

Maritime Herd Profiles: CoCo Creek Jerseys

Mark & Marjorie Anderson, CoCo Creek Jerseys, Ward's Creek, New Brunswick

In the past few issues of the Breeder, we have tried to highlight herds in different regions of the country, highlighting one established herd and another that is relatively new to the Jersey breed. This issue looking at herds in Atlantic Canada, the new breeders we are profiling are Mark and Marjorie Anderson of CoCo Creek Jerseys, Ward's Creek, New Brunswick.

The family farm dates back to the early 1900's, when Mark's great-grandfather started milking a few Guernsey cows, along with all of the other animals found a farm in those days. The farm was then passed to Mark's grandparents, Willis and Marion Anderson, who are living just down the road now. They started shipping milk full time in 1946, and started a registered Holstein herd. Mark's parents Charles and Roben later assumed responsibility for the herd, growing it to it's present size of about 70 cows in milk. Mark, his wife Marjorie, and their young son Iain represent the 4th and 5th generations on the farm, and while they currently work for Mark's dad, there are plans to take over management of the farm in the future.

As mentioned, the herd milks about 70 cows at present, with about 175 dairy animals around at any one time. There are currently 5 Jerseys in the milking herd, with 6 replacement heifers coming on. The Anderson's also have a small herd of crossbred beef cows, and finish all the steers on farm. All forage is made on farm, a mixture of alfalfa and grass for silage and hay. They also grow barley and oats mixed on farm for heifer feed, with dairy ration brought in for the cows. Corn isn't grown here, due to having smaller fields that are quite prone to erosion. Pasture is also employed for part of the year.

The first Jerseys came to the Anderson farm in the late 1990's, when Mark decided that he would like to have something unique, something to stand out in the herd. His first cow was Dalling Vale Buds Buffy, from Edward Dalling's herd in nearby Waterford, NB. Mark and Marjorie were the first to have Jerseys in their immediate area, but have since seen quite a few others in the area try a few Jerseys in their herds. While they did not introduce Jerseys for purely economical reasons, Mark and Marjorie recognize that the Jerseys definitely make economic sense for their operation. Despite only being a small portion of their herd, they have seen an increase in their bulk tank fat test, helping them to meet SNF ratios. Their cows have been productive, and they note that the Jerseys are excellent grazers, competing well with the Holsteins for their feed. The Anderson's credit an efficient productive cow, along with the support they have received from Jersey Canada, with continuing to grow with the Jersey breed.

In the years since their first purchases, they have continued to add Jerseys from other Maritime herds, namely the Marshfield, Brownlane, and Woodland herds. Last year, they purchased Peninsula Ressurrect Gorgeous in the World #1 Jersey Sale in June. She is a "Ressurrection" daughter from an EX-90 "Amedeo" at Peninsula. Mark



Top: Grazing Jerseys at CoCo Creek. Bottom: CoCo Creek JW Flossie.



and Marjorie are now milking some of the animals with their prefix, and are pleased with the level of production from their Jerseys. Two cows in particular that they are pleased with are CoCo Creek Hallmark Brownie (a daughter of their first cow) and Co Co Creek Fusion Felicity. They have also started to show at the Frederiction Exhibition in September. They are quite aware that you usually don't start out at the top, and are taking lessons learned to improve for the next year. Mark and Marjorie especially value the animals with their own prefix, as you can't buy animals with your prefix - you have to put the effort into breeding them.

Being a smaller herd of Jerseys at present, it is hard to use a wide variety of sires. However, there are no two cows by the same bull, so they are getting some level of variety in their genetics. They use mostly proven sires, but do try and use some young sires from time to time. Bulls that emphasize type and components are most commonly used in this herd. Sires currently being used include Senior, Jace, and Ressurrection, as well as young sires Constantine and Seize the Moment from Select Sires.

For the future, the Andersons plan to increase the size of their Jersey herd to about 1/4 of the total herd, but are not limiting themselves, depending on what the future brings! They hope to soon own an Excellent cow with the CoCo Creek prefix, and build a herd of productive, long-lasting Jersey cows. They also look forward to continuing to be involved in Jersey events in New Brunswick and the rest of the Maritime provinces through Jersey Atlantic.