

# THE PULSE

Spring 2021 • Holstein Association USA, Inc.



**U.S. REGISTERED HOLSTEINS<sup>®</sup>**

THE WORLD'S PERFECT COW

The Pulse is proudly sponsored by





# POWERING THROUGH THE PANDEMIC

**T**his past year has been fraught with trials and tribulations. While all of us have our own stories to share, I would like to share the situations that have been unfolding for the Holstein Association USA.

Topping the list is the National Holstein Convention. Having just served as co-chair of the last in-person convention held in Appleton, Wis., I personally appreciate many gut-wrenching obstacles faced by the Pennsylvania planning committee. COVID-19 canceled the 2020 event and it even threatened to cancel portions of this year's gathering, too.

However, our Pennsylvania hosts, led by Diane and Reid Hoover, and David Lentz, showed tremendous perseverance. After a series of meetings, Keystone State leaders developed a plan, in conjunction with Holstein Association USA staff, to host this year's gathering. I personally want to thank everyone for their determination and patience throughout this journey.

To make everything fit together given pandemic restrictions, this year's schedule needed some significant adjustments. Our largest rooms will be like a milking parlor or the showring at World Dairy Expo . . . we will need to make maximum use of that space to comply with state-mandated room capacity regulations induced by the pandemic.

That being the case, the time honored Dairy Bowl competition, including the finals, will take place on Tuesday, June 22. That night will be capped off by Family Night. Dairy Jeopardy will take place on Wednesday, the same day as host day. Buses will be taking attendees to the great farm and event tours on June 23 . . . those folks who are more comfortable driving their vehicles will be provided maps by the host state. The night will draw to a close with a Junior Awards Banquet, while adults can go view the sale cattle.

Thursday we will turn our attention to the Association's annual meeting. Given the pandemic, we will hold that meeting in just one day. We will begin the morning with the Delegate Meeting and a Candidates Forum that will replace the traditional caucuses. Later that morning, we will move to the annual meeting, committee reports, and elections. The night will conclude with the National Convention Sale.

My personal request for all who head to Pennsylvania — please extend our hard-working state host committee and national staff grace as they navigate all the extra pandemic hurdles.

### Holstein moves forward

The Holstein Association USA board of directors, CEO Meyer, and CFO Casna all met in person in Hartford, Conn., for both the November 2020 and March 2021 board meetings. To be candid, those meetings were among the most productive in my ten years of service. Due to the pandemic and travel restrictions placed on Vermont residents during the pandemic, all other national staff joined the meeting via video conference.

As board President, I must note that Vermont has not been

business friendly. By order of the state government, all residents must quarantine for two weeks after leaving the state. Hence the limits on national staff attending those meetings as our business gathering in Connecticut forced our CEO and CFO to work from home for two straight weeks.

Even though physical movement has been restricted, make no mistake, Holstein staff has been powering forward. Project Elevation, the \$7-plus million complete computer rewrite continues to move forward. Aaron Bristol, Executive Director of Information Services, gave the board of directors a preview of advanced tag ordering and registration systems, among other new options. Members should begin experiencing these vastly improved interfaces at [www.holsteinusa.com](http://www.holsteinusa.com) in the third and fourth quarter of 2021.

As the information technology team rolls out better computing systems, classifiers in the field will have new handheld computers to better collect type data. Tri-Star AMR (automatic milk recording) continues to be the nation's only testing plan to be customized for robot dairies. As more herds of multiple breeds sign up, Holstein staffers are finalizing details to make Tri-Star AMR herds eligible for all Holstein awards. When it comes to dairy record processing centers, AgriTech Analytics fully updated their computing system to Oracle 4th Dimension. For those of us on the farm, that means they can better serve us.

Holstein Association USA continues to collaborate with others. We partner with the American Guernsey Association to conduct their classifications. Holstein software powers Brown Swiss, Guernsey, Milking Shorthorn and Red & White registrations. We also have strong partnerships with Allflex and Zoetis to stay on the cutting edge of identification and genomics.

