

## Jersey—The World's Choice

The Jersey breed has been growing in dairy herds across the globe, especially over the past decade. The same advantages that contribute to breed growth domestically—greater feed and reproductive efficiencies, longer herd life and a smaller carbon footprint in the production of cheese—support increased demand for Jersey genetics in other parts of the world as well.

Though climates, economies and governances vary tremendously, dairy producers from Argentina to Zimbabwe are increasingly switching to Jerseys to operate more profitable dairies. The Jersey breed is poised to capitalize on the challenges that come from shrinking agricultural land bases, growing populations, stricter regulations and increased pressure to produce dairy products in a responsible manner.

To give readers a better feel for how dairy producers in other parts of the world manage their Jersey herds, the *Jersey Journal* is publishing a two-part international roundtable. The series will feature Jersey producers from each of the five regions of the World Jersey Cattle Bureau (WJCB). The North American and European regions will be included in the April issue; the African, Asia/Oceanic and Latin American regions will be highlighted in the May issue.

The WJCB is an organization comprised of national Jersey breed societies and associations that are either members, associate members or affiliated members as well as individual lifetime members.

The organization was founded in 1951, in part, to encourage good will and cooperation and to generate research, promotion, education and coordination between individuals and organizations involved in enhancing the Jersey breed in all parts of the world. It also has an objective to encourage and support individuals and organizations to discover, develop and utilize improved methods of breeding, feeding and management under varied agricultural conditions and by the use of the Jersey breed in the most constructive manner.

The WJCB is governed by a president (currently Derrick Frigot of the Isle of Jersey), a vice president from each of the five regions, a secretary (currently Roger Tewhella of the United Kingdom) and a treasurer (currently Stephen Le Feuvre), who must be a resident of

the Isle of Jersey. The president and vice presidents are elected by the WJCB. The secretary and treasurer are appointed by the WJCB Council, which is comprised of the previously mentioned officers, two delegates from each national member and an observer from each associate member or affiliated member.

Each year, the WJCB holds a three-week conference in a different part of the world. This year's meeting will be held in Europe, with events kicked off in Dublin, Ireland, on June 3 and finishing on the Isle of Jersey on June 22. This year's trip will conclude with celebrations marking the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the Jersey Herd Book, the oldest dairy herd book in the world

### Featured Herds

**Steven and Claire Bland, Clifton Jerseys, Abbott Lodge, United Kingdom:** The Blands operate Abbott Lodge in Penrith, Cumbria, on rented land that is part of the Lowther Estate in northern England. Their children, Robert and Lizzie, will be brought into the partnership this year. When the Blands lost their Holstein-Friesian herd to foot and mouth disease in 2001, they opted to re-stock with Registered Jerseys and also add value to their product by making and selling their own ice cream on the farm. The Clifton Jerseys herd of 300 cows and 200 heifers is managed by the Blands and two full-time farm employees and a student. The ice cream store is manned by several part-time staff members. The farm is operated on 230 acres of land with additional acreage rented for summer grazing. Abbott Lodge will be a host farm for the WJCB Conference this summer. Steven is a director for UK Jerseys, responsible for shows, judges and type classification.

**Paul Houze, Lodge Farm, St. Saviour, Isle of Jersey:** Houze is the principal director of Lodge Farm, which has been in his family for three generations. Today, he operates the farm with his daughter, Becky, who completed her agricultural degree in 2015 and plans to assume full responsibility of the business in the coming years. The Houzes milk 220 cows and raise 110 heifers, some of which are exported to the UK. They also finish 30 Jersey-Angus crosses



Steven and Claire Bland and their children, Robert and Lizzie, operate Abbott Lodge, home of Clifton Jerseys, in northern England. The Blands produce ice cream from the 300-cow herd and sell it to consumers through an on-farm tea room.



Lodge Farm, operated by Paul Houze and his daughter, Becky, is one of 24 herds on the Island of Jersey. The Lodge Farm Registered Jersey herd is 220 cows and 110 heifers. The Houzes also raise 30 Jersey-Angus crosses for local beef sales.



The Moreys—Tracy, David, Lee and Casey—operate Unique Valleystream Genetics in northwestern Canada. The couple started dairying with Holsteins and switched to Jerseys after doing their own on-farm research trials to compare the breeds.

each year for local beef sales. The farm is 550 verges, an old feudal measurement used on the Island. Since one acre equals 2.25 verges, Lodge Farm is about 244 acres.

**David and Tracy Morey, Unique Valleystream Genetics, Canada:** The Moreys operate Unique Valleystream Genetics with their children, Casey, 22, and Lee, 20, and three full-time employees in Rochester, Alberta. With 250 cows and 350 heifers, the Registered Jersey herd is the largest in Canada. David and Tracy began farming in 1992 with the purchase of 46 Holstein cows and 480 acres of land. Shortly thereafter, they expanded the herd to 120 cows and introduced a handful of Jerseys to the milking string. The Moreys were impressed with the brown cows, so transitioned the herd to half Holstein, half Jersey in 1994 and conducted their own research trials to compare the performance of the breeds. The results were conclusive, so subsequent expansions were exclusively Jersey. In 2004, they purchased Valleystream Jerseys lock, stock and barrel—cows, heifers, calves, embryos, semen and prefix—and moved the well-known herd from Ontario to Alberta. The Moreys



Martin Schuler, third right, operates Interfarm, Switzerland's largest Jersey dairy, with his parents, Bruno and Rita, center. The Schulers get help with the farm from Selina, Martin's partner, second right, and her daughter, Eileen, far right, and staff members, from left, Nasko, Ion, Valeriu, Cristin, Vladimir, and Guiliana, fourth right.



