



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MFBF Names Sunderland Cat ‘Barn Cat of the Year’

CONTACT: MFBF Director of Public Affairs, katelyn@mfbf.net



MARLBOROUGH, MASSACHUSETTS – Sept. 28, 2021 – ‘No working farm is complete without a working cat!’ This line is straight out of Sophie-Jane’s nomination for Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation’s (MFBF’s) barn cat of the year, which was submitted by her owner Laurie Cuevas. It showcases how important these larger-than-life purr-sonalities are to their farmers and due to Sophie-Jane’s work to keep the barn at Thomas Farm & Dairy free of birds, she was awarded MFBF’s Barn Cat of the Year.

“Sophie-Jane exhibited the qualities of an excellent barn cat,” said MFBF Promotion and Education Chair Meg Gennings. “Not only does she keep rodents and birds out of the barn at Thomas Farm and Dairy but she also is extremely affectionate and an excellent napper. Those qualities are what make

barn cats popular.”

Sophie-Jane was adopted through Dakin Humane Society’s barn cat program, which pairs cats who are either too feisty or too shy to live in traditional homes with working barns. These cats are spayed or neutered, and the owner is required to provide them with a warm bed (in Sophie-Jane’s case that meant a cat door into the warm room where Thomas Farm and Dairy raises baby goats).

“We are so happy that Sophie-Jane found a loving home/barn and has now earned the title of Barn Cat of the Year,” said Stacey Price, Dakin Humane Society director of development and marketing. “We are incredibly thankful to those who open up their barns to cats like Sophie-Jane. They are truly doing lifesaving work by making this choice. Cats like Sophie-Jane are used to being outside, some may not even like people and prefer the company of other cats making it difficult for animal shelters to sometimes find living quarters for them. And even though these cats are wild they deserve equal compassion, love and humane care within the environment for which they thrive. Congrats Sophie-Jane for representing all barn cats!”

The contest was sponsored by [The Pet Food Institute](#), and the winners will receive a gift basket of pet-themed items. Thanks to their generosity, in addition to barn cat of the year, five other felines were selected to win awards in the following areas and receive gift baskets:

- Best napper: Thomas, who is owned by the UMass Livestock Barn and was nominated by Seana Mawhinney from Ashburnham
- Best mouser: Spinach, who is owned by Vanessa Romasco from Georgetown
- Best dressed: Peanut, who is owned by Sarah Lovett from Sherborn
- Sasiest: Hamilton, who is also owned by Sarah Lovett from Sherborn
- Chonkest: Alfalfa, who is owned by Karen Herzig from Colrain

A panel of farmers, who are used to working alongside furry aloof feline companions, reviewed 20 nominations to select the 2021 Barn Cat of the Year. Entries included written responses and photos to showcase their cat’s dedication to farm life.

For farmers who are looking to adopt barn cats, here is a list of links to shelters with a barn cat adoption program:

- <https://www.dakinhumane.org/barn-cats.html>
- https://www.mspca.org/animal_care/barn-cat-program/
- <https://monadnockhumanesociety.org/adoption/barn-cat-program/>
- <https://www.plymouth-ma.gov/animal-control/pages/barnworking-cat-program>
- <https://www.catsontheweb.org/feralcatrescues.htm>

###

About Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation

The Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation is a non-profit organization representing nearly 6,000 family members across the Commonwealth. MFBF is an advocate for farmers, run by farmer members who develop policies through its grassroots process. Its mission statement is to "strengthen a diverse agricultural community by supporting and advocating for Massachusetts farm families." Its vision is to "envision a world with plentiful high-quality agricultural products, productive open land, and a robust and prosperous farming community. We are committed to working with like-minded groups to achieve these goals." For more information about the Massachusetts Farm Bureau Federation, please visit www.mfbf.net.

FOLLOW US

