

Herds of Excellence

Holstein Association USA is pleased to honor seven Registered Holstein breeders as 2013 Herds of ExcellenceSM. These herds have all exceeded the stringent award criteria outlined below. This award was introduced six years ago to honor true “breeder herds,” those who are breeding and developing Holsteins that consistently achieve high levels of both milk production and type. On the following pages, you will find profiles for each of this year’s honorees.

HERDS OF EXCELLENCE CRITERIA

Herds receiving the award must:

- Be 25 percent above breed average Mature Equivalent (ME) for milk, fat and protein;
- Have classified within the last year and have an actual average classification score of 83 points or higher;
- Have at least 70 percent of the herd homebred;
- Be enrolled in the Association’s TriStar production records program.

PINEHURST FARMS

David Bachmann
Sheboygan, Wisconsin



Back row: **David Bachmann and Nancy Thomson**
Front row: **Laura and Robert Bachmann**

1-YEAR HONOREE

81.8% Homebred
Average Classification Score: 89.5
ME Averages: 35,523M 1,607F 1,037P

David Bachmann began breeding Registered Holsteins in 1947, and took over his grandfather’s dairy farm. Since then he has worked to develop an internationally recognized herd, widely respected for their homebred animals with outstanding type and milk production. The herd at Pinehurst today is smaller than it once was, with 24 cows milked three times a day. Cows are housed in the tiestall barn, with some box stalls available for special individuals.

Bachmann says that at Pinehurst, their focus has always been on efficient milk production and reproduction. “We believe that cows breed to the average of their inheritance,” he says. “We try to update the average of their inheritance with each generation.” David advises other breeders, “If you set a target [for your breeding program] and try to maintain it, even if you can’t always, it is the effort to do that which increases your chances of success.”

Through the years, they have participated in both classification and production testing programs, proving the outstanding performance of their cattle. The proof is in the results; just looking at animals bearing the Pinehurst prefix, you will find 57 classified EX-93 or higher, with five at EX-96, and 4 at EX-95. Additionally, they have bred four Gold Medal SiresSM, 33 Gold Medal DamsSM, and 12 Dams of MeritSM. David believes that if you breed for type, you will get cows with sound milk production, commenting that the original concept for “type” was established by the traits cows have which allow them to produce large volumes of milk.

One cow family who continues to bring notoriety to the Pinehurst herd in recent years is that of Pinehurst Royal Rosa-ET EX-91, who was the first twelfth generation Excellent cow in the breed. Impressively, Rosa is backed by six generations of cows (and sometimes sires, too) with the Pinehurst prefix. Of course, Rosa went on to have 16 Excellent daughters herself, who have produced several branches of the family which have done well for their owners.

STAR-SUMMIT FARM

Timothy Baker
Byron Center, Michigan



Tim Baker

**5-YEAR
HONOREE**

91.8% Homebred
Average Classification Score: 88.2
ME Averages: 32,235M 1,247F 1,030P

Tim Baker milks 70 Registered Holstein cows twice a day at his western Michigan farm. The cattle spend their day in a freestall barn, with some older cows kept in boxstalls for comfort. During warmer months, the herd is given access to pasture. Cows are brought into a tiestall barn twice a day for milking.

Tim's dairy involvement officially started 33 years ago when he received a Registered Holstein calf as a gift from his father, for a 4-H project. He worked through high school, slowly acquiring animals of his own, and took over management of the family farm in 1997. The Star-Summit herd participates in a variety of Holstein programs, including COMPLETE, classifying every seven months, and using EASY ID™ to register and order customized ear tags for their animals.

Of his breeding program, Tim says, "We believe in strong cows with good feet and legs that are able to deliver high volumes of milk for many generations." Some current service sires being used at Star-Summit include Gillette Windbrook-ETS, Maple-Downs-I G W Atwood-ET and MYE038 Buxton-ET. Aside from a quality genetic base, Baker feels their "secret to success" involves consistency in everything they do, from feeding and nutrition, to milking, to their reproductive program. He says, "It's also important to surround yourself with a team of experts who you can rely on for their opinion and advice." Tim values their veterinarian, nutritionist, and others in the field who can help keep him informed with up-to-date information within the industry.