### European Region

*Members: Denmark, the Isle of Jersey, Switzerland, the United Kingdom.*  
*Associate Members: Czech Republic, France, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden.*  
*Affiliate Members: Ireland, Italy.*

In this region, the Jersey population is estimated to be about 200,000 cows, with the largest concentrations in Denmark (70,000 cows), the U.K. (30,000 cows) and Albania (15,000 cows). Other breeds milked are Ayrshire, Brown Swiss, Fleckvieh, Guernsey, Holstein, Montbeliarde, Normande, Norwegian Red, Shorthorn and Viking Red.

On the Isle of Jersey, there is only one breed of dairy cow—the Jersey—and just 24 dairy farms. Live cattle have not been imported for more than 200 years. International genetics in the form of embryos and semen have been allowed since 2008, but must meet stringent pedigree standards.

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### North American Region

*Members: Canada, Costa Rica, Guatemala, the United States.*  
*Associate Member: Mexico.*  
*Affiliate Members: Nicaragua, Panama.*

Outside the U.S., the largest concentration of Jerseys is in Canada, with about 38,000 cows and 18,000 heifers. Holstein is the predominant breed, accounting for 93% of the national dairy herd, while Jersey ranks second at 4%. Ayrshire, Brown Swiss, Guernsey, Milking Shorthorn and Canadienne cattle are also milked.

Jersey farms are as diverse as the climate in Canada, which is temperate on both coasts and ranges from hot and dry in the summer to extremely cold in the winter on the plains. Ontario Jersey herds average 52 head, while Quebec Jersey herds average 26 head. In Western Canada, there are fewer, yet larger herds, averaging 100 head. Nearly all dairy farms are family owned.

"The Jersey breed has grown steadily in Canada

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## European Region

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In other countries across Europe, Jerseys represent about 1% of the region's 24 million dairy cows. In Denmark, Jerseys account for 14% of the national dairy herd and have an average herd size of 185 cows—20 more than Holstein. Jersey herds in Albania milk 2-4 cows on average. In Russia, the largest Jersey dairy milks more than 2,000 cows.

"Growth of the Jersey breed has been strong over the past decade, especially in France, Holland and Eastern Europe," commented Peter Larson, executive secretary for Danish Jerseys. "More heifers have been exported to Eastern Europe in recent years as their economies develop and investors, some from Western Europe, see Jersey advantages for developing and expanding dairy plants."

"In the more developed countries of the region, demand for Jerseys has grown primarily because the breed is better adapted to environmental restrictions (nitrogen and phosphorus production) placed on production per cow and kilo of milk produced and use

of medications and antibiotics," Larson continued.

In these countries, with some of the world's highest costs of operation from labor, housing, veterinary costs and other services, the Jersey offers a financial edge for her owners as well with more production per hectare, livestock unit or cow.

Among the challenges dairy producers in the region face is to become competitive pricewise in the global market without government subsidies. Since April 2015, when the European Union (EU) abolished the quota system, milk production has been rising and milk price declining.

Dairy cooperatives (mostly farmer-owned) are developing new and specialized products not just for consumption, but also for use in medical, cosmetic and other industries. As well, many dairy producers are now processing their own products on the farm to capitalize on this demand and better their income. In the mountain areas in central and southern Europe, there is a long tradition of cheese production on the farm. In France, Holland, Italy, Switzerland

and England, it is common for dairies to produce their own cheese and ice cream.

Herd management services for Jersey breeders in the European region are very diverse. National Jersey organizations have been established for breeders in the Czech Republic, Denmark, France, Germany, Holland, Ireland, the Isle of Jersey, Italy, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, and the U.K. All are members of the European Jersey Forum established in 2009. Jersey breeders have access to registration, tags, performance programs, mating programs, milk marketing and cattle marketing assistance through these organizations or other dairy breed associations. In some countries, services are provided by national cattle federations.

Genetic evaluations are available in some countries, but not all. As well, some of the available genetic evaluations are based on other breeds and not Jersey-specific. Among the focuses of the European Jersey Forum is the development of a common breeding value estimation and classification system.

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## North American Region

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over the past 15 years," noted Kathryn Roxburgh, vice president of the North American region and general manager for Jersey Canada. "In 2000, one in 30 herds on official test had at least one Jersey in the barn. By 2014, that number grew to one in six herds. Of particular note is the explosive growth of the Jersey population in the province of Quebec, which has doubled since 2006."