Holstein's research grant program, fueled by the Reserve Fund, moves research on Holsteins forward. And the recently launched Holstein Marketplace provides members options to market their bulls.

On the junior front, Holstein staffers successfully launched the inaugural Virtual Interview Contest, and the Young Dairy Leaders Institute (YDLI) received a top to bottom review. With that in the rear view mirror, new attendees can apply for Class 12. Applications will be due August 1.

Indeed, Holstein Association USA powered through the pandemic.



**Corey Geiger, President**  
**Holstein Association USA, Inc.**





# THE UNLIMITED POTENTIAL OF U.S. REGISTERED HOLSTEINS

This issue of *The Pulse* highlights a number of excellent examples of how our beloved Registered Holstein® cow continues to get better all the time. As you read the pages of *The Pulse*, think about how far the Holstein breed has come, and the unlimited potential of our beautiful black and white cow.

Stone-Front Leader Hilda, a 15-year-old Registered Holstein cow, has set the new record for the most Lifetime Milk produced by a Holstein. On page 22, read about the great Hilda cow who completed 2020 with a lifetime total of 460,720 pounds of milk! Hats off to Andy and Lyn Buttles of Lancaster, Wisconsin for breeding, developing, and allowing Hilda to fully express her genetic potential and production capabilities!

**“Think about how far the Holstein breed has come, and the unlimited potential of our beautiful black and white cow.”**

Hilda, classified EX-90 4E, surpassed the previous Holstein record holder that was set in 2003 by KOEPKE K0017229-1660. Known as the “Granny” cow, her lifetime total of milk was 458,616 pounds.

Cows like Hilda and Granny are perfect examples of trouble free, long lived, fertile cows that produce large volumes of high-quality milk easily and efficiently. The herd management expertise of their owners, the Buttles and Koepkes from Wisconsin, allowed those cows to reach their full potential.

The 2020 Holstein Association’s Herds of Excellence grace the pages of 12 through 17 of the magazine. These herds have achieved excellence in both type and production.

As you can see, the herd owners are astute breeders of Holsteins, as at least 70% of the herd must be homebred in order to qualify for the prestigious honor. All of these herds far exceed the 70% homebred requirement as four are 100% homebred, and the rest are over 95%.





Most of the herds honored this year have earned the award multiple times, which speaks well for their ability to not only reach the top, but to sustain excellence.

When combined, the 2020 Herds of Excellence average 35,831 pounds of milk, 1,409 pounds of fat, and 1,100 pounds of protein. Their average age-adjusted classification score is 87, and combined, the herds are 98% homebred.

Hearty congratulations to all of the 2020 Herds of Excellence. Your animal husbandry talents, combined with the most coveted dairy animal in the world, the U.S. Registered Holstein, set a high bar for other breeders around the globe.

On pages 6 and 7, Holstein Association USA presents Eastriver Goldwyn Deb 176, the 2020 Star of the Breed! The highest honor presented to a Registered Holstein cow, the Star of the Breed recognizes a cow that excels both in the showing and back home on the farm.

Truly a cow for all seasons, Deb is owned in partnership by Corey Feltmann and Andy Stuewe of Norwood Young America, Minnesota. This seven-year-old cow is scored EX-94 2E and has over 175,000 pounds of lifetime milk.

Both Andy and Corey say Deb is a trouble-free cow who transmits well. Deb, the 2020 Star of the Breed,



shines brightly as a cow who provides the complete package of outstanding type and production.

All of you, our members, are to be commended. As stewards of the U.S. Registered Holstein herd, you are the engine that drives the U.S. dairy train!

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



Eastriver Goldwyn Deb 176 was named the 2020 Star of the Breed. Pictured with Deb are Ava (13), Jade (11) and Andy Stuewe on her left and Corey, Emily (6), Katie, and Olivia (9) Feltmann on her right.



