured.org.uk

Carole Stewart
Hammond PR
07770 881578
carole@hammondpr.co.uk

RSPCA Assured
Wilberforce Way
Southwater, Horsham
West Sussex, RH13 9RS

01403 800141
hello@rspcaassured.org.uk
www.rspcaassured.org.uk

RSPCA press office
0300 123 0244/0288
press@rspca.org.uk

Duty press officer
Evening and weekends
07825 158490

@rspcaassured
RSPCAAssured
RSPCAAssured_Official



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“Conservation and animal welfare are clearly at the heart of everything Clive and Elizabeth do. From ensuring efficient, environmentally friendly drainage to providing imaginative enrichment for their hens to keep them active and occupied, the Patrick’s farm is proof that higher welfare, sustainable farming can be achieved. They very much deserve this award and I really hope they inspire others to take their lead.”

Commenting on their win, Clive says:

“We have been RSPCA Assured certified since we had our first flock in 2010. Our aim is to have the highest welfare possible for our birds, whilst farming sustainably, so this award is such a lovely accolade. As a farming family, it really does mean a great deal to us all.’

Elizabeth adds:

“I love our hens. They’ve helped us continue our quest for a sustainable farm. All their manure goes back onto the fields and in turn, the enriched soil, full of plump worms, is great for the birds as it encourages them to range.

“We operate an ‘open farm’ where we welcome students to carry out research. Recent results have shown extraordinary levels of worm count and improved infiltration, compared to what might be found with traditional farming methods.”

The RSPCA Assured awards are designed to recognise and reward pig, broiler, laying hen and turkey members for achievements in four categories:

- **Excellence in higher farm animal welfare** - going above and beyond the standards and/or expectations to help improve farm animal welfare
- **Excellence in the education of farm animal welfare** - being proactive in engaging and educating others about higher farm animal welfare
- **Excellence in sustainability and higher farm animal welfare** - demonstrating consistent dedication to caring for the environment and animals in general through sustainability efforts
- **Outstanding contribution** - to pig and poultry welfare

Originally planned to be announced at the *British Pig and Poultry Trade Fair 2020*, the final winners in the other categories are being announced via the scheme’s [website](#) and social media platforms [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#)

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RSPCA Assured hopes to extend its awards programme to the rest of its membership in the near future. For more information about the awards, the Patricks and other winners and runners up click [here](#).

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