

THE PULSE

Fall 2020 • Holstein Association USA, Inc.



U.S. REGISTERED HOLSTEINS

THE WORLD'S PERFECT COW

The Pulse is proudly sponsored by



A GOOD YEAR THAT WE ACTUALLY WANT GONE

When this year wraps up, dairy just might fair quite well financially. However, the economic roller coaster has been volatile and at times even violent.

We went from \$2 per pound for cheese prior to the pandemic to a 20-year low of \$1 per pound in late April trading on the CME. Markets then rebounded to an all-time high of \$3 per pound in July. This cheese market activity all happened in a span of 118 sessions. And since then, the market dropped down toward \$1.50 and rocketed back up to \$2.70-plus in mid-October trading on the CME.

When we think about these record cheese prices, \$24 milk has not universally translated to \$24 milk checks. While we had a \$24.54 Class III price, the second-highest ever, in July, the Class IV price for the month was \$13.76. When those prices get blended out through the federal milk marketing orders, most of us didn't see anything close to \$24.

During this tumultuous ride, government programs helped bridge the income gap.

The first round of the Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) delivered \$1.75 billion in payments to U.S. dairy farmers. In addition, USDA's Farmers to Families Food Box program purchased nearly \$4 billion in food products and made them available to needy families. While all of us who milk cows to earn a living would prefer to make money based on our own work, the pandemic has unleashed generational changes market forces on us. These programs were a step to help make us whole.

An eye towards next year

Open enrollment for the 2021 Dairy Margin Coverage (DMC) began on October 13. In 2019, 23,000 dairy farmers signed up for protection, but only 13,000 took USDA up on the offer this year. Given none of us know how long the pandemic will weigh down dairy markets, everyone should take a strong look at enrolling in DMC coverage for the 2021 milk production season before the open enrollment closes on December 11.

For those who are gun shy on signing up, remember that DMC is far more robust than its predecessor, Margin Protection Program (MMP-Dairy), at predicting true feed costs. By adjusting the formula to include Premium and Supreme alfalfa, DMC paid out \$75 million more during 2019 and 2020 than would have been the case with average alfalfa prices.

Another risk management tool that deserves a solid look is Dairy Revenue Protection (DRP). At my wife's family

farm where we have our Holsteins, we began using DRP. The product has become so popular that nearly 25% of U.S. milk production was covered by it this year. Those dairy farmers who had coverage in place for the second quarter of 2020 realized significant payouts due to the low prices that we

endured at the time.

Again, it's an insurance policy that works much like crop insurance.

For the Knigges, who are installing a new robot system this fall, DMC and

DRP offers some peace of mind during the pandemic to help moderate the severe milk price fluctuations.

An eye towards the future

Indeed, many of us have our chins up with an eye on our dairy future. On October 2, we classified our Registered Holsteins as jackhammers were removing concrete in the free stall barn for the third generation of robots to be installed since 2000. While conditions were not ideal given all the activity, we still had a good day and enjoyed the chance to talk cows during these stressful times.

It's that very reason that many among us have been making an extra effort to get out to the fall shows. Thanks to all those Holstein breeders who led grassroot efforts during the pandemic to give fellow Holstein breeders a chance to exhibit their finest. I appreciate your "above and beyond" efforts.

For some of us, traveling during the pandemic has been extremely challenging. That still holds for those in the New England states and other areas on the eastern seaboard. Because of those pandemic-induced conditions, most staff at 1 Holstein Place has been grounded. Due to Governors' orders, anyone leaving the region would have to quarantine for 14 days before returning to the office. Given the significant disruptions that would make to work flow, we have collectively made a conscious choice to keep staff in the region. It's also the reason the in-person November board meeting will be held in that area — we want to minimize disruptions to work flow to our members.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Corey".

Corey Geiger, President
Holstein Association USA, Inc.

CEO's Message



A SEASON OF THANKSGIVING:

Valuing Your Resilience Amidst a Pandemic

In my message to you in the Spring issue, I quoted the late British bishop, Brooke Foss Westcott, who stated, “As we wake or sleep, we grow strong or weak; and at last some crisis shows us what we have become.” The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the best and worst in people. While some have used this environment as a license for unsavory behavior, many others have come to represent the best our country has to offer.