"Jersey's growth ultimately boils down to remarkable efficiency," Roxburgh continued. "For new farmers, the Jersey's small body size means they can start milking in an existing, older facility and avoid the expense of renovating old stalls to fit a larger cow. Others introduce Jerseys to help manage their overall solids-not-fat ratio. Reproductive and health traits are also a draw, as Jerseys get in-calf quickly and calve easily, reducing labor required for repeat breedings and assisted calvings.

"From an environmental perspective, Jerseys produce 55% less phosphorus per kilogram of manure. This plays a significant role in farm nutrient management plans.

"Overall the greatest appeal is that a Jersey cow requires less water and feed, smaller area for housing, and fewer veterinary expenses per kilogram of solids produced compared to other breeds. This means a lower initial investment, netting a higher profit in the end."

A shift in the Canadian consumer's attitude toward butterfat, with unprecedented growth in butter and yogurt sales, offers additional growth opportunities for the breed as more fat and less water is shipped from Jersey farms.

Jersey Canada registers about 9,000 animals a year. The organization also facilitates genomic testing, manages breed awards, publishes The Jersey Breeder magazine and maintains digital communications. Jersey breeders can purchase iden-

tification tags through National Livestock Identification for Dairy (NLID) or Agri-Traceabilite Quebec Inc. and classify cows through a multi-breed program administered by Holstein Canada. Two agencies provide official milk testing services: CanWest DHI and Valacta.

"In Canada, milk is marketed through a supply management system that provides more stable prices than the world market," commented Roxburgh. "Producers manage their production on a quota, which is based on national demand for dairy products (minus imports) and expressed to them as kilograms of butterfat production per day.

"This stability enables dairy farmers to be 100% self-sufficient without relying on government subsidy for income security. Supply management also balances market power in the situation we have today, where close to 12,000 producers are shipping 80% of their milk to three major processors."

grow crops on the farm's 2,750 acres and an additional 400 acres of rented land.

**Martin Schuler, Interfarm GmbH, Switzerland:** Since 2013, Schuler has been operating Interfarm GmbH on a farm in Hunenberg that was purchased by his great-grandfather in 1944. His parents, Bruno and Rita Schuler-Schoepfer, milked Brown Swiss and first incorporated Jerseys in the milking string in 2003. Today, the herd is fully-Jersey and the country's largest with 250 cows and 150 heifers. Bruno and Martin are responsible for feeding and breeding the cows and harvesting crops from the 20-hectare (49 acres) farm. Other daily tasks, such as milking and heifer care, are carried out by six employees from Eastern Europe. Martin's partner, Selina, and her sister manage the household. Interfarm provides board and lodging for all employees. Martin is one of the founders of Swiss Jersey Night, the country's largest Jersey show, and received the WJCB JETA Award in 2014.

### Questions

*What is the production of your herd?*

**Bland:** Our herd is currently producing 6,300 liters (14,310 lbs.), with components of 5.6% fat and 3.9% protein.

**Houze:** Our current rolling average is 6,323 kgs. milk (13,911 lbs.), with components of 5.97% fat and 3.62% protein.

**Morey:** For years, we have worked on a kilograms fat/cow/day basis as we are paid on components alone. Our current production stands at 1.2 kgs. (2.6 lbs.) fat/cow/day, with a goal of 1.4 kgs. fat/cow/day. Component tests are 5.2% fat and 3.95% protein. Our Jersey milk is shipped at a premium of 15-17 cents per liter over our Holstein milk.

**Schuler:** Our herd average for 2014/2015 was 5,957 kgs. milk (13,105 lbs.), with components of 5.43% fat and 3.84% protein in 300 days. Breed average for Jersey herds in Switzerland for the same time period was 5,642 kgs. milk, (12,412 lbs.) with tests of 5.26% fat and 3.87% protein.

*Describe your milking facilities.*

**Bland:** Cows are milked in a 22:22 herringbone parlor that is fully automated.

**Houze:** We milk in a 14:28 swing-over herringbone parlor with milk meters and automatic identification and recording.

**Morey:** We had been milking cows in the free stall barn through three Lely robots and cows in the tie stall barn (show cows and high genetic merit cows) through a double-12 herringbone parlor. In 2014, we began milking cows in the tie stall barn through an additional Lely robot to reduce labor requirements while our children attended college.

**Schuler:** Cows are milked three times a day in a 20-point, swing-over parlor imported from New Zealand in 2009. The system does not include automatic cluster removal, milk metering or feeding. Last year, we installed three-way selection that is coupled with a heat detection system so we can separate cows that are ready for insemination.



Veile is a "Lemvig" daughter in the Interfarm herd of 250 cows in Hunenberg, Switzerland. She was one of the Schuler's first Jersey purchases and has developed into a tremendous brood cow.

*Describe your housing facilities for milking cows.*

**Bland:** Cows are housed in cubicles bedded with rubber mats and sawdust.

**Houze:** During the winter months, cows are housed in free stalls with rubber mats and bedded with sawdust. They are pastured day and night from April through October.



U.S. genetics have worked well in the Clifton Jerseys herd in Penrith, Cumbria. Among the standouts is Clifton Tequila Bracken, above, who was named All Britain Junior Heifer in Milk in 2015.