*Presenting the 2020*

# STAR OF THE BREED



## **EASTRIVER GOLDWYN DEB 176 • EX-94 2E**

5-09 • 2X • 296D • 39,060M • 3.5%F • 1,353F • 3.2%P • 1,241P

**2nd 150,000 Lb. Lifetime Milk Production cow - 2020 Midwest Fall National Holstein Show**

**OWNED BY:** Andy Stuewe & Corey Feltmann, Norwood Young America, Minnesota

### **ABOUT THE AWARD**

The Star of the Breed recognition is given annually to one Registered Holstein® cow that exemplifies outstanding production combined with exceptional type. To be eligible for the Star of the Breed award, a cow must place in the top five in her class at a National Show, be in a herd enrolled in the TriStar<sup>SM</sup> program and have an official classification score.

Once the eligible cows are determined, the following calculation is used to determine the award recipient: Combined Mature Equivalent (ME) Fat and Protein + Age Adjusted Classification Score X (Breed Average ME CFP/Breed Average Age Adjusted Score.)



**“A** cow that you would take a hundred of.” These words were how Corey Feltmann and Andy Stuewe described their cow Eastriver Goldwyn Deb 176. Deb is a cow who provides the complete package of outstanding type and production, and one many Registered Holstein® breeders would love to have an entire herd of in their barn.

Holstein Association USA is delighted to present Eastriver Goldwyn Deb 176 with the 2020 Star of the Breed. The highest honor presented to a Registered Holstein cow, the Star of the Breed recognizes a cow who excels at the show and on the farm.

“She can hold her own in the showring, and I would put her up against anyone in the milking parlor,” Corey said. “She produces really easy it seems and is low maintenance,” Andy added.

Deb is scored EX-94 2E and has over 175,000 pounds of lifetime milk. She is owned in a partnership by Andy Stuewe and Corey Feltmann in Minnesota and was bred at Eastriver Farms in Prince Edward Island, Canada.

## **SURPASSING EXPECTATIONS**

Andy and Corey purchased Deb at the Best of Triple-T and Heath Sale in 2017. Originally, the friends planned on buying another cow who exceeded their price point. Corey was still on the phone with Michael Heath when bidding on Deb began. Although she was not looking her best after the long trip from Prince Edward Island, Michael convinced Corey to take a chance on her, and Andy agreed to go in on half.

The night Corey and Andy went to pick Deb up is still memorable for them both. “Andy came back to the truck and said, ‘what did you get me into here,’” Corey recalled. It didn’t take long for Deb to adjust. “I was really impressed once we got her here, and she just kept getting better and better,” Andy said.

A month and a half later, Deb proved she was worth taking a chance on when she was named Reserve Intermediate Champion at the Minnesota State Show. From there, she was the Intermediate Champion and Reserve Grand Champion Cow at the Midwest Fall National in 2017.

In 2018, Deb was named Senior Champion and Grand Champion of the Midwest Fall National. She has done well at shows since then and was recently named the 2020 Cow of the Year by the Minnesota Holstein Association.

## **TROUBLE-FREE TRANSMITTER**

Both Andy and Corey have housed Deb at their farms, and say she is a trouble-free cow who transmits well. “I’ve been impressed by her offspring so far,” Andy said. Deb’s three oldest daughters are two-year-olds, and two of them are scored VG-86.

“As of now we are just going to keep IVFing her here,” Corey says about plans for Deb’s future. She has already been flushed to sires such as Doc, Lambda, and Master and is currently pregnant to Jaeger.

Deb also has an impressive pedigree. Her dam is Homestead Astronomical Deb EX-95 3E, and she has several full sisters also from Eastriver Farms. Corey and his family owned Eastriver Gold Deb 851 EX-93 3E, a full sister to Deb.