Indeed, we owe a great deal to the unsung heroes of America – the doctors, nurses, EMTs and others who have unselfishly served on the frontlines during this crisis. Included among them are dairy farmers who have worked each day to ensure an abundant, safe and nutritious food supply for our fellow citizens – in spite of all the fear and uncertainty.

As we approach the Thanksgiving holiday, I cannot help but think about this – and to appreciate the members of the Holstein Association USA, Inc. for whom I – and the rest of our team – serve.

Ralph Waldo Emerson once wrote: “This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it.” Since March, our members have known what to do – and they have done their best in a very challenging time. The resiliency you continue to show is awe-inspiring.

This is traditionally a time for us to count our blessings, and 2020 should be no exception. It’s a time to complete our current year’s business, review past activities, and plan for future progress.

Holstein America

Hopefully, you were able to watch *Holstein America* on RFD-TV September 24th. The episode featured Registered Holstein® breeders, Velmar Green and Ike Hunt, Green Meadow Farms, Elsie, Mich.; Spencer Hackett, Melarry Farms, Rice, Minn.; Kurt and Sarah Loehr, Forest Ridge Holsteins, Eden, Wisc.; Clay and Ken McCarty, McCarty Family Farms of Rexford, Kan., along with Allison Ryan and Brock Peters, MVP Dairy, Celina, Ohio; Dwight Rokey, Rokeyroad Holsteins, Sabetha, Kan.; Alise and Lucas Sjostrom, and Jerry and Linda Jennissen, Jer-Lindy Farms, Redhead Creamery, Brooten, Minn.; and Dr. Robert Cropp, Professor Emeritus, UW-Madison, Wisc. Those stories not only make you proud to be a Registered Holstein breeder, they get you pumped up for the future!

If you missed the show, you can watch it by visiting our website at www.holsteinusa.com. Click on the YouTube icon, go to the “Videos” tab, and select “Holstein America September 2020” or type in this address: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1IJTYbFyqss> and you can watch it at your convenience.

You can see and hear for yourself from those successful folks about their stories and the value of Registered Holsteins.



Your Holstein Association is the voice and face of the United States dairy community. Most weeks we have national news bytes focusing on the dairy industry, the Holstein cow, our members, and other dairy industry leaders and experts on RFD-TV, and National Association of Farm Broadcasting (NAFB) broadcast radio stations around the country. If you, or the general public hear or see dairy stories on the radio or national television, you can be assured the vast majority of those messages come from us.

Power of Holsteins

The power of Holstein dairy cattle genetics has never been more obvious than it is today. Congratulations to you, the breeders of Holstein cattle for the outstanding production increases of your Registered Holsteins. Your Holsteins led all breeds in milk, fat, and protein production increases in 2019.

Your Holstein cows have long been the leader for superior production of high quality milk, butterfat, and protein. Our wonderful black-and-white cow gives you more of everything you're paid for.

Value

With regard to dairy cattle, the value proposition has always favored Registered Holsteins over grade cattle and other breeds. For a mere \$6-10, you have the opportunity for a return on investment that's likely better than any on your dairy, in good times or bad.

Velmar Green of Green Meadow Farms is right on the money when he said in the September *Holstein America*

episode, "In a poor economy like we've had for the last 4½ years, we've been able to sell Registered Holstein heifers for \$200-\$300 more than just ordinary heifers."

You'll find the McCarty Family Farms/MVP Dairy story on *Holstein America* fascinating. Among other things, Ken McCarty stated, "Working with the Holstein Association is an investment in our future."



"Working with the Holstein Association is an investment in our future."