Aside from receiving the Herd of Excellence award several times, Baker has earned Progressive Breeders Registry™ recognition eight times since he has been managing the farm, and received the Progressive Genetics Herd™ award six years in that same period of time. He was honored to be named Holstein Association USA's Distinguished Young Holstein Breeder award recipient in 2010. Tim and his wife, Jennifer, have three children who enjoy being involved with dairy activities.

HILROSE HOLSTEINS

Joseph A. Brantmeier
Sherwood, Wisconsin



Jeff, Joe and Andy Brantmeier

**6-YEAR
HONOREE**

86.4% Homebred
Average Classification Score: 86.7
ME Averages: 34,350M 1,259F 9,84P

Hilrose Holsteins is a true family dairy, owned and operated by Joe Brantmeier and his two sons, Andy and Jeff. They milk 90 Registered Holsteins twice a day in their tiestall barn, and are the only farm in the country to have received Herd of Excellence honors every year the award has been given, since 2008. Additionally, they have earned Progressive Breeders Registry honors for 23 years, and are a five-year Progressive Genetics Herd.

Hilrose is enrolled in the Holstein COMPLETE program, and use Official Holstein ear tags for registration. Joe says he finds value in all of the programs Holstein Association USA offers but they especially enjoy classification. "Our family always looks forward to classification. It gives us a good chance to see how things are progressing." Joe was proud to have, at one time, had five generations of cows all alive and milking in his barn, all classified Excellent.

The Brantmeiers pay close attention to cow families, and enjoy making matings that complement the strengths of each. Some families are bred for high type and the show ring, while they have others which are more focused on high genomic values, and have recently exported embryos to China and Germany. "That's the neat thing about the Registered business," Joe said, "there's room for everyone!"

No matter the cow family and what the specific breeding goals are for a mating, they maintain an overriding philosophy of striving to breed profitable cows with sound type, who live long, productive lives. A few of the bulls currently being used as service sires include Apples Absolute-Red-ET, Domicole Chelios-ET, Maple-Downs-I G W Atwood-ET and Mr Chassity Gold Chip-ET. Joe's advice for younger breeders is to "buy the best animals you can, and remember that when you buy an animal, you are not only buying her, but the future offspring she will produce." He adds, "Also use good bulls, whatever your criteria for a 'good bull' is. Don't lose sight of type, and focus on making long-lasting cows."

Joe, Andy and Jeff officially formed an LLC last summer for the dairy, and are excited about the future of their operation. Joe's wife, Chris, is a recently retired teacher who has been heavily involved with their county committee which is hosting the Alice in Dairyland finals this month, and they also have a daughter, Sara.

SPOTLITE-J HOLSTEINS

Janice Jurbala
Orangeville, Pennsylvania



Sandi Hock and Janice Jurbala

**2-YEAR
HONOREE**

87.1% Homebred
Average Classification Score: 83.2
ME Averages: 32,675M 1,231F 1,004P

Spotlite-J Holsteins was established by Jan Jurbala in 1977, and her herd today consists of 50 cows milked twice a day in a tiestall barn. She and business partner Sandi Hock own several cows together, a partnership that started in 1992 when they purchased a red carrier cow from Max Beer, to introduce some red genetics into the herd. All of the calves and heifers are housed at Sandi's house, and she assists with milking. Jan's family is also close by and enjoys being involved with the farm. Spotlite-J has been honored with the Progressive Breeders Registry award for seven years.