## **FRIENDS WITH SAME FOCUS**

With farms located just five minutes apart, Deb is one of many cows Andy and Corey have owned together over the past decade. They also breed and exhibit cows under the Stu-Felt prefix and have successful dairy operations of their own.

Corey farms with his father Dennis and brothers Chad and Chris at Feltmann Dairy LLC. They milk 160 cows on the home farm, and 45 cows on a neighboring site. The Feltmanns focus on breeding problem-free cows that put milk in the tank, breed back, and last, and use bulls with extreme type on their show cows.

A few miles down the road, Andy milks 90 cows at Flower-Brook Registered Holsteins. “I breed for long-lasting cows with a lot of type, good udders, and good strength,” he said. The herd has a BAA of 111.4 and has been home to many impressive cows over the years, including the Holstein Association’s 2008 Star of the Breed, Stuewes FB Giddy-ET EX-94 (EEEEEE).

When buying cows together, Andy and Corey look for cows who will fit their breeding program “Don’t just add a cow to add a cow, add a cow that can develop your genetic potential,” Corey said. The longtime friends then work together to make mating decisions they believe will improve the cow.

“We’ve got the same eye, and we’ve always been friends and had respect for each other,” Andy says. With past success and a cow like Deb to help pave the way forward, it’s clear the future is bright for these longtime friends and Registered Holstein breeders.

**“ She can hold her own in the showring, and I would put her up against anyone in the milking parlor.”**

— Corey Feltmann



# Herds of Excellence

Holstein Association USA is proud to present our 2020 Herds of Excellence award recipients. These nine herds have all achieved the rigorous criteria to qualify for this honor.

The award is broken into three herd size divisions based on the number of cows included in production averages.

The categories are as follows:

**Division 1:** 500+ cows

**Division 2:** 100-499 cows

**Division 3:** 10-99 cows

Herds receiving the award must:

- Have classified within the last year and have an age adjusted classification score of 83 points or higher;
- Have at least 70 percent of the herd homebred;
- Be enrolled in the Association's TriStar<sup>SM</sup> program

Additionally, qualifying herds must meet the following production criteria:

- 500+ cows – 15 percent above breed average Mature Equivalent for milk, fat and protein
- 100 to 499 cows – 20 percent above breed average Mature Equivalent for milk, fat and protein
- 10 to 99 cows – 25 percent above breed average Mature Equivalent for milk, fat and protein



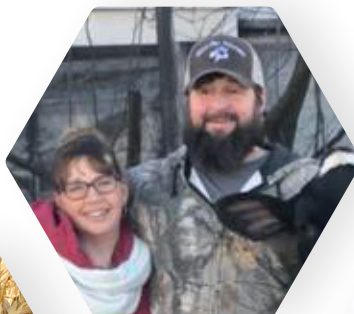
Keepke Farms Inc.



Hibrose Holsteins



Dinomi Holsteins



Show-Mar Holsteins



Koester Dairy Inc



Hill-Ton Holsteins



Ever-Green-View Holsteins, LLC



B-Long Holsteins



Siemers Holstein Farms Inc.



# Division 1: 500+ Cows



Dino and Dante Migliazzo

**4** Year  
Honoree

**97.2% Homebred**  
**Milk: 33,302 Fat: 1,267 Protein: 1,071**  
**Average Classification Score – 83.0**

## Dinomi Holsteins

The Migliazzo Family • Atwater, CA

Attention to detail and consistently doing things right is the foundation for success at Migliazzo and Sons Dairy in Atwater, California. “You can’t really slip in any area and expect to have excellence if you’re not giving your 100%,” Dino Migliazzo said. Dino farms along with his brother, Dante, and his son, Loren, who plays an important role as the farm manager.

“Holstein has helped us focus on what’s important from an economic standpoint to be sustainable in the dairy industry,” Dino shared. He says programs such as Holstein COMPLETE and TriStar have been especially beneficial for the herd of 860 cows. Because of their herd size, the Migliazzo family is involved in the farm from both a labor and a management standpoint.

