USPOULTRY Recognizes Tyson Foods with Clean Water Awards

TUCKER, Ga. – Sept. 17, 2020 – The U.S. Poultry & Egg Association (USPOULTRY) has awarded the 2020 Clean Water Award to Tyson Foods in New Holland, Pennsylvania, and Tyson Foods in Robards, Kentucky. The award is presented annually to poultry facilities that go above and beyond in their commitment to sustainable wastewater treatment and water reuse. The winners were chosen by a committee of industry engineers, university personnel and industry media. An announcement of the recognition of the Clean Water Award recipients was made during USPOULTRY’s virtual Environmental Management Seminar.

Award recipients were recognized in two categories, full treatment and pretreatment. The full treatment category encompasses plants that treat wastewater in accordance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits that allows the facilities to discharge into a receiving stream or final land application system. The pretreatment category includes facilities that discharge pretreated effluent to a publicly-owned, full treatment facility for further treatment. To be eligible, a facility must have a minimum of two years of no significant non-compliances or notices of violations or any other type of enforcement action.

Tyson Foods was selected the winner in the full treatment category for their broiler and further processing complex in New Holland, Pennsylvania. The complex generates an average wastewater flow of 0.698 million gallons per day and processes 620,000 birds and 2.5 million pounds of cooked product per week. Unique to the facility, the New Holland complex partnered with EDL Energy to expand its infrastructure and increase the use of landfill gas as a fuel source in place of natural gas. This has helped to reduce the facility’s carbon footprint. Refuse generated at the complex is recycled at the Lancaster Waste-to-Energy facility, where in 2019, it generated approximately 1,591,632 kilowatt hours of renewable energy. Processing the waste in this manner, instead of placing it into a landfill to decompose, offsets atmospheric carbon emissions by approximately 2,600 tons.

The New Holland management team knows that reductions in water usage require intentional planning, monitoring and communication across functional areas, and they regularly review water saving opportunities. Since a baseline was established in 2015, water usage has been reduced at the New Holland complex by 47.5 million gallons per year, or nearly 16%, from the established baseline. As a means to support their workforce and community, the facility emphasizes the importance of continual training for their personnel and management staff and contributes to supporting environmental protection efforts and wildlife management projects in the local community.
Tyson Foods was also selected as the winner in the pre-treatment category for their poultry processing and rendering facility in Robards, Kentucky. The facility processes approximately 250,000 birds per day and treats, on average, 2.2 million gallons of wastewater per day. The facility utilizes two dissolved air flotation (DAF) units, one with an auger incorporated in the bottom to remove sand and/or grit introduced into the system. This auger assists in removing the sand and grit out of the system by transporting through a sediment removal system known as the sand bar – an elongated, sloped containment basin. Sand and grit capture and removal helps preserve system components, like pumps and piping, and in turn extends the life of these critical pieces of equipment. Time and money are also saved by reducing the need to replace damaged equipment. The facility has incorporated water saving initiatives, including a water re-use system that collects, filters and recirculates water for non-food contact uses. This recirculation water is used to offset fresh-water demand by eliminating an avenue for unneeded potable water consumption. Other water saving initiatives include the installation of water-efficient faucets, eliminating the continuous overflow of chiller water and reducing chiller make-up water.

Tyson Robards’ commitment to environmental stewardship is further demonstrated through the operation of a rendering plant that recycles chicken byproducts, not consumed by humans, into wholesome pet food products. Other examples of the facility’s environmental stewardship include transitioning to energy-efficient lighting and partnering with numerous vendors to recycle and reuse items such as cardboard, various types of plastic, scrap metal, wooden pallets, used oil, etc. The facility is also actively involved in their community through numerous outreach programs.

Simmons Foods in Southwest City, Missouri, was recognized with an honorable mention with distinction award in the full treatment category. Tyson Foods in Berryville, Arkansas, was recognized with an honorable mention with distinction award in the pretreatment category.

“We received many great applications for this year’s Clean Water Awards, and they should all be applauded,” said Greg Hinton, Rose Acre Farms, and USPOULTRY chairman. “The quality of the applications received is representative of our members’ steadfast commitment to wastewater treatment and the conservation of our earth’s natural resources. Congratulations to this year’s winners.”

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U.S. Poultry & Egg Association (USPOULTRY) is the All Feather Association progressively serving its poultry and egg members through research, education, communications and technical services. Founded in 1947, USPOULTRY is based in Tucker, Georgia.