**Morey:** We have three milking cow setups: free stalls, a straw-bedded pack and tie stalls for show cows and high genetic merit cows. The tie stall barn is a modified free stall facility. All facilities are insulated, but not heated, and rely on cow body heat for heat during the winter. Our calf barn, tank room and office, though, are heated.

**Schuler:** Cows are housed in a free stall barn with 120 cubicles with rubber mats bedded with wood chips. The facility was built in 1981 and is continually being expanded. Cows are also bedded with a

wood-based compost that is made in the old pigsty.

*Describe the ration for your milking cows.*

**Bland:** The herd is grazed throughout the day from April to October. The winter ration is grass silage, whole crop barley silage and a protein blend fed as a semi-TMR that is topped up in the parlor.

**Houze:** The herd is grazed during the summer and fed corn silage, soybean and canola meal, haylage bales, Megalac (rumen bypass fat) and a wheat-based concentrate with minerals in the parlor. Cows are also offered a corn silage and hay silage mix ad lib between evening and morning milkings.

**Morey:** Our ration is a partial TMR because we have a pel-

let ration going through the robot that supplements the ration based on levels of production. The TMR consists of barley silage, alfalfa baleage, barley grain and a mineral-protein custom pellet.

**Schuler:** All cows are fed a TMR consisting of grass silage, sugar beet pulp silage, distiller's dried grains with solubles (DDGS), oats, straw and mineral nutrients. Cattle are also grazed during the vegetation period.

*Do you grow your own feed or purchase it?*

**Bland:** We grow our own forages for grass silage and whole crop silage, but also purchase some of each as well.

**Houze:** We grow all our bulk forages and some wheat. All other concentrates are purchased from the U.K.

**Morey:** We grow all our own forages and grains (barley and alfalfa) and purchase the mineral-protein pack for the TMR and the pellet that goes through the robots. Wheat and canola are grown as cash crops.

**Schuler:** Cattle graze on our own pastures. We purchase grass silage as bales as well as other additional feed.

*Describe your housing facilities for your heifers.*

**Bland:** Heifers are raised in pens, bedded with straw and fed big bale silage. They are pastured in the summer.

**Houze:** Calves are raised in hutches from birth through weaning at 12 weeks-of-age. They are then moved into group pens and bedded with straw. When they are 32 weeks-of-age, they will be either be put on pasture with supplementary feed (summer)

or raised in the straw yards (winter) until spring. Heifers will remain on pasture until freshening, even in the winter.

**Morey:** We raise calves in 60 insulated Comfy Calf Suites in the calf barn, which also has a weaning pen in the back. Weaned heifers are moved to an uninsulated heifer barn. When they are nine-months-old, they are moved to a pre-breeding pen, where they are introduced to silage. Year-old heifers are then moved to a breeding pen.

**Schuler:** Heifers are kept in bedded stalls in the winter and on pasture during the vegetation period.

*Describe your newborn calf practices.*

**Bland:** Newborns stay with their dams for 24 hours. Their navels are dipped and they are fed a calf nutritional paste and given an injection of vitamins A, D and E to boost immunity. They are housed in individual pens for two weeks and then in group pens with an automatic feeder until they are eight weeks old. Calves wear jackets during the colder months.

**Houze:** Newborns are removed from their dams as soon as possible and fed 2-3 liters (2-3 quarts) of colostrum. When they are dry, they are moved to a sterilized, freshly-bedded hutch. Some smaller animals are fitted with a calf coat. Calves are fed twice a day with colostrum for four days then transitioned to slightly diluted whole milk. Concentrate pellets are introduced at seven days-of-age.

**Morey:** Cold weather is a huge issue for us, so we give special attention to our calves in the winter. Since we've been farming, temps have dipped to -53° C; -40° C (-40° F) is very common. Newborns are removed from their dams immediately and given two bags of Headstart colostrum (120 grams IgG), a First Defense bolus, Enforce 3 intranasal and an injection of selenium. They remain on Headstart colostrum for five feedings and then be transferred to pasteurized milk. Calves are weaned when they are three months-of-age in warmer weather and at four months-of-age during cold winter months. The weaning pen is at the back of our insulated calf barn.

**Schuler:** Newborn calves are given colostrum during the first three hours of birth using the coloQuick colostrum management system. They are raised in

igloos from day one until they are weaned at three months old. The igloos are set on wood chips and bedded with straw. Calves are fed Jersey milk three times a day up to nine liters (9.5 quarts) per day. They are also given a feed mix (corn, wheat, barley, oats, dextrose, canola, potato protein and minerals, with 30% alfalfa hay) and an unlimited

than 1% of calves. We firmly believe in feeding milk slightly diluted (5:1) at 37° C (98.6° F).

**Morey:** We do not feed milk replacer. We feed whole milk. We purchased a Holm & Laue Milk Taxi this past November.

**Schuler:** We do not feed milk replacer because milk is more attractive at current prices.

*Do you have a pasteurizer for feeding milk to newborns?*

**Houze:** On the Island, we are effectively free of many diseases. We have never seen brucellosis, tuberculosis, leptospirosis, BVD and IBR. We understand Johne's disease has occurred here, but many Island farms have never seen a clinical case. All milking cows are screened for Johne's every year. If a cow tests positive, she is retested and if the second test is positive, she is culled.

