

# Windsor Manor Holsteins is a Family Tradition

BY SHARON B. SCHUSTER  
Maryland Correspondent

NEW WINDSOR, Md. — Just a speck on the map, between Baltimore and Frederick is New Windsor, Maryland, home to a Carroll County dairy farmer whose impact has been felt as far away as Japan.

At 35, Jason Myers has achieved local and national recognition as a progressive dairyman and breeder. His big break came with the sale of the 1976 Grand Champion Holstein at the Maryland Spring Show to Japanese investors.

"That's what really helped us to go on our own," he explained. "She was an excellent show cow." The Kingstead White Rock daughter went on to set a national record for production in Japan.

As grand as that milestone was, Myers hasn't been resting. He continues to capture titles, and works at being an active leader in the dairy business. Myers is the current president of the Carroll County Holstein Association and has been on the board of directors of the Maryland Holstein Association for six years.

In 1979 he was named Outstanding Young Cooperator by the Maryland Co-op Milk Producers. A year later, he captured the title of Maryland Holstein Junior Breeder. This year Myers was honored by the Jaycees as Outstanding Young Farmer.

"In our field, we have to be experts in too many things," he said. "It's important to know where to go to get answers." The University of Maryland graduate credits much of his know-how to practical experience with his father, whom he describes as "a real progressive dairyman."

Myers worked in a 50-50 partnership with his father for nine years. In the late 70's he built up equity by selling 20 to 25 cows per year to other farmers and investors.

"Building up enough equity to go on your own, and deciding when you have reached that point," he explained, "is one of the biggest obstacles." He also believes that "financing is too easy." Myers said, "Now that we're on our own, we're building up the herd. We

don't sell many."

The herd now numbers 58, with approximately 90 percent registered. The bovine of Windsor Manor are as infamous as the dairyman himself. The current rolling herd average is 19,450 pounds of milk, 676 pounds of fat, and 3.3 percent protein.

On the year ending high rolling herd average, the Myers's herd was ranked eighth in the county. The HFAA classification is 106.3 BAA on 49 cows. At the Maryland Spring Show in February, Myers showed the best three females.

Myers pursues various methods of upgrading the herd. Besides the AI services of Select and Sire Power, he uses embryo transplants. "We work with our own cows," he explained. Sub-producing cows are used as the recipients. "There are 10 pregnancies now in our own animals," he added.

Favoring super ovulation over single ovulations, Myers said, "While you're at it, you might as well do supers." Recalling one particularly successful attempt, he said, "We got 14 good eggs from one cow, implanted nine, six took, and we froze some."

The implants are done surgically. He said the "tricky part" is getting all the animals ready at the same time. "Last year's ET's produced two bulls and two heifers," Myers noted.

The young farmer has definite ideas about the dairy industry. "Government programs tend to make over-production which keeps prices down," declared Myers.

He favors instituting a quota system and explained, "We're good producers, but lousy merchandisers and advertisers. We've got a lot going for us — the value of calcium, the protein in milk, and cheese is popular in the country." Myers continued, saying that milk must be viewed as a beverage that has to compete in that industry.

The success that Myers enjoys at Windsor Manor Farm is the result of many years of planning and practical modifications to the facility. When he moved to New Windsor two years ago, he leveled a hillside behind the existing stanchion barn, and built a freestall barn on the newly leveled



Windsor Manor Farm, located in Carroll County, Maryland, is home to Jason Myers, a dairy farmer whose influence has been felt as far away as Japan.

ground to get more protection and sunlight.

Included in the new barn design are four bays, with box stalls for older cows, one bay with oversized stalls which are 52 inches wide to accommodate bigger cows, and free stalls for heifers. During the winter, the barnyard can be separated by gates, allowing the bred heifers to clean up the leftovers that travel around clockwise on the 70 foot conveyor feeder.

"The cows always get fresh feed," he explained. The conveyor is fed by two concrete silos; the 16-by-72 silo contains alfalfa haylage, and the 20-by-80 silo is filled with corn silage. "We put everything we can get into those silos," he said.

Second cutting alfalfa goes into square and round bales. Myers said that he depends upon custom work for most of his planting and harvesting.

The barnyard is built on a 2 percent slope, a more noticeable grade than the usual 0.5 percent. This grade helps to keep the surface cleaner and drier, though the lot is scraped daily. The last several feet of the lot slope upward to create a slight 'V' which carries runoff to a natural grass swale running to a nearby lagoon.

At the end of the barnyard is an 80-by-60 manure pit. The previous level of the manure in the now empty pit is still detectable on the eight foot walls. Built on a 75 percent cost share as part of the Rural Clean Water Project, the pit is designed to hold the manure of 80 cows for 180 days.

It took 200 yards of concrete and three miles of steel to build the structure according to government specifications. Myers has also put in contour strips and 2,000 feet of grass waterways as part of the RCWP program, all on 75 percent cost share.

The floor of the stanchion barn is clean enough to wear white "tennies" without ever having to worry about scraping the bottoms. It's clean. Myers said he can milk with four units at one time.

The skeleton of a future office area stands adjacent to the milkhouse. Asked if he is going to computerize his operation, he replied, "My computer is right here," pointing to the "gray matter" underneath a thick crop of brown hair. The office will house the many awards and photographs, and provide a place to complete paperwork.

Myers manages the place along with an additional 120 acres of rented ground, with the part time help of Jason Shutter. The 17 year old Westminster High School senior has been working at Windsor Manor since January, helping with the 4:15 p.m. milking.



Jason Myers attributes his success to his family working together. With Myers and his wife, Donna, are their daughters, Kelly (left) and Kristin.

But, it is Donna Myers who sees that things run smoothly both in the barn at 5:30 a.m. and in their home around the clock.

"She works with me," said Myers of his wife, and mother of their two young daughters. She raises the calves for the first year, in hutches and then in a converted hog barn for heifer calves. "Newborn calves that's my favorite part," said Donna Myers.

"I don't trust them to anybody else." She said that working on the farm gives her the opportunity to work with the family. "The kids, Kelly, 8, and Kristin, 5 can work with us."

Well prepared to be a farmer's wife, Myers grew up on a Guernsey farm as the farmer's daughter, and graduated from the University of Maryland with a degree in Home Economics, with a minor in Extension. On days that find Myers and his help in the field trying to get a load of haylage into the silo, his wife very capably starts the afternoon milking.

Living proof that "Milk, it does a body good," the slender housewife

(who professes to eating "lots of ice cream") remodeled their 1815 home and decorated it with warm, country colors. Wreaths, samplers and the girls' art work adorn the walls around the stone fireplace in the kitchen.

Her husband confirmed her abilities as a fine country cook, but he is not the only one who sings the praises of her culinary talents. A cheesecake that she baked to be auctioned by the Maryland State Holstein Association at a fundraiser to send the 4-H judging team to Europe, brought a record \$95. It was bought by the team's coach, Dr. Lee Majeskie.

Together, the family enjoys showing cows and attending shows and conventions, such as the upcoming Maryland Holstein convention to be hosted by Carroll County on February 20 and 21, 1987.

Vacations together are a rarity, and are very much appreciated by the whole family. It is evident that Windsor Manor Farm is truly a family enterprise, and, therein lies the secret of its success.



Myers feeds a grain mix to his 19,450 pound herd prior to milking.



After milking, the cows enter the barnyard for exercise and to feed at the bunk.