— Ken McCarty
McCarty Family Farms/MVP Dairy

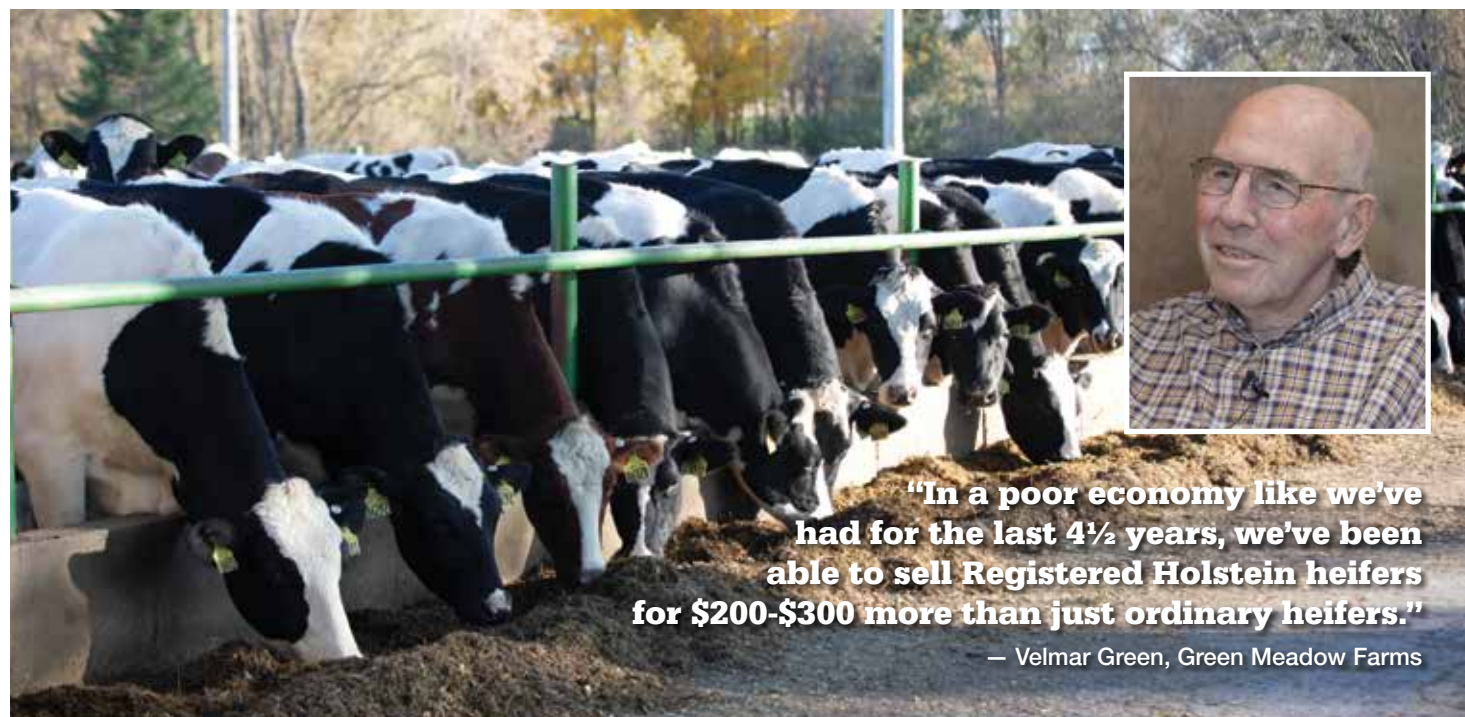
In closing, make no mistake, the Holstein cow is the most iconic symbol in all of agriculture and the U.S. Registered Holstein is the most coveted dairy animal in the world. Spencer Hackett of Melarry Farms sums up the value of Registered Holsteins well: "100% of my success of what we're doing here is because of the Holstein cow."

Indeed, we owe a great deal to the world's perfect cow – and we are blessed to be stewards of this great breed of cattle.

Please accept my most sincere best wishes to each of you at this time of Thanksgiving. Take care of yourselves, do everything you can to stay well, and keep thinking positive thoughts.

Happy Thanksgiving,

**John M. Meyer, Chief Executive Officer
Holstein Association USA, Inc.**



"In a poor economy like we've had for the last 4½ years, we've been able to sell Registered Holstein heifers for \$200-\$300 more than just ordinary heifers."

— Velmar Green, Green Meadow Farms



“Without a collective database, we wouldn’t have the progress that we have today.”

– Bill VerBoort, ATA general manager

THE POWER OF INFORMATION

A look inside dairy records processing at AgriTech Analytics.

Have you ever wondered what happens when data is submitted for Dairy Herd Improvement Association (DHIA) testing?

Bill VerBoort can explain every step of the process. He’s spent his career connecting dairy producers with records processing systems — and the information they need to be successful.