**Morey:** We purchased a Holm & Laue Milk Taxi this past November so we could maximize the use of waste milk while providing a consistent, disease-controlled product for the next generation of our milking string.

*Do you have a healthy market for newborn bull calves?*

**Bland:** No.

**Houze:** No, sadly.

**Morey:** We have a healthy market for bull calves from April through December. Our market is families that wish to raise calves for a variety of reasons. However, we refuse to sell bull calves in the winter because most of our customers do not have the proper facilities to raise newborn Jersey calves in cold weather. It is common here for temps to dip to -40° C during the winter months, so it takes a high level of management to successfully raise calves in our winters.

**Schuler:** No. Bull calves are slaughtered to make sausage meat from 10 days old.

*Describe your herd health practices.*

**Bland:** We have operated a closed herd for 15 years and have very few problems requiring routine vet checks. We find that Jerseys are very healthy cows. Disease monitoring is done through milk samples; we will vaccinate if necessary. All cows are fluked at drying off and treated with antibiotic dry cow therapy. Our rolling SCC is 120,000. The milking herd uses a footbath weekly. We also take dung samples from heifers to determine if a wormer is neces-



The Blands of Cumbria, U.K., sell ice cream off the farm to consumers through the Abbott Lodge tea room, a circular building that had been used as a horse engine house and calf barn. The family has been processing milk from the Registered Jersey herd since 2008 and today offers 40 flavors of the rich, creamy delicacy.



Among the favorites at Unique Valleystream Genetics in Alberta, Canada, is Unique Habit J Lo, VG 87 (CAN), with 22,732 lbs. milk, 1,265 lbs. fat and 972 lbs. protein at 4-3. She is sired by a bull bred by the Moreys, Unique VS Habit, a "Rocket" son out of their "Honey" family.

amount of water. An animal protection law in Switzerland mandates we feed hay to baby calves.

*Do you feed milk replacer? If so, is it special for Jerseys?*

**Bland:** Yes, we feed milk replacer. And while we would like to feed milk replacer designed for Jerseys, it is not available in the U.K.

**Houze:** Having experienced too many problems with various milk replacers, we feed high SCC milk, not milk from treatment cows or clinical mastitic cows. We experience very few issues and lose less

sary.

**Houze:** We belong to a herd health certification association, so, together with European Union regulations, we are regularly tested for all major diseases. We have a monthly vet visit to review problems and treatments. No vaccinations are required. Heifers are given a pulse release anthelmintic prior to being put out at pasture to protect them from stomach worms and lungworm. Some dairies administer liver fluke treatments as well. We occasionally use a pour-on wormer on adult animals, but that is rare. Milking cows are foot-bathed twice a month. Antibiotic dry cow therapy is used on cows with SCCs over 80,000; Boviseal is used for cows under that mark. Our rolling average for SCC is 94,000.

**Morey:** I (Tracy) am an animal health technologist and David has a strong skill set in palpation. So, we have done the majority of our own herd health tasks. Over the years, I have taken care of everything veterinary in nature—vaccination and treatment protocols, parturition, etc. David has dealt with everything regarding reproduction—pregnancy checks, embryo implants, etc.

When our children left for college, we set up a monthly program with the local veterinarian for routine pregnancy checks and health concerns. But, we still do the majority of our own veterinary work in-house and have learned to do everything as simply as possible.

Dry cows are dry treated with Spectramast DC and vaccinated with Scour Bos 9, Vira Shield 6, J-Vac and an eight-way clostridial (blackleg is a huge concern in our area). Pregnancy checking is done once every five weeks, with David covering anything that needs to be dealt with in-between.

**Schuler:** Calves are vaccinated against ringworm. Cows are vaccinated with Rotavec, Corona and treated with the drying agent Orbenin when they are dried off. We recently began administering the internal teat sealant Orbesal at dry-off as well. We try to carry out hoof care as often as possible and give priority to animals with problems or those that have not been checked the longest. We began vaccinating all animals against pink eye this year as well after we became aware of the condition two years ago. Our TMR always contains mycotoxin binders as a preventative measure because we feed a lot of DDGS.

*At what age/weight do you begin to breed heifers?*

**Bland:** 13 months.

**Houze:** 280 kgs. (616 lbs.).

**Morey:** We typically start breeding heifers at 12 months but will sometimes breed



Prides OT Lucky Isis, one of the promising young cows at Lodge Farm on the Isle of Jersey, sired by Lencrest On Time-ET.

them at 11 months if they are large enough.

**Schuler:** We start insemination at 9-10 months-of-age, regardless of weight.

*What is your average age at first calving?*

**Bland:** 24 months over the past four years

**Houze:** 26 months.

**Morey:** 22.5 months.

**Schuler:** 20.9 months.

*What is your calving interval?*

**Bland:** 390 days.

**Houze:** 383 days.

**Morey:** 13 months (about 395 days).

**Schuler:** 412 days.

*What traits are most important for selection of service sires?*

**Bland:** Milk yield, fat %, and then udder index and type.

**Houze:** a.) milkable udder; b.) balanced production (milk/fat); c.) good fertility; and d.) longevity.

**Morey:** Balance is always the underlying theme for choosing sires. Though we watch production traits, type traits must be strong, with particular emphasis on udders and feet and legs.

