

## **Grey Cattlemen win prestigious Environmental Award**

February 20- Toronto – Chris and Carrie Knott of Ravenna will be honoured as the 2002 winners of The Environmental Stewardship Award (TESA) at the annual meeting of the Ontario Cattlemen's Association (OCA) on February 20 in Toronto. The award is sponsored by the Royal Bank of Canada and OCA.

Both Chris and Carrie Knott were raised in Grey County and bought their farm nine years ago – a property they now share with their two young sons, Brandon, 5 and Trevor, 2.

They have a commercial cow/calf herd of about 40 pairs and farm a total of about 700 acres – much of it on rented land. Since 1998 they've fenced cattle from all water courses, installed concrete cattle crossings, have dug a shore well to provide alternate water sources, erected concrete walls around their manure storage and some of their yard and have increased the size of the concrete pad under their manure storage.

They also practice conservation tillage methods. They've been using a no-till drill for eight years and have noticed less erosion to the land and much less labour required to work the same acreage.

Farming in the Blue Mountains, in the southern Georgian Bay area of Ontario in the Beaver Valley, tourism plays a huge role in the community as the area hosts a lot of cottagers in the summer and skiers in the winter. Said Chris, 32, "I'm always conscious of what people driving by are thinking of my farm." This has been part of the reason behind the improvements made on their property.

They're beginning to see their efforts pay off. A creek running through their property now stays running much longer in the summer months since the cattle have been fenced away from it. Vegetation has begun to regrow along the banks and the property looks much better.

Grant programs such as the Beaver River Water Quality Improvement Project have provided much needed financial assistance for some of the projects and Knott encourages other producers to research and take advantage of the programs available in their own areas.

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