For the last 14 years, he’s served as general manager of AgriTech Analytics (ATA), a division of Holstein Association USA and one of four dairy records processing centers across the U.S.

“The challenge is, how to take data and make it useful to farmers. Numbers, by themselves, don’t do much for most people,” VerBoort says. “You need to turn that into information, not just a lot of data.”

Based in Visalia, Calif., ATA is responsible for compiling dairy records based on testing data that is sent from DHI organizations and field personnel.

Those records include information on milk weights; components; status dates for freshening, drying up, etc.; and basic information on individual cows, such as registration number, sire, dam, birth date, etc. All records have standardized measures to help dairy producers compare data across their herd.

On an average day, ATA processes data from 20 to 25 dairy herds from across the nation, the equivalent of 40,000 to 50,000 cows. In 2019, the team processed records on nearly 990,000 cows in more than 500 herds. That’s the highest number in the last 12 years.



“Our average herd is a little less than 2,000 cows,” VerBoort says. “We have quite a wide range of clients, from a handful of animals in someone’s backyard to herds with upwards of 40,000 cows.”

How records are processed

“We need three categories of information to process a record: production information, status information and the overall file detailing herd information,” VerBoort says. “We turn all of that data into useful information that dairy producers can use to manage their dairy.”

Because DHI testing is usually done every 30 days, once the new data is received, it is added to a cow’s individual test record.

“We estimate how much the cow has produced, based on what her previous month’s record was compared to the new month’s data,” VerBoort says. “We continue to build on the record until she finishes up her lactation.”

Compiling records is now done very quickly. VerBoort says DHI online reports and computer download files are available for producers to review the same day the test day information is received from the DHI labs.

Data compilation and evaluation has progressed over the years to include much more benchmarking information, VerBoort says, along with genetic data and reports used by financial institutions that work with dairies.

“Benchmarking is one of the real values of the collective database,” VerBoort says. “A great example of that is our herd comparison report, which compares your herd statistics with herds of similar size, the same breed, state and county that you live in.”

Having those benchmarks allows dairymen to dial in on where they need to improve herd management.

The strength of genomic information is also bringing the comprehensive database to a new level. Dairy producers are incentivized to have their genomic data records processed because they receive a discount for doing so, VerBoort explains. The discount is a thank you for contributing data to the pool of genotypic data.

“The industry has four million records in the national database to analyze what traits are best in certain

bulls, cows or cow families,” VerBoort says. “Without a collective database, we wouldn’t have the progress that we have today. We’d be breeding a cow that looks a lot differently.”

After the information is shared with the dairy farmer, it is also shared with the Council on Dairy Cattle Breeding (CDCB), which incorporates that data into U.S. genetic evaluations. Participating in DHI testing is also important for having production record information on official Registered Holstein® pedigrees.

“Being involved in the system provides tools to help better manage a herd,” VerBoort says. “And also identify, from a genetics perspective, how to improve the genetic value of your animals for both milk production and marketing purposes.”

In the future

As more dairies install robotic milking systems, the opportunity opens for operations to get even more in-depth data, including milking weights, component information and more.

“The TriStarSM AMR program allows us to remotely tap into the robotic milking system at the dairy producer’s request and extract the data we need to process the herd,” VerBoort says.

He believes the future of the TriStar AMR program will be even more high-tech.

