

# Farm builders recognized for year's most unique concepts

HFH Inc. took home five of the awards presented annually by the CFBA



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For Steve Gerber it was “the highlight of my career... bringing my clients’ vision to reality.”

Gerber was the project manager for Ennotville-based HFH Inc.’s construction project at Boernview Farms at Gadshill. The seven-month-long dairy barn/milkhouse project culminated in a building that was eventually recognized with an award by the Canadian Farm Builders Association (CFBA).

It was one of five 2019 awards for HFH, which also topped the Project of the Year, Recreational/Hobby, Commercial/Institutional, and Horse II categories.

POST Farm Structures of Elora was also a multiple winner, taking the Farm Storage and Horse I awards.

Others recognized by the association were McCann Redi-Mix at Mitchell in the Swine category, Dresden’s Agri-Urban Buildings Inc. for Poultry, and Frey Building Contractors of Hawksville for Other Livestock.

Gerber, who’s been involved in dairy barn projects for 24 years, says the work at Boernview began by sitting down with owners Roger Boersen, his son Adam, daughter Krista, and her husband Cole during the winter of 2018/19 to piece together the details. The brainstorming and blueprint design work also included the family’s Lely dealer.

“One of the highlights was being part of a project where we, with good trades people, were able to go from having our first concrete poured on May 6 to milking cows on Dec. 2 in a little less than seven months,” Gerber recalls.

The finished site included a 268’ x 394’ wood-framed main dairy barn, a 48’ x 76’ milkhouse, utility, vet and conference room, as well as a 10’ x 33’ manure pump room. The total square footage was about



**Dairy barn winner exterior.**



**Project of the Year.**



**Dairy barn winner interior.**

110,000, Gerber notes.

In essence, says Roger Boersen, the barn “is designed as six separate groups with two robots per group, with three center pods with room for one more and a cross-link at the front connecting all the

groups.”

The barn includes 744 48-inch freestalls with sand bedding in a 18 row layout.

The design features 12 Lely robots which, in a potential future expansion, can see the addition of 16 more, Gerber

says.

He says one of the unique features is the cross-ventilated design where, in the summer, air gets pulled in at one end of the barn and out the other end through fan power. “At its peak, for those hot humid days,

this barn has an air exchange capacity of every 40 seconds.”

There’s a flat ceiling with R-40 insulation in the attic that makes it possible to pull air from the attic in winter throughout the facility at multiple locations and control the amount of air being introduced at the locations. “It has worked very well this past winter,” Gerber notes.

Other features include:

- Retractable summer baffles that can increase the air speed over the cows on warm, muggy days;
- A Maximus control that controls all the ventilation, lighting and feed;
- A small L robot orientation with sort locking head gates;
- Locking gate with Palpation rail for vet use for each group of cows;
- A three-foot transfer lane across the whole barn allowing good control in sorting and



**Poultry barn winner interior.**



**Poultry barn winner exterior.**



**Horse barn winner.**

moving cows;

- 24 hour surveillance with 16 angles through our facility;
- All herd treatment and management is done in a 10-stall area behind each robot pod, making herd management much more efficient through robot sorting software which identifies heats, sickness and any other weekly processes needed.
- Six V-alley scrappers dumping into the a cross gutter;
- Automated chain disc. Feeding system too every robot bringing in two types of feed;
- Robot rooms built with Nuform forming material allowing a smooth finish for easy cleaning;
- A Milk Glycol Chiller system for instant cooling of milk before it gets to the milk tank for optimum milk;
- There is a flush line under all the robots taking out gray water to a new storage tank outside of the barn allowing for one pump for all the robot waste water.

FOR THE Project of the Year award, HFH general manager Brian Brubacher says his company was “privileged to work on a multi-purpose building”, which featured horse stalls at one end and storage at the other.

As such, he says the building “meets the needs of different members of the family.”

The total area was 80 x 90 feet, which includes an 80 x 40 hobby farm at the front and an 80 x 50 shop at the back. It is also suitable for hosting social

events.

It was designed with “attention to detail to match the beautiful property,” Brubacher notes.

Jeremy Marsh, McCann’s project manager for the Dashwood-area hog barn, says the project started in May 2017 but, due to the length of the barn the work was completed in stages. Concrete work, for example, was being finished up on one end of the barn while framing was happening on the other.

“This allowed pigs to be moved into the dry sow portion of the barn while the farrowing side was still under construction,” Marsh says.

The building is approximately 700 feet long and 131 feet wide and is made to house 2,400 dry sows in loose housing as well as farrowing sows. The ceilings are nine feet high.

Some of the unique features incorporated into the building include a NEDAP electronic feed system, Vereijken farrowing crates, Mial chain feeding, Paneltim penning, and Meridian bins. The automated features are run by Genius controllers.

Brian Fitzgerald, a territory manager at Agri-Urban, describes the company’s award winning project as a 64 x 606’ free-range barn at Petrolia-based Franz Turkey Farms. The building is naturally ventilated with curtain walls and includes “all the bells and whistles”.



**Swine barn winner.**



**Farm Storage winner.**