



**THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY**

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,  
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

### **Hardin County Extension News Release**

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## **Ag Hall of Fame to Induct New Members**

*Hardin County* – The Hardin County Agriculture Hall of Fame has announced the 2019 honorees to be inducted at the seventeenth annual Agriculture Hall of Fame recognition banquet. The 2019 inductees include: Dean and Barbara Dulin, Madelyn Lowery, Fred Rarey, and Mark Watkins. The banquet will be held on Tuesday, December 3rd, beginning at 6:30 pm at St. John's Evangelical Church on East Carrol Street in Kenton. The public is invited to honor these inductees and their families, and to recognize their many accomplishments. The purpose of the county Agriculture Hall of Fame is to recognize outstanding agricultural contributions by Hardin County people and to honor those who have brought distinction to themselves and the agricultural industry.

Gene McCluer will be the guest speaker. McCluer served as an Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Agent in Hardin County from 1988 until his retirement in 2013. For seventeen years he and his family had operated a 50-cow dairy farm in Allen County, near Harrod. Today they operate the small family farm as a grain operation. He has served on the Mid-Ohio Energy Cooperative board in Kenton for 35 years, and currently serves as chairman of the board of the Ohio Rural Electric Cooperatives in Columbus.

Dean and Barbara Dulin are being inducted into the Hardin County Agriculture Hall of Fame as husband and wife. Dean graduated from Kenton High School in 1957 and was a lifelong dairy farmer, owning and operating DuLynn Farms with his wife Barbara. Together they raised registered Holstein cows and exhibited their cattle at many local, state, and regional shows. Dean was on the Marion Production Credit Association (PCA) Board from 1976-1985, during a very rough time in agriculture. He was a member of the Hardin County Restorers and Collectors, Dairy Service Unit, Cattlemen's Association, and Latham Masonic Lodge where he was a 50-year member. Named the Hardin County Jaycees Outstanding Young Farmer in 1970, Dean started the Dairy Bulls and Heifers 4-H Club. He was named the Hardin County Soil and Water Cooperator of the Year; and had one of the county's highest rolling herd averages for milk, fat, and protein at the time of DuLynn Farms herd dispersal. On the state and national level, Dean was a member of the Ohio Two Cylinder Club, Milk Marketing Board, National

Holstein Association, and was recognized for the Milk Marketing Inc. Outstanding Farm Operation in 1970.

Barbara Dulin graduated from Kenton High School in 1958 and was a member of many organizations that impacted Hardin County agriculture. She was also a member of the Hardin County Dairy Service Unit, Dairy Women, Pleasant 20 Club, and Country Connection Club. Along with her husband Dean, DuLynn Farms was a cooperator for COBA/Select Sires, welcoming foreign visitors to their farm to visit an active dairy herd. DuLynn Farms also exported bred heifers and bulls all over the world to Russia, Iraq, Iran, Argentina, Brazil, and Mexico. Barbara and Dean were instrumental in starting and building the Central Church of Christ in Kenton with Dean serving as both a deacon and elder, while Barbara played the piano and organ every Sunday. They also were active at Flat Branch Church of Christ where Barbara played the piano. The farm couple were also active helping at Kenton City Schools where their three children attended, and where today a scholarship is presented in the family's honor. The importance of education was passed onto their three children, who today all have a college degree as well as a master's degree.

Madelyn Lowery was born in 1943 and is a graduate of Kenton High School. She attended Ohio Northern University and graduated with a B.S. in Elementary Education. A lifelong resident of Hardin County, she was a kindergarten teacher for 35 years at Kenton City Schools. Along with her late husband Steve, they raised lambs, pigs, steers, ducks, and chickens on the family farm over the past 50 years. Crops raised have included soybeans, corn, wheat, and hay. Madelyn has had many school children out to the farm to educate them about farm life. In addition, her farm has also been the location for Forestry Field Day. She also educated youth as a 4-H advisor for over 15 years. She currently raises feeder lambs to sell to area 4-H and FFA members. She has always been willing to help out these members with their lamb projects inside or outside Hardin County. She travels with friends and family to county banquets locally and to other counties to support agriculture. Besides helping individuals with lamb projects, she has also helped judge lamb contests in various counties.

Madelyn has served on committees to organize annual sheep tours throughout the state for many years. She has participated in sheep and agriculture tours across the United States and around the world. She has been active in an educational program called "Women of the Land" sponsored by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Hardin Soil and Water Conservation District. She has served as president and vice president of the United Way of Hardin County as well as the University Club. She has represented Kenton City Schools teachers as president of the Kenton Education Association and has served as a board member for Hardin County Farm Bureau, member of Hardin County Sheep Improvement Association, and the Hardin County Retired Teachers. She has been active in Keep Hardin County Beautiful, served her local church as a Vacation Bible School teacher and on the church social committee. In addition, she has volunteered at the Hardin Northern Schools reading program. Madelyn Lowery is always willing to help and is not afraid to lead a discussion or step up to organize an event. According to her kids, "she loves to see kids succeed and learn life through their projects."