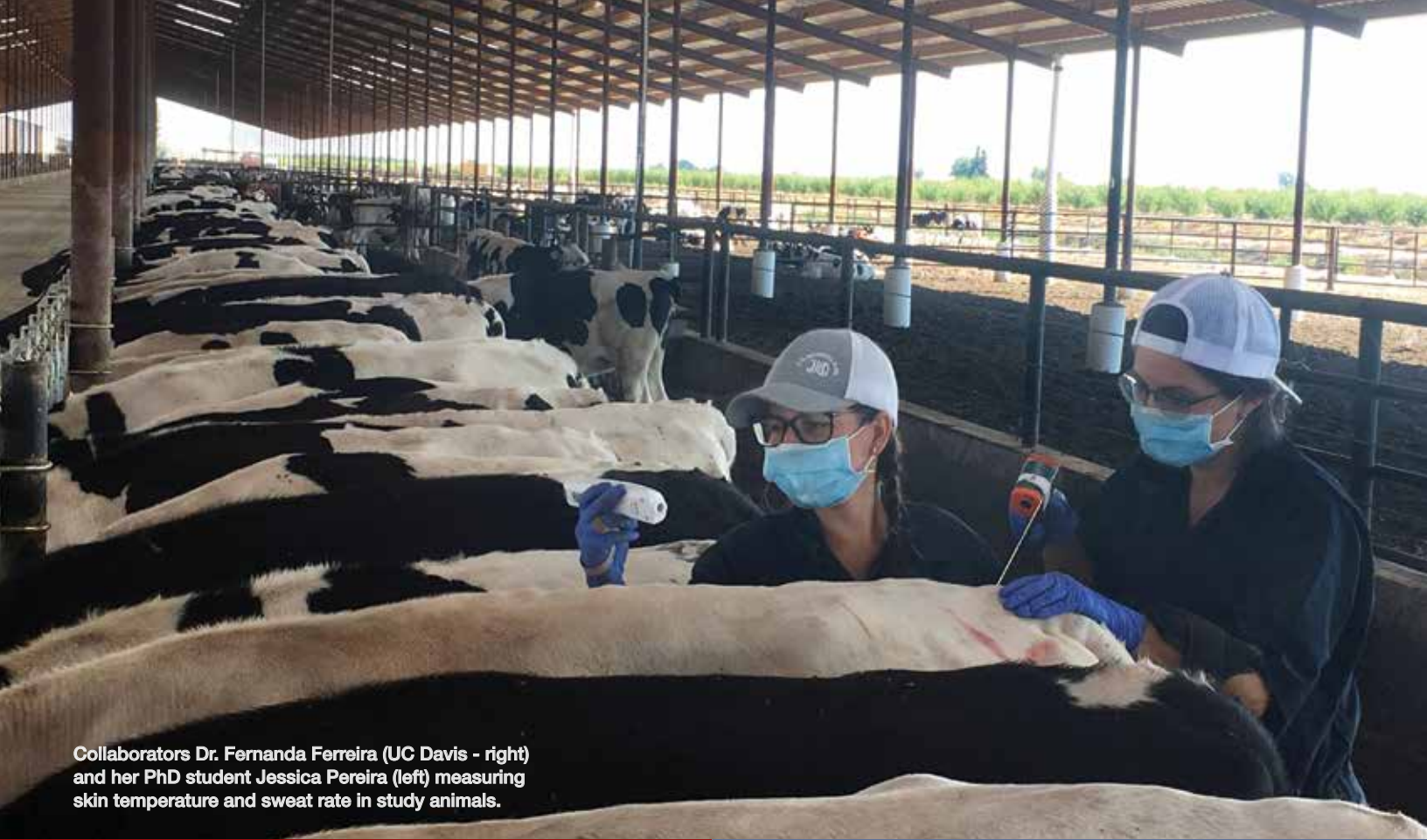
“Instead of just going in on test days to get a cow’s information, what we’d like to be able to do is go into the cloud and access 305-day records for specific cows,” VerBoort says.

VerBoort says taking advantage of available data is the reason why the U.S. dairy industry has evolved to become worldwide leaders — and that will be even more important in the years ahead.

Especially when it comes to managing a sustainable food supply for hungry consumers around the globe.

“The high-producing cow, she has the lowest carbon footprint per pound of dairy product provided,” VerBoort says. “We’re trying to do our part to not only keep our clients in business, but also be as sustainable and environmentally-friendly as we possibly can.”





Collaborators Dr. Fernanda Ferreira (UC Davis - right) and her PhD student Jessica Pereira (left) measuring skin temperature and sweat rate in study animals.

RESEARCH GRANT PROGRAM SUPPORTS FUTURE OF THE HOLSTEIN BREED

While the special focus is on improving the health and profitability of Holsteins through genetics, research proposals can address a variety of areas including nutrition, reproduction, dairy foods, and economics.

Holstein cows are much different today than they were 100 years ago. Yes, they may still be black-and-white, but they produce milk much more efficiently than ever before. In recent years, a focus on improved health and fertility and higher components show that the breed is continuing to thrive in the current environment.