Jan says that they know they can get high production from their cows through the genetics they have, along with their nutrition, so they try to focus on breeding cows for traits that will give them the longevity they desire, such as good feet and legs, and quality udders. She has always used mostly young sires in her breeding program, using sons of popular bulls that they may not have used. She likes to see numbers backed up by performance, and studies the maternal side of pedigrees before deciding to use a bull. Some of the bulls she has used recently include Apples Absolute-Red-ET, Crackholm Fever-ET, Gillette Windbrook-ETS, Lirr Drew Dempsey and Lookout P Redburst-Red-ET.

One tactic Jan feels has helped them build a diverse, high performing herd is purchasing about one animal each year from a prominent cow family, and flushing her to make progress and build their herd. She enjoys buying into cow families that have done well for others, and said that they have had a lot of success in getting offspring from those animals. An example of such a purchase are the calves pictured in the photo above, descendants of Pennwood Leader Rocklyn EX-95. Sired by Mr Chassity Gold Chip-ET and Toc-Farm Goldsun, the calves are out of a VG-85 Mesland Duplex daughter of Rocklyn, who was purchased as a choice.

Jan's motto is, "you can always learn!" She attributes some of her success to the influence other successful people have had on some of her decisions. She enjoys reading about what others are doing, and trying to put things into practice on her farm that seem to work well for others.

EVER-GREEN-VIEW FARMS

Thomas J. Kestell
Waldo, Wisconsin



Back row: **Chris, Tom and Joel Kestell**
Front row: **Jennifer Benzschawel, Gin Kestell holding grandson Ethan, and Julie Kestell**

**3-YEAR
HONOREE**

73.4% Homebred
Average Classification Score: 83.6
ME Averages: 34,199M 1,354F 1,038P

With over 50 years of experience in the Registered Holstein business, Tom Kestell's motto at Ever-Green-View Farms is, "Where dreams come true." Pursuing his dream, Tom and family milk 86 cows three times a day in their tiestall barn in eastern Wisconsin. Their hard work and dedication to consistency has paid off; in addition to being multi-year Herd of Excellence honorees, Ever-Green-View has received the Progressive Genetics Herd award for 21 years, and earned Progressive Breeders Registry recognition for 12 years. The herd is enrolled in Holstein COMPLETE.

Tom employs a progressive breeding strategy to capitalize on the quality genetics his herd possesses, and to ensure genetic gain generation after generation. They are genomic testing many calves, but Tom is quick to emphasize that it is used as a "starting tool," not as a final decision. He says, "In order to stay in business, you have to change as things change." This has led to utilizing more genomic young sires to help them remain competitive. He seeks out bulls who come from proven cow families, with strong maternal lines and a sire stack he admires.

Kestell believes strongly that "you get what you breed for," and because of that, his breeding program revolves around high fat and protein, balanced with high milk production and good udders. A few of the bulls currently being used on the farm are Rickland Predestine 669-ET, Seagull-Bay Supersire-ET and Val-Bisson Doorman-ET. He does an extensive amount of flushing, and last year made 3,000 embryos, the majority of which were exported.

Tom credits consistency in all areas of their operation as a key to keeping their cows performing at a high level. "We have always had consistent goals for both production and type," said Tom. "We are not breeding for show type, but for very functional type, yet never taking production out of the equation." He also advises, "You have to decide where you want to go and stick with it. It's important to stay focused on your breeding goals and not jump around." He has also been blessed with good help through the years, including one son who is currently farming with him. Finally, he feels that their steady supply of quality feed has been beneficial for the cows. Tom is excited for the future of the Holstein breed, and feels there is no limit to the potential of what can be achieved for herd averages.

MAINSTREAM HOLSTEINS

Randy W. Kortus
Lynden, Washington



Jana, Melissa, Randy and Mike Kortus

**4-YEAR
HONOREE**

100% Homebred
Average Classification Score: 83.2
ME Averages: 34,662M 1,472F 1,030P

Randy Kortus has come a long way since obtaining his first Registered calf as a 4-H project heifer, and today he and his family milk around 80 cows twice a day on their dairy, over half of which are Registered Holsteins. The majority of the herd is housed in freestalls and milked in a 30-stall flatbarn parlor. Mainstream Holsteins is enrolled in the COMPLETE program and uses Official Holstein ear tags. They have received the Progressive Genetics Herd award for 22 years.