**Schuler:** Polled, beta-casein A2A2 and kappa-casein BB.

*What bulls are you currently using as service sires?*

**Bland:** Bridon Excitation, GJPI -104; Chilli Action Colton-ET, GJPI +26; ISAU Broadlin AussieGold-P-ET, GJPI +22; Rock Ella Impression-ET, GJPI -117; Steinhauers Samson Lemonhead, GJPI +168; Sunset Canyon Dignitary-ET, GJPI +148; and Sunset Canyon Dimension-ET, GJPI +201.

**Houze:** "Colton;" Buttercrest Success-ET, GJPI +35; Dutch Hollow Oliver-P, GJPI +104; Gabys Chronicle-ET, GJPI +109; Guimo Joel-ET, GJPI +36; and River Valley Cece Chrome-ET, GJPI +122.

**Morey:** Currently in our show group, we use Heartland Merchant Topeka-ET, GJPI +26, Roseys Tequila Roman, GJPI -104,

River Valley Magic Genie-ET, GJPI +21, and Tower Vue Prime Tequila-ET, GJPI -166. In our mainstream herd, we are using "Joel," All Lynns Valentino Irwin-ET, GJPI +114, Glynn Headline News-ET, GJPI +89; IGL Santana Torpedo-ET, GJPI +118, Sunset Canyon David-ET, GJPI +146, Sunset Canyon Jordache-ET, GJPI +136, and Vermalar Bruce-ET, GJPI +47.

**Schuler:** Miracle-PP-ET, a German bull sired by DK Miro-P and out of a homozygous polled daughter of Dutch Hollow Brendon-P-ET, GJPI -58.

*Have you used North American genetics? If so, what bulls are most influential in your herd?*

**Bland:** "Tequila" has given us type. Among his daughters in our herd is Clifton Tequila Bracken, who was named All Britain Junior Heifer in Milk in 2015. "Excitation," SC Gold Dust Paramount Iatola-ET, GJPI +22, SHF Centurion Sultan, GJPI -5, and Sooner Centurion-ET, GJPI -52, have also done well in our herd.

**Houze:** Since 2008, we have mainly used North American genetics with very good results. The three bulls who have made the most impact are "Iatola," "Sultan" and Forest Glen Avery Action-ET, GJPI -2.

**Morey:** We have used lots of U.S. genetics over the years. In the past, Rock Ella Paramount-ET, GJPI +6, and Windy Willow Montana Jace, GJPI +30, worked well here. Recently, "Irwin" and "Topeka" have been particularly influential for us. We have also enjoyed our daughters of "News" and Sunset Canyon Machete-ET, GJPI +195. In the calf barn, we are very pleased with our daughters of "Chrome," Chilli Chavez-ET, GJPI +30 and Wilsonview IF Matt, GJPI +99.

Canada's former #1 cow for LPI was a "Paramount" daughter from the Duncan Belle cow family. Lencrest Par For Belle, VG 85 (CAN), led the pre-genomic evaluations for a record 4.5 years and has several sons in A.I. Her descendants are mainstays in our barn. Among them is a VG 88 "Tequila" granddaughter we will show this spring.

**Schuler:** We've been pleased with daughters of All Lynns Louie Valentino-ET, GJPI +132, Dutch Hollow Dalton-P-ET, GJPI +63, Dutch Hollow Motivation-PP, GJPI +25, Dutch Hollow Oliver-P, GJPI +104, Fairway Mygent Dallas-PP, GJPI -47, Golden Dream Critic Maverick-P, GJPI +83, and Golden Dream Lovabull Armani-P-ET, GJPI +35.

*Do you consider genomic evaluations for sires? If so, why?*

**Bland:** We have used some genomic sires, but there are few choices of them in

the U.K. I believe this tool will be of great benefit when it becomes more widely-available.

**Houze:** Yes. They are an important piece of the puzzle. However, I do not get too excited about composite scores. The genomic linear predictions offer such a great insight to help prevent a bad match and improve the next generation. We use aAa scoring too (please briefly explain this). All information on sires is important and should be used wisely to create the herd that is most profitable in the situation it exists. Here at Lodge Farm, we need cows to convert grass and corn into milk, get back in-calf for several lactations and tolerate the wind and rain that sometimes arises. Others will have other goals. Luckily, we are blessed with a breed that is diverse in qualities.

**Morey:** Yes. We consider genomic evaluations on sires quite heavily because we tend to use about 40% young sires in our herd.

**Schuler:** Yes, we consider genomic evaluations because there are not enough progeny-tested polled bulls available.

*Have you genotyped your animals? If so, how do you use genomic evaluations to manage females?*

**Bland:** No, because genotyping is not readily available for Jerseys in the U.K.

**Houze:** Not yet!

**Morey:** Yes. We genotype about a third of our herd and recently developed a plan to test open heifers on a monthly basis. Those results are used for mating purposes, embryo sales and potential bull matings. When purchasing, we insist on seeing genomic results.