Their goal is to breed functional, high-producing cows. “We really focused on high quality milk that exceeds components above and beyond what you would get from an average Registered Holstein,” Dino said. Milk from Migliazzo and Sons Dairy is made into cheese, and they recently received the top-quality award from Hilmar Cheese Company, a testament to their attention to detail year in and year out.

## Siemers Holstein Farms Inc.

The Siemers Family • Newton, WI

Now in the farm’s fifth and sixth generations, the Siemers family strives for excellence with an unwavering focus on being good cow people. Their mission is simple: to make every generation better than the last.

The Siemers family says they feel blessed to have worked with several of the industry’s best cow families including Roz, Hanker, Bombi and Paris. They say these families make their best conformation and performance cows and are responsible for placing more than 50 bulls in AI per year.

“My advice to other breeders is to find the type of cow that you like, and make sure she can be profitable and sustainable for several generations,” Dan Siemers says. “Figure out what niche you want to shoot for, and make sure it’s going to make the right kind of cows that will accomplish your long-term goals.”

When making breeding decisions they look for strength in the cow’s conformation, so their herd will produce more pounds of combined fat and protein for longer periods of time. They have bred thousands of Excellent cows over the years, and annually breed more than a hundred new Excellent and a few hundred new Very Good two-year-olds. They have achieved 29 Progressive Genetic Herd honors.



The Siemers Family: back row; Dan, Janina, Jordan and Connor. Front row; Josh, Lauren, Jake, Jenny and Paul

**5** Year  
Honoree

**98.7% Homebred**  
**Milk: 36,882 Fat: 1,472 Protein: 1,120**  
**Average Classification Score – 85.0**



## Division 2: 100-499 Cows



Andy, Jeff and Joe Brantmeier with Hilrose Advent Anna-Red-ET

### Hilrose Holsteins

Joseph A. Brantmeier • Sherwood, WI

**A**t Hilrose Holsteins, the recipe for raising an accomplished herd begins with the fundamentals. Joe Brantmeier manages the dairy alongside his sons, Andy and Jeff. They aim to breed high type, profitable cows that milk well and look good doing it.

“Hard work does pay off,” Jeff says. “But it is not something that happens overnight, as my dad has been at this a long time. He set the foundation and we are trying to build on that.”

Hilrose Advent Anna-Red is a cow they feel proud to have bred and developed. Recently classified EX-95 and named the 2018 Wisconsin Cow of the Year, she has had a tremendous impact on their herd.

“She really put us on the map,” Jeff says. “A once-in-a-lifetime cow. We’ve been very fortunate to market her daughters in sales across the country.”

The family’s patience, hard work and sustained effort through the years have allowed them to get to where they are today, to earn a place among herds of excellence.

“We are very fortunate,” he says. “It’s been rewarding to see that our goals are being reached and that our herd continues to improve on both type and production.”

**100% Homebred**

**Milk: 34,384 Fat: 1,376 Protein: 1,039**

**Average Classification Score – 89.1**

### Koepke Farms Inc.

The Koepke Family • Oconomowoc, WI

**J**ust to the west of busy Milwaukee, the Koepke family has been farming for nearly 150 years. Dave Koepke, who recently retired, looks forward to what the future brings for the multi-generation dairy.

The key to a productive herd, he says, is a balanced approach. Focusing on strong feet and legs, good udders and moderately framed animals to meet the needs of their operation.

“It’s all about avoiding extremes,” Dave says. “Just keep slowly inching forward, and don’t try to breed all in one leap.”

They pay close attention to cow health, productive life and daughter pregnancy rates when making breeding decisions. Achieving high components is also a priority. The Koepke family introduced the LaBelle cheese brand a decade ago and continue to supply an aged Gouda-style cheese using the fresh, premium milk from their herd.