This progress was not possible without the hard work and willingness to think outside the box from dairy producers and scientists alike. To continue to provide leadership, information, and services to help dairy producers worldwide, the Holstein Association started the research grant program in 2017.

Designed to benefit members

The Holstein Association's research grant program provides funding to universities in the United States performing research studies that benefit the sustainability of Holstein cows. While the special focus is on improving the health and profitability of Holsteins through genetics, research proposals can address a variety of areas including nutrition, reproduction, dairy foods, and economics.

"The research proposals that sort their way to the top have potential for long-term benefit to the producer. If we get the benefit to the producer, that will benefit the consumer as well," explains Dr. Roger Shanks.

Dr. Shanks is a dairy genetics consultant for the Holstein Association. He grew up on a Registered Holstein® farm, worked in dairy cattle genetics as a professor at the University of Illinois for 31 years, served as editor-in-chief for the *Journal of Dairy Science*, and now uses his expertise to lead the Holstein Association's research grant program. Each year grant proposals are reviewed by a committee of Holstein enthusiasts who pay close attention to which proposals have the greatest potential to best serve members in the future.

“What the Holstein Association does with this program, the way I see it, is it strives to address pressing issues facing the Holstein breed, issues that are known and identified by a review committee made of dairy producers and people directly involved with the industry. This program plays a critical role in funding scientific research that can hopefully be directly applied to improve the Holstein breed and the dairy industry,” said Dr. Anna Denicol, assistant professor at the University of California, Davis and principal investigator of a current research grant program project.

With producers in mind, the size of the committee also provides the diversity of opinion needed to consider many different sides of the dairy industry when selecting which research projects to fund.

“We are investing this money in a particular research project, because down the road when a project gets applied to the national herd, all the Holstein Association members will benefit from it,” says Dr. Shanks.

Forward thinking research

In addition to being directly applicable to Holstein breeders, research grant proposals should be innovative, exploratory, and based on sound science. Projects can range from one to three years in length and the annual grant amount is expected to be between \$10,000 and \$80,000.

Three research grant projects have been funded to date. The first, from North Carolina State University, focused on using genomic information to manage inbreeding. The project identified variation in the severity of inbreeding using runs of homozygosity (ROH) to quantify the age of inbreeding. Longer ROH indicate recent inbreeding while shorter ROH indicate the inbreeding is likely from past ancestors. In general, the research found that recent inbreeding is more severe and has higher potential to lead to reduced profitability.

A three-year project from the University of California, Davis, which examines breeding Holstein cows for the slick hair gene to improve heat tolerance, was selected in the second year of the program.

“What we hope to see with this large-scale study is that the animals carrying the slick hair gene mutation are indeed more resistant to heat stress, as previous studies have indicated,” said Dr. Denicol. “The hope is that we can help mitigate this problem a little bit from all aspects including production, reproduction, and well-being.”

Dr. Denicol and her co-principal investigator, Dr. Peter Hansen from the University of Florida, are following two

groups of Holsteins on several farms in California and Florida from birth through their first lactation. They aim to discover if the shorter, finer hair on animals with the slick hair gene mutation helps to reduce heat stress.

“We are investing this money in a particular research project, because down the road when a project gets applied to the national herd, all the Holstein Association members will benefit from it.”

— Dr. Shanks, Dairy Genetics Consultant
Holstein Association USA



The team is evaluating physiological responses to heat stress including internal and skin temperature, sweating rate, and respiratory rate. Future evaluations will include reproduction and lactation records.

“The size and breadth of this project is one of the main strengths that we have here,” Dr. Denicol shared. “We are very excited to see if we can make a difference in heat tolerance by using this mutation

which is already in the breed, so it would just be a matter of strategically increasing the frequency of that mutation in the breed. Enhancing heat tolerance could have an enormous benefit to the Holstein breed.”

A glimpse into the future

The most recent project to be funded is a two-year study on double ovulation and twinning in lactating Holstein cows. The study, from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, investigates both genetic and physiological components of double ovulation and twinning. New research proposals are currently being reviewed and the 2021 research grant program recipient will be announced in November.

