



## The Coppernolls

# MMPA's Top Quality Award Winners

*The Coppernolls: Harry Jr., June and Harry Sr.*

One of the most important elements in achieving high quality milk is cleanliness. Keeping the cows and their environment consistently clean is key to reducing mastitis and maintaining low somatic cell counts. Cleanliness is at the top of a list of many things that MMPA's 2002 Top Quality Award Winners, Harry and June Coppernoll, Sr. consistently do to achieve top quality milk.

"To get high quality milk, you can't just do one thing better, you have to do a lot of things better each time you milk the cows," Harry says.

The Coppernolls produce high quality milk every month of every year by keeping their facility and cows clean, paying close attention to details and taking the time to perform tasks correctly. The Coppernolls, along with their son, Harry Jr., work full-time on their farm near Leslie, Mich. Another son, Timothy, works part-time maintaining the farm's equipment and buildings.

Since 1990, MMPA has recognized the farm that produces the highest quality milk for the year. The Coppernolls earned MMPA's 2002 Top Quality Award with quality averages of 1,500 raw bacteria count, a somatic cell count of 62,667 and a pre-incubated count of 1,833. MMPA's quality award levels are: 250,000 somatic cell, 10,000 raw bacteria and 20,000 pre-incubated bacteria counts. The top quality award winner is selected from the pool of farms that have met the quality premium award in each of these areas, every month during fiscal year 2002.

"It takes commitment by the producer and everyone milking on the farm to meet the quality premium levels every month of the year," says Gary Trimner, MMPA director of quality control and member services. "Being MMPA's top quality farm proves the Coppernolls are doing the right things at the right time and they are doing them consistently every day."

Twenty years ago, the Coppernolls switched from washing the cows with water before milking to pre and post dipping with iodine.

"We have always wanted to produce high quality milk, but for the first few years we had quite a bit of mastitis," Harry says. "Then we went to an iodine pre and post dip instead of washing the cows with water. Once we got the water off the cows, we started noticing a difference."

Today, Harry and a full-time employee, Mike Briggs, milk nearly 100 cows twice a day in a double-four herringbone parlor. Clean cows are pre-dipped with a 0.25 percent iodine solution; dirty cows are wiped first with a paper towel and then pre-dipped. The iodine pre-dip is left on the teat ends for 30-45 seconds then wiped with a new paper towel, ensuring the teat ends are very clean. Each quarter is pre-stripped to visually look for abnormalities in the milk before attaching the