**Schuler:** No, because there is no specific market for tested Jersey cattle in Switzerland. We are unable to export bulls or genetics to attractive markets.

*Describe your milk marketing situation.*

**Bland:** Quotas were discontinued in the U.K. in April 2015 and processors are now putting limits on production, with penalties



Unique Stock Farm is Canada's largest Registered Jersey herd with 250 milking cows and 350 heifers. The Moreys use U.S. genetics extensively in their breeding program, which includes about 40% young sires. They are also heavy users of genotyping and currently test about 30% of the herd..

for over production. At Abbott Lodge, we make more than 40 flavors of ice cream on the farm and sell direct to consumers. We also sell the bulk of our milk to Grahams, the Family Dairy, which uses it for Graham's Gold, their premium product made exclusively from Jersey milk.

**Houze:** Since the Island is small and we milk less than 3,000 cows, virtually all the farms market through one, farmer-owned cooperative. Each farm has an allocated production quota based on historic production and milk quality. The total quota is market driven. The first call on milk sales is our local market. Fluid milk, butter, yogurt, cream and ice cream are important; cheese is less important due to immense competition in that market. Exports of ice cream and ultra-high-temperature milk with extended shelf-life are providing new opportunities. All our marketing promotes our product as being high-quality and reliable. That starts at the farm level, with low bacteria counts, low SCCs and good component scores.

**Morey:** We are on a fat-based quota system. Presently, our milk is all pooled and our milk marketing board determines how and where our milk is delivered. We have no control and no connection to any particular plants. As a result of this, there are no Jersey-specific products in our province of Alberta, which is definitely something that we need to address in the future. Quota in Alberta is presently trading at about \$37,500/kgs./day.

**Schuler:** We sell our milk to a distributor, who then sells it to a milk powder factory. Switzerland abolished milk quotas in 2009, a step that had been long overdue in my view. Our milk has also been used specifically for yogurt production since 2015. We plan to expand this business and also make our own yogurt in the future.

*If you process your own products, how long have you been doing this and why did you begin doing it?*

**Bland:** We began making our own ice cream shortly after getting the Jerseys in June 2002 to add value to our milk.

**Morey:** We may look at on farm processing in the future when, or if, our children return back to the farm.

**Schuler:** We are in the process of setting up our own processing business. Our Jersey milk is worth more than we get for it currently. Jersey milk generates higher returns; we produce a premium product, not a cheap one. We need to have a greater share of the value chain and develop our own professional brand.

*If you process your own products, what do you produce and where are products sold?*

**Bland:** We make ice cream and sell most of it through the Abbott Lodge Tea Room, a circular, horse engine house that was converted a processing plant and farm store when we began making ice cream. We also sell at a select number of outlets, including the gastropub on the Lowther Estate and a tea room on the edge of Ullswater.

**Schuler:** Currently, we produce yogurt and sell it on the farm and in small farm shops.

*Do you sell beef to consumers?*

**Houze:** We sell younger culls direct to private customers. Older animals are sold to a processor for mince. We also raise 50 Jersey-Angus crosses annually for a local butcher. The meat sells really well and we can achieve a good premium over commodity beef.

**Morey:** No, we do not sell any Jersey beef. But, we do consume it ourselves and love its leanness.

**Schuler:** Yes, we sell Jersey beef to a hotel, but only a small number of animals. We also fatten cows for slaughter. Unfortunately, we do not have room for fattening male animals. And, we would first have to create demand for them.

*Do you sell cattle?*

**Bland:** Yes. Most of our sales are private treaty, depending on the purchaser's requirements. We also occasionally consign to auctions.

**Houze:** Yes, we sell cattle privately and consign to sales. We adapt to market conditions. At the moment, marketing cattle in Europe is difficult with depressed milk and beef prices. Selling cattle is one thing, being profitable is another thing. We like to sell between 20-30 head each year.

**Morey:** We have marketed privately and publicly in both Canada and the U.S. and made huge investments in dollars and time to overcome the challenges of selling cattle from remote western Canada. We have consigned cattle to a variety of venues and even had opportunity to set up herds for several local young producers.

Our longstanding partnership with Hillpoint Partners has given us the opportunity to market our genetics in the U.S. As well, we have partnered with several fellow breeders from eastern Canada, which has provided an avenue to market genetics in the country's dairy-concentrated areas.

We have also traveled to shows across Canada, made the 4,500 kilometer (about 2,800 miles) trek to the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair (RAWF) and driven a better part of four days to attend World Dairy Expo to market our genetics. We take the trailer to Cross Plains at least once a year to move cattle between Hillpoint Partners and Unique Valleystream. Among our tan-

bark achievements was showing Avonlea Mischief's Magnolia-ET, SUP-EX 92-4E (CAN), to Intermediate Champion of the RAWF in 2006.

Since our children have been in college, we have put marketing on the back burner while we try to stay on top of the daily responsibilities. We are hopeful that social media will enable us to ramp up our marketing efforts in the near future.