Over the years, Koepke Farms has had five cows with more than 300,000 pounds of lifetime milk and 16 Excellent cows, 110 Very Good cows and 140 Good Plus cows.

“It’s a lot of hard work, and doing a good job managing,” Dave says. “Keeping the cows healthy and getting them through the transitions.”



Dave Koepke

**100% Homebred**

**Milk: 34,501 Fat: 1,386 Protein: 1,016**

**Average Classification Score – 85.3**



## Koester Dairy Inc

The Koester Family • Dakota, IL

**F**amily is the key to success at Koester Dairy. Dan and Amber farm along with their son Lance and his wife Cynthia; sons Kyle and Brent; and daughter, Bria. “With the family members here, everyone has a strong interest in accomplishing the highest goals and to be successful,” Dan said. “Everyone has their own area that they excel in.”

The Koester family’s goals include having eight pounds of combined fat and protein per cow per day, something Dan says they are usually able to maintain. They credit three-times a day milking and working closely with a good veterinarian, nutritionist, and hoof trimmer as factors that help them reach their production goals.

An emphasis on genetic improvement is also important. “We try to breed for well-balanced cows that give a lot of milk with high components and good type,” Dan says. “Of course, health traits have been more important the last couple of years.” The Koester family uses all of the information available to them, such as genomic information and classification scores, to make informed breeding decisions.



Kyle, Cindy holding Erica, Brent, Amber, Dan, Bria, Neil, Ethan, Alissa, Lance and Cynthia. Seated- Levi and Lydia

**98.3% Homebred**

**Milk: 33,685 Fat: 1,351 Protein: 1,061**  
**Average Classification Score – 85.1**

## Division 3: 10-99 Cows

### B-Long Holsteins

Bruce, Brenda & Bret Long • New London, WI

**A**sk Bruce Long and he will tell you, it is all the little things that go into building and sustaining a high-performing cow herd.

Together with his wife, Brenda and son, Bret, the family operates B-Long Holsteins, a longstanding winner of the Herd of Excellence award.

“To receive the Herd of Excellence for numerous years, it takes a lot of things,” Bruce says. “Having high-quality genetics from both a production and type standpoint is important, and we put in a lot of hard work keeping cows comfortable, healthy and well fed.”

He adds that getting cows bred back in a timely manner and working with the cows in early lactation both make a tremendous difference in an animal’s ability to reach its genetic potential. When making selection decisions, they look for deep, wide, open cows with good legs and udders, along with positive production and components.

The family’s passion for the Registered Holstein cow drives them forward each day.

“It is an honor to be recognized by Holstein USA and included in this elite group of breeders,” Bruce says. “We work together to care for the cows and get the work done.”



Bret, Brenda and Bruce Long

**100% Homebred**

**Milk: 34,936 Fat: 1,364 Protein: 1,093**  
**Average Classification Score – 87.3**



## Division 3: 10-99 Cows



**11**  
Year  
Honoree

Chris, Gin, Jennifer and Tom

### Ever-Green-View Holsteins, LLC

Thomas J. Kestell • Waldo, WI

**E**ver-Green-View Farms was established almost 50 years ago by Tom and Gin Kestell, who now farm with their son Chris and his wife Jennifer. Since then, they have developed one of the world's highest producing herds and a commitment to giving back to others.

"I think one of the most important things that has allowed us to be successful is a steady focus on where we want to go," Tom said. The Kestell family strives to breed cows with outstanding production and type and provide top-notch care to their herd. "Treating our animals as individuals from calf on up really has helped achieve a lot of our goals," Tom added.

Ever-Green-View Holsteins have also made a genetic impact on the global scale. Last year, they marketed over 4,000 embryos to various countries. Beyond marketing embryos, the Kestells help farms in foreign countries with their herd management, enabling the genetics they sell to reach their full potential. Tom says his advice to herds in other countries is often to "seek out people who are better than you at what you are doing."

