

## 2014 Iowa Master Farm Homemakers Guild Inductees

### Jennifer Ewoldt - IMFH Class of 2014

#### Scott County

Family and farm life are at Jennifer Ewoldt's core. Jennifer and husband Robb raise crops, cattle and hogs on about 800 acres near Blue Grass in Scott County with two young sons, Alex, 7 and Isaac, 5.

A native of Canada, Jennifer graduated from the University of Guelph and earned a degree in veterinary medicine at University of Prince Edward Island. She met Robb at Iowa State University. "Dr. Jennifer is somehow able to keep up with everything at home along with her responsibilities at the Scott County Animal Hospital, where she works full-time as a veterinarian.

The Ewoldts do custom work in addition to farming their own land: custom baling, planting, combining and forage chopping. Jennifer helps Robb in the field and with the livestock as needed. She does farm recordkeeping

Jennifer excels at explaining agriculture to people, authorizing a column every two weeks in the Quad City Times about farm life. She also helps relate ag to the public through farm tours. For the past several years the Ewoldts have held an open house each year on the farm, drawing several hundred urban people. Jennifer visits with them, explains various farming activities and patiently answers questions in a way people can understand. They leave with a smile on their faces.

Helping Robb work cattle on the farm, Jennifer tags cattle and gives shots. She often invites teenage girls interested in horses to help with the spring and fall cattle round-ups, and shows the girls by example that anything is possible.

The Ewoldts have five horses and use them for working their cattle in their picturesque, hilly pastures. "We freeze-brand our cattle and calves, roping everything as we work them, all done the traditional cowboy way." Robb says. "Jennifer is modest - she won't say much about her skill but she'll out-rope me in the branding pen every year."

### Joyce Gauger - IMFH Class of 2014

#### Muscatine County

Joyce and Ron Gauger have been partners in what will soon be 53 years of raising a family, making decisions to produce hogs, cattle and crops, and giving back to the community in many ways. More recently, they've enjoyed retirement on their well kept Muscatine County farm near West Liberty, tending a big garden and growing fabulous flowers.

As a longtime 4-H local leader, Joyce held workshops in her home, gave individual help to members with projects and helped the club succeed in participating at county and state level. Community service projects included the 4-H "clown club" going to the University of Iowa Children's Hospital.

Education and learning have always had high priority. She has judged neighboring county fairs for over 25 years even judging 4-H exhibits at the Iowa State Fair. She also served as a chaperone for Iowa 4H-ers selected to attend the National 4-H Conference in Washington D.C. when she retired, Joyce didn't stop being involved in 4-H.

"Joyce has been involved in Muscatine County 4-H and Master Gardener activities for so long that a one-page letter wouldn't begin to cover her contributions," says Becki Petersen, county youth coordinator for 4-H.

Very active in the Master Gardener program, Joyce has led numerous workshops for events and hosted many garden tours and luncheons at her home. Joyce helped with the Ag in the Classroom program and did promotions for the Muscatine County Porkettes. Serving the county fair over the years, she continues today as superintendent of the Floral Hall flower show. Joyce did such things as host garden walks on the farm to raise funds to replace the old floral building on the fairgrounds.

Joyce worked for the school district lunch program at times to help support family income. She still bakes and sells baked goods and garden produce at area farmers markets.

The Gaugers have four children and six grandchildren.

#### Lois Martin - IMFH Class of 2014

Linn County

While gardening is her passion now, the list of leadership roles and activities Lois Martin of Marionn has been involved with the past 50 to 60 years is long and varied.

She was president of the PTA and Linn-Mar Boosters Club, a 4-H leader for 26 years and on numerous county committees, and taught classes through Kirkwood Community College on sewing and crafts from pigskins. She has been a Sunday school teacher for over 50 years and helps with Vacation Bible School. She was the youth group leader, is the Missions coordinator, on church supper committees, and maintains church flower gardens. Lois convinced her church to buy a Safe-T Home (Sukup grain bin house) for Haiti, and worked with the Global Compassion Network.

She continues to volunteer at the Linn County Fair. Lois sews quilts for five different children's charities. Lois and Loyd spend four months in Texas each winter and while there Lois sews quilts for missions. They have also helped build homes for migrant workers. Lois still does all the farm recordkeeping and helps in the farrowing house, from the birthing process to sewing up pigs that get stepped on, to performing CPR on pigs, to cleaning the pens. When Lois and Loyd had a dairy herd, she helped with milking, calving and raising the calves. She had a good sized flock of chickens which provided eggs and meat for the family and she helped raise sheep.

In 1954 Lois and Loyd hosted their first international student. One Japanese son brought his new bride back to Iowa to honeymoon on the farm. In 1966 they became a farm vacation destination; they've since hosted families from many states and from 47 countries, the landscape on the Martin's large livestock and grain farm is literally covered with a vast variety of flowering plants and vegetables. Lois cans and freezes fruits and vegetables; and loves to bake pies.

Lois and Loyd raised five children and now have 16 grandchildren; 31 great-grandchildren and are expecting their first great-grandchild.

#### Annette Sweeney - IMFH Class of 2014

Hardin County

Annette Sweeney's teaching career was cut short at less than three years when her father unexpectedly passed away in 1981. With a younger sister and her mother's health failing, she returned home during the 1980s Farm Crisis to take over the family grain and livestock operation near Buckeye in Hardin County.

When Annette married David Sweeney in 1985, Dave began specializing in the purebred cattle enterprise while Annette remained responsible for row crops, grain marketing, accounting and banking. The couple eventually shifted to purebred Angus and for the last 5 years have sold breeding stock for commercial and purebred herds.

Annette stayed home to care for two sons while still being involved in every aspect of the farming operation. Later, Annette created a seasonal in-home business, Practical Publishings. She recruited five farm wives to help her produce cattle sale catalogs for Conover Auction Service in Baxter, Iowa.

Over the years, Annette gained a reputation as an enthusiastic leader in farm organizations and commodity groups. She was the executive director for the Iowa Angus Association, and served on Hardin County's FSA board, Farm Bureau board. She also served on the Iowa Charolais Breeders boards and Iowa Soybean Association Ag-Urban Leadership Initiative. Elected to the Iowa House of Representatives in 2008, she became chairman of the House Agriculture Committee. When one of her past 4-H members came back from Iraq and complained he couldn't get a loan, she drafted a bill to allow veterans to sue the Iowa Finance Authority as their bank. The bill passed without a single no vote in both houses.

After leaving the Iowa Legislature, her advocacy for agriculture continues as she serves as president of Iowa Agri-Women and on the Annie's Project-Education for Farm Women board.