



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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**THE OHIO POULTRY ASSOCIATION ANNOUNCES ANNUAL AWARD RECIPIENTS**

*Individuals and Groups Honored for Dedication to Ohio Egg and Poultry Industry*

**COLUMBUS, Ohio (April 24, 2017)** – The Ohio Poultry Association (OPA) announced its annual award recipients during its meeting and banquet on April 21 at the Renaissance Hotel in downtown Columbus. Each of the five awards honored an individual or group who made a significant contribution to Ohio’s egg, chicken and turkey farming communities during the past year.

“Every year we seek individuals whose work and accomplishments promote the goals of our poultry community to provide Ohioans safe, affordable food,” said Jim Chakeres, OPA executive vice president. “Their dedication and passion is truly evident and advances our standards of quality and excellence.”

Awards and recipients at the 32nd Annual OPA Banquet included:

**Golden Egg Award: Jim Cooper**

The Golden Egg Award traditionally recognizes an individual who is committed to advancing the mission and values of the state’s egg, chicken and turkey farmers, and it was awarded to Jim Cooper this year. Cooper currently serves as the CEO of his family farm, Cooper Farms, which is the largest turkey farm in Ohio and the 12<sup>th</sup> largest in the nation. Under his leadership, Cooper Farms has implemented new technologies which have shaped industry standards, currently employs over 2,200 individuals and works with more than 300 family farms for turkey, swine and layer operations.

**Legacy Award: Stoller Farms**

The Legacy Award recognizes individuals who are committed to advancing the mission and values of the state’s egg, chicken and turkey farmers. Stoller Farms was recognized for consistently ensuring the highest level of animal care through its four generations of leadership. Stoller Farms is also recognized as a leading standard-bearer on environmental issues and demonstrates a strong commitment to protecting the air, water and land. The Stoller family also is passionate about giving back to their local community and has played an active role in churches, school boards and other charitable organizations.

**Golden Feather Award: Representative Brian Hill and Former Representative Dave Hall**

The Golden Feather Award is bestowed annually to individuals who have distinguished themselves as champions of livestock agriculture or poultry issues. Both Representative Brian Hill and Former Representative Dave Hall were honored this year.

A family farmer, Representative Hill has worked directly on critical issues affecting the poultry industry, serving as an advocate during his tenure in office. He has been proactive in including the Ohio Poultry Association in the legislative process and has been influential in passing legislation to improve the quality of life for farms and the agricultural community.

Former Representative Hall has been a loyal supporter of Ohio agriculture throughout his time as chairman of the Ohio House Agriculture Committee. Former Representative Hall was a strong influence on many agricultural issues considered by the legislature, including water quality, protection of agricultural resources, budget concerns and tax issues. Because of his efforts, the long-standing issue of penalties for cockfighting in Ohio communities has been resolved.

#### **Meritorious Service Award: Dr. Tim Barman**

The Meritorious Service Award is given annually to an individual in the academic field who has contributed to the egg and poultry communities. Dr. Tim Barman was honored for his extensive efforts in shaping livestock care standards and providing educational opportunities to students. An industry expert in poultry health, and a staff veterinarian for Cooper Farms, Dr. Barman has dedicated his life to both the animal veterinary practice and inspiring the next generation of Ohio's agricultural leaders. He frequently provides tours and shares his insights with local 4-H, FFA and The Ohio State University Veterinary students.

Ohio is the second largest egg farming state in the nation, producing more than 9 billion eggs a year, with a retail value of more than \$744 million. Ohio's egg, chicken and turkey farms create more than 13,578 jobs, generating \$331 million in earnings to the state's economy.

For more information, visit the OPA website at [www.ohiopoultry.org](http://www.ohiopoultry.org).

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