**95.7% Homebred**

**Milk: 41,171 Fat: 1,673 Protein: 1,264**

**Average Classification Score – 89.1**

### Hill-Ton Holsteins

The Hamilton Family • Cuba City, WI

**2**020 brought exciting progress for the Hamilton family. "One of our highlights last year was being selected for the Holstein class for the Hoard's dairy judging contest," John said. Four of their homebred Excellent cows were highlighted on the cover of the January 25th, 2021 edition of the Hoard's Dairyman, as one of the classes of the 2021 contest.

With John and Evie's son Charlie back on the farm, the Hamiltons recently built a new freestall hoop barn to house their expanded herd. "We have incorporated a couple of employees since we added the extra cows," John shared. "We strive to teach them that the small details are what enable us to be able to get this award."

Going the extra mile on the small details, staying true to their breeding philosophy, and honoring their motto "Live to Dream - Work to succeed" has enabled them to sustain success over many years. Hill-Ton Holsteins has received the Progressive Breeder's Registry award for 27 consecutive years and has been home to 89 homebred Excellent cows. They have also bred 27 Gold Medal Dam recipients and developed two additional GMD honorees. Their current BAA is 109.1. John says their goal for the future is "to continue to do what we are doing, and to strive to get better."



**4**  
Year  
Honoree

Evelyn, John and Charlie Hamilton

**95.0% Homebred**

**Milk: 37,164 Fat: 1,386 Protein: 1,135**

**Average Classification Score – 86.8**



# Division 3: 10-99 Cows

## Show-Mar Holsteins

Mark O. Brantner • Evans City, PA



Wesley, Shianne, Jelena, Mark, Dylan holding Show-Mar D-Back Uppercut and Austin Brantner

**“E**xcellence bred, not bought” is the slogan Mark Brantner coined for his herd of Registered Holstein cows. Growing up on a dairy farm, Mark dreamed of developing a top-notch herd of his own. “My goal in life was to start with average cows and eventually breed an animal to compete at Madison,” he shared.

Over the years, that’s exactly what Mark has done, alongside his wife Jelena and their four children. The Brantners showed their first animal at the International Holstein Show in Madison, Wisconsin in 2019 – a homebred spring calf that placed second in the open show and has since calved and scored VG-87 as a two-year-old. “It makes going to the barn pretty fun when you have cows like that,” Mark said.

None of the cows at Show-Mar Holsteins go back to a well-known cow family. Instead, every animal in the 100% homebred herd can be traced back to five ordinary Registered Holstein cows Mark bought in 1995. During this time, he was also starting his career and working for Holstein breeders in Pennsylvania and Maryland.

Today, Show-Mar Holsteins consists of 60 cows with a BAA of 112. “Back in 2008 my BAA was 102.4,” Mark said. “It has either stayed the same or gone up every year since then.” In August of 2020, Mark reached another goal when his cow Show-Mar Scrambled 1308 was classified EX-95 2E. This is a result of many years of careful attention to

### 100% Homebred

**Milk: 36,453 Fat: 1,404 Protein: 1,100**  
**Average Classification Score – 89.4**

breeding and steady improvement to the genetics of his herd. “I got to the point where I got complete cows, and that wasn’t quite good enough for me, so I started breeding for more type,” he explained.

The herd is milked three times a day and average of 97 pounds of milk with 4.1% fat and 3.2% protein. In addition to breeding complete cows, Mark says that consistent management practices and attention to detail have helped him be successful. “I have no problem getting up in the morning,” he said. “I am up and out, there is no hesitation.”

With many of his lifelong dreams already achieved, Mark has another goal in mind. After leasing or housing his cows on other dairy farms for many years, the Brantners are in the process of buying a farm of their own. Mark hopes it will be a place where is children can return home to farm if they choose. “I have no idea what’s going to happen in the future. All I know is it looks good, and I am excited for it,” Mark says. “When I get my own place, the sky is the limit.”