Fred Rarey was born in 1944 and graduated from Kenton High School. He has been a lifelong resident of Hardin County for 75 years. His mother passed away when he was 9 years old at which time he went to live with his grandparents and an aunt, who raised the boys on a 65-acre family farm where they raised corn, soybeans, wheat, and milked cows, raised hogs, sheep, and took care of a flock of chickens. It was here that Fred developed a passion for farming. As a small boy, he recalls sitting at the Hogan grain elevator in Grant with his grandfather and the older farmers telling him “you’re not worth anything until you own land.” It was during this time that it became his goal to own land and make a career of farming. Fred joined the Air Force Reserves to do his civic duty while still able to work towards his goal of farming and owning land. He convinced his aunt to buy an 80-acre farm that he would farm for nothing until it was paid off, and the entire family pooled all their extra money together to make payments on the farm until it was paid for. Later he got a job at Whirlpool, where he spent many years working in the factory all day and on the farm all night. Once the 80-acre farm was paid off, his aunt allowed him to use it as collateral to buy his first farm. He started share cropping more farm ground and trying new things such as spraying for weeds instead of cultivating. He bought more ground and was one of the first to start cash renting farm ground which later provided him the opportunity to expand his farming operation.

When the devastating drought of 1988 hit, Fred Rarey had to liquidate 256 acres so he could keep following his dream. While it was one of the toughest periods in his career, he didn’t let it discourage him for long. He started trying minimum tillage and no tillage practices. He started planting soybeans in 15-inch rows and changing plant populations to maximize yield potential. These practices proved to be successful, allowing him to purchase more farm ground. Over the years, he has been able to overcome adversity, turning his 65-acre family farm into over 1500 acres in a period of 65 years of hard work and determination. Over this period of time, he married his wife Karen and has been married to her for over 45 years. They had one son, Judd who now farms beside Fred with the help of grandson Parker. Along his journey, he has been a member of Greenwood Grange, Ada Full Gospel Church, and FFA as a student. He has served his church as a deacon, trustee, and now as assistant pastor after being a member for over 41 years. Fred Rarey has always been patient, strong, and steady under pressure. His claim to fame has been “to not let his past disappointments define his future.”

Mark Watkins was born in 1962 and graduated from Kenton High School. He later graduated from The Ohio State University with a Bachelor’s Degree in Animal Science and married his wife Marsha. Mark farms 9000 acres of corn, soybeans, wheat, and barley with his brother Brian and son Trent. They use innovative grain farm practices including strip-till, no-till, cover crops, conservation practices in cooperation with NRCS, precision ag and variable rate applications of seed and fertilizer, precision placement of fertilizer, and sensor-based nitrogen applications. He owns and operates drainage tile installation equipment and surface drainage machinery for owned and rented land. Mark is a partner in a 25,000 head swine wean to finish operation, including an on-farm feed mill producing up to 500 tons per week of swine feed rations. He is an innovator in swine nutrient management including design and building of a power unit and minimum tillage manure injection toolbar. The grain and hog farm helps to support the livelihoods of 15 separate families in Hardin County agriculture. Mark has helped mentor and support employees and family members as they get their start in farming jobs and careers.

As a professional, Mark worked as a partner to grow and sustain a very successful grain and livestock farm. He was an early innovator and leader in adopting reduced tillage systems in the 1980s and 90s. He had a particular niche for creating solutions by building and modifying farm machinery, specifically building a self-propelled sprayer and modifying various strip-till toolbars and no-till planters, and manure handling equipment. He started with a small, remodeled swine farrow to finish facility and over time, adapted to the changing industry by partnering and building large modern swine confinement facilities. He was an early adopter of owning and operating tile and drainage installation equipment. He is a proponent of “doing it yourself” for farm building projects, including storage buildings, grain bins, also for repairs and maintenance of all farm machinery and equipment. Mark and Marsha were named the Outstanding Ohio Farm Bureau Young Farm Couple in 1990, and he was recognized by the American Soybean Association for the Conservation Legacy Award for the Eastern Region in 2002. He has also served as Ohio Soybean Association president, Heartland board member, and is a member of the American Soybean Association and the Ohio Corn and Wheat Growers. Locally, he has served as Hardin County Farm Bureau and Pork Producers president, Goshen Youth 4-H advisor, Kenton School Board member, Liberty National Bank director, OSU Alumni Association treasurer, and has served the First United Methodist Church in multiple positions including leading mission trips to Mexico and Honduras.

Tickets for the Hardin County Agriculture Hall of Fame Banquet must be purchased in advance through November 25. Tickets are \$12 and can be reserved by calling the Hardin County Extension office (419-674-2297) or purchased from the committee members: Genny Haun, Bob McBride, Ruth Oates, Kerry Oberlitner, Gary Harpster, Steve Poling, Amanda Murphy, Bob Wood, and Mark Badertscher.