Breeding for high TPI values and milk production have always been at the top of Randy's breeding program focus. Current sires include a mix of bulls, such as De-Su Observer-ET, Ladys-Manor PI Shamrock-ET, Maple-Downs-I G W Atwood-ET, Minnigan-Hills Day-ET, Moutfield SSI Dcy Mogul-ET and his brother, Mixer, and S-S-I Domain Lithium-ET. They are currently doing some genomic testing of both males and females on their farm to aid in breeding and marketing decisions.

Kortus mentions a few bulls who have worked very well for them and had an overall positive influence with several milking daughters in the herd today, including TPI greats Ensenada Taboo Planet-ET, De-Su Observer-ET and De-Su 521 Bookem-ET. However, they also have some homebred animals who have been star performers and are worth special mention. On the male side, many will recognize Mainstream Manifold, who is currently #12 on the April 2013 Top 100 TPI list, and one of the older bulls on the list, with daughters in over 1,300 herds included in his proof. Looking at the female side, one cow easily comes to the top of Randy's mind, Mainstream OR Candace-ET, sired by Deslacs Offroad-ET. She is classified 2E-93, with a +1946 GTPI and is the top cow in Washington State for 365-day fat production in three age divisions. Further, she is a Dam of Merit with several sons in AI. Candace boasts a lifetime milk production record, in three lactations, of 156,140 pounds of milk, average 4.8 percent fat and 3.0 percent protein.

Like some of our other honorees, Randy feels that a major key to his success is having drive and providing consistency in all areas of their operation, saying he likes to "find out what's working, and go with it." He is proud to have his family share his passion for detail and care for their cattle. Randy and his wife, Jana, have four children: Melissa, Mike, Mark and Matt.

MAPLELANE-MANOR FARM

Benjamin F. & Carolyn A. Turner
Apulia Station, New York



**John Young, Maplelane-Manor Front Hon,
Carolyn Turner and Jay Liddington**

**3-YEAR
HONOREE**

95.5% Homebred
Average Classification Score: 83.0
ME Averages: 33,656M 1,301F 1,075P

Passion and dedication are two words that can be used to describe Ben and Carolyn Turner of Maplelane-Manor Farm. The couple built their 120-cow tiestall barn in 1982, and Maplelane-Manor Farm was officially born. Ben is a long-time veterinarian who enjoys encouraging young dairymen in the region and working with people to develop practices to improve their operations. Carolyn works on the farm full-time, and is widely known for her support of youth.

John Young, Carolyn's son, is the herd's main manager, and Turner is quick to emphasize that it is a team operation. "Our major thing is just working together, and we are blessed to have outstanding help." Local high school students can frequently be found in the barn assisting with milking and other chores part-time. Her philosophy is to "get kids working and keep them out of trouble," all while developing life skills that will serve them well into the future. "Having a good team and the young people around makes it a very pleasant place to work," she adds.

The Turners' breeding philosophy revolves around strong, balanced cows with both type and production, possessing the width and power necessary to last, with beautiful udders. Carolyn says, "We are just out to do a good job, not set any records. It all just seems to come together." Despite her humble nature, Maplelane-Manor has earned numerous recognitions throughout the years, including being named the 2012 Active Master Breeders by the New York Holstein Association. Thirty-five Excellent cows carry the farm's prefix, with the highest at EX-94, Maplelane-Manor Durham Dori. They have also bred 13 Gold Medal Dams and 4 Dams of Merit.

Maplelane-Manor holds numerous New York state production records for milk, fat and protein production on twice a day milking, along with boasting one of the highest rolling herd averages in the state. Two cows they owned, Greenhillacres Toystory Jen and Maplelane-Manor Com-Leader currently hold National Milk and Protein production records in their respective age divisions.