“One objective of the program is to increase research on Holsteins. I think we’ve been successful in encouraging that as well,” Shanks expressed.

Although not every research proposal that gets submitted is able to be funded, the submitted proposals can more easily be used to apply for other grants. After the first year, Dr. Shanks noticed that many of the research proposals submitted received other funding, increasing the overall amount of research on Holstein cows.

With continued collaboration between the Holstein Association, industry members, and animal scientists from across the country, the future of the research grant program, and the Holstein breed, looks bright.

“The research grant program is really specific, yes, it’s for the Holstein breed, but putting it in context that the Holstein is such an important breed in the United States, I think that this is a really valuable program that helps everyone involved by bringing scientific research and industry close together” said Dr. Denicol.



Dr. Anna Denicol

Holstein Holiday Clothing



The perfect holiday gift for your farmer
or fellow Holstein enthusiast!



Casual Hoodie - \$35

SIZES: XS - XXL

Featuring the words "Every Holstein tells a story," this lightweight hoodie provides comfort and style all in one.

Fleece Lined Sweatshirt - \$38

SIZES: XS - XXL

Our light grey, quarter zip sweatshirt with a hood and large front pocket is lined with soft fleece on the inside, making it warm and cozy.

Insulated Beanie - \$18

In or out of the barn, this fleece lined beanie is the ideal accessory for the cold days ahead.

Red & White Mesh Cap - \$18

Team Holstein Cap - \$23



Place your order today!

Email Teresa Thayer at tthayer@holstein.com
or call 800.952.5200 ext. 4294

Shipping: \$10 for all orders placed by December 4
and \$20 for all orders placed on or after December 5.
Please allow 7 to 10 days for shipping.





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Bulls offered by breeders, for breeders

Cruisin checks a lot of boxes for breeders who are looking for modern day type and performance from a tremendous maternal line.

— Jeff King



Cruisin's Dam and Granddam



KINGS-RANSOM C CRUISIN-ET **712HO01010**

Bred & Owned by Kings-Ransom Farm LLC, NY

+2.98 PTA Type +2.63 UDC +1.35 FLC

From 'the Roxys', his 10 closest dams average 93.1 points!

CRUSHABULL X MONTEREY X MOGUL

DAM: **KINGS-RANSOM MONTEREY CLASH EX-94**

3-01 3X 305d 29,670 4.0%F 1,193 3.1%P 928

2ND DAM: **KINGS-RANSOM MOGUL CLEO-ET EX-95 2E**

5-09 3X 365d 36,350 4.7%F 1,698 3.3%P 1,199

LIFE 1,743d 153,350 4.6%F 7,029 3.3%P 5,098



712HO01007 TERRA-LINDA RYNO-ET

Bred & Owned by Terra Linda Dairy, Tulare, CA

GTPI +2726 NM\$ +609 aAa: 345126

TAHITI x MODESTY x MONTROSS

DAM: **MS TERRA-LINDA MODESTY 197 VG-86**

2-00 3x 365d 28,790 4.4%F 1,258 3.2%P 914

2ND DAM: **TTM MONTROSS 7046-ET EX-90**

3-03 3x 358d 35,320 4.3%F 1,509 3.0%P 1,068

LIFE 1,055d 110,850 4.0%F 4,482 3.0%P 3,339

- 17 generations, deep maternal line
- 1,148 milk, +.12% F, +.02% P, 119 pounds of combined Fat and Protein
- 1.9% SCE, +1.39 UDC and Beta Casein A2/A2



712HO01008 OCD KENOBI FOGHAT-ET

Bred & Owned by Oakfield Corners Dairy, Oakfield, NY

GTPI +2809 NM\$ +665 aAa: 423651

KENOBI x BURLEY x DELTA

DAM: **OCD BURLEY FRANCES 41330-ET VG-87**

2-03 3x 365d 30,810 4.6%F 1,428 3.5%P 1,065

2ND DAM: **OCD DELTA FRANCES 34899-ET EX-90 DOM**

3-08 3x 355d 32,270 4.4%F 1,415 3.3%P 1,054

- 11 generations VG & EX dams
- High component percentages with 114 pounds combined Fat and Protein
- +5.2 Productive Life, +1.9 Cow Livability, +2.4 Fertility Index

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