**Schuler:** Yes, we sell as many as possible if the price is right. Quality has its price and if the price is not right, we prefer to slaughter the animal.

*Do you sell bulls as herd sires to other dairy producers?*

**Bland:** Yes, we sell approximately 4-6 bulls each year.

**Houze:** Yes, occasionally we do.

**Morey:** Yes, we sell bulls as herd sires. On average, we move 10-20 breeding bulls per year to other dairy producers. In the past, most were sold to producers wanting an easier calving option for Holstein heifers. But, as of late, most are sold with the intent of crossbreeding to increase milk components.

**Schuler:** No, because there is no market for that.

*How much do cattle sales contribute to your farm income each year?*

**Bland:** Possibly up to 4%.

**Houze:** 6-8%.

**Morey:** Over the past 10 years our cattle sales/embryo sales have contributed 9% of our gross income on average.

**Schuler:** Animals for slaughter and productive livestock together contribute approximately 6.5%.

*Why do you milk Jerseys rather than another breed of dairy cow?*

**Bland:** Jerseys are a better fit for our facilities, which have smaller stalls. We built a new parlor and purchased a new bulk tank in 2005 to upgrade the facilities. However, the barn and stalls are sound and ideally-sized for Jerseys. They are also more efficient and produce the perfect foundation product for our delicious ice cream.

**Houze:** On the Island of Jersey, there is no other dairy breed. And, why should there be?

**Morey:** Economics. When we did our on-farm trials, we were milking an equal number of each breed. We segregated our Holstein and Jersey females to test their performance over three months. We found the Jerseys consumed 2/3 of the feed of their Holstein counterparts, but produced 85% of the fat volume. With less vet costs and these results, the choice was a no-brainer and we began to do a full switch over to Jerseys.

**Schuler:** We milk Jerseys because they



Interfarm has been owned and operated by the Schuler family of Switzerland since 1944. The Schulers have been selling yogurt on a small scale for several months and are now expanding the business to boost farm income.

have greater feed efficiency, faster reproduction, are easier to manage and give us a higher milk price.

*What items make your farm most profitable?*

**Bland:** Milk yield and fat test as this is what our milk price is based on. We do not get paid for protein.

**Houze:** Though milk yield, fat yield and reproduction contribute to profitability, feed conversion is probably most important.

**Morey:** The absolute #1 reason is feed efficiency, as explained earlier. Reproduction in the Jersey is sound as well and a huge advantage, with fewer inseminations, no calving issues and no parturition issues. We have always appreciated good cows of any breed—and still do—but we simply fell in love with the Jersey cow.

**Schuler:** Feed efficiency, reproduction, heifer raising costs and milk components. Because Jerseys have an advantage in feed and reproductive efficiencies, lower rearing costs (cattle mature very early) and produce milk that gives us extra income from fat and protein, they are the breed that makes our farm the most profitable.

*What programs and services do you use from your national Jersey organization?*

**Bland:** We use type classification and pedigree registrations and will probably use genomic testing when it becomes available. We also advertise in the society magazines.

**Houze:** We use everything on offer—registration, classification, genetic information, shows, advertising, social meetings and professional development (lectures).

**Morey:** We use all services available to us—registration, classification and genomic testing.

**Schuler:** Registration and herd testing.

*Describe your methods for permanently identifying your animals.*

**Bland:** In Europe, all bovines are required to be double tagged with a unique herd and animal number. In the U.K., we are required to register a calf with British Cattle

Movement Services (BCMS) within 21 days of birth. BCMS then issues an animal passport that stays with the animal for life. Any movement off the farm requires notification to BCMS. If an animal is moved onto our farm, nothing can be moved off for six days. Animals going to a show would require a total of four movements—off farm, on show grounds, off show grounds and on farm—even if turnaround time is the same day. These regulations were established in the early 1990s, post BSE and foot and mouth disease.

**Houze:** In Europe, all bovine are required to be double ear-tagged. One tag is micro-chipped and can be used for automatic identification in milking parlors, feeders, etc.

**Morey:** We have been registering cattle, of course, and using EZE-IR permanent dual panel tags from NLID for the past 17 years. We haven't tattooed animals since we started dual tagging. These RFID tags have both the animal's registration number and management number laser printed on them.

**Schuler:** Calves are fitted with ear tags, which they wear their whole life. Tags are mandatory and identification numbers are registered in the national database.

*Why is registration important?*

**Bland:** It gives us full traceability. We can market our products as 100% Jersey backed by pedigree information.

**Houze:** Registration is so important to us on the Island of Jersey that it is mandatory that all animals be registered. Our milk cooperative will not accept milk from any herd that is not 100% registered pedigree Jersey (beef crosses are permitted, however). This gives us great opportunities to market not just cattle, but, more importantly, dairy products. Interestingly, the Island herd book has its own standard for pedigree, requiring seven generations of registered ancestry. Many overseas bulls do not qualify.

**Morey:** Registration adds value to your animals and your farm. Most importantly, if you wish to utilize all the tools (proofs, genomics, etc.) of the industry, then you need to contribute to them.

**Schuler:** It is an expensive hobby because we do not have access to the international genetics market. We use performance tests as a management tool.