



Pennfield Profile

The Stonerook Family

RHA 11/04/93
14,661 lbs. milk - 762 fat 5.3%
551 Protein 3.8%

MARTINSBURG (Blair Co.) — Located in a rich fertile farming area in Blair County is a place called the "Cove". Top quality dairy cattle and top quality crop production are synonymous with this area. It is in this environment that Stoney Hollow Jerseys have developed into one of the top Jersey herds in the state, boasting a RHA of 14,661 lb. milk, 762 lbs. fat, and 551 lbs. protein.

Stoney Hollow is a fourth generation farm owned and operated by Donald & Jill Stonerook. They took over the responsibilities and day to day operation of the farm from Don's parents, Earl & Pleasy in 1986.

Although the herd is now all Jerseys, this was not always the case. Prior to 1981, the Stoney Hollow prefix was associated with good quality Holsteins. Earl Stonerook was in partnership with his son Don since 1973. After Don married Jill in 1979, the 4 "Stonerook" continued to be Holstein breeders until September 1981, when the first Jerseys arrived. During the next 5 years the

Jersey count rose to 26 along with 60 Holsteins. In addition to the 86 head of milk cows, the Stonerooks raised all their own heifers. In 1986 Don & Jill decided to go ahead and assume full ownership for the farm. At the same time the herd was reduced to 60 milking head: 25 Jerseys and 35 Holsteins; this reduction was primarily due to the limited number of acres for crop production. Things stayed this way until January, 1990, when the Holsteins were sold and Stoney Hollow Farm became Stoney Hollow Jerseys.

When you ask Don why the change to all Jerseys, he's quick to respond. Don felt with the market changing to component pricing the Jersey breed would work out better. Since they ship their milk to a cheese market and receive a premium for protein, the Jerseys seemed the right choice. Also, with the limited acreage, the farm could support more Jerseys than Holsteins. Don emphasizes the fact that the Jerseys were their breed of choice!



The Stonerook Family (l to r), Garrett, Jill, Jason, Donald, Earl & Pleasy.

During those years of change from a Holstein herd to a Jersey herd, some other changes took place. A TMR was installed in 1976, and although not the original mixer, this feeding concept is still working today. 1984 brought the addition of a computer feeder which is still delivering HMSC + a custom Pennfield PFR to the top producers today. Another change came about in 1989, when the switch from H.M. ear corn to H.M. shell corn was made. This was done to densify the ration and give it more consistency. Don always has, and still does, feed long stem hay. It's now offered in round bale form.

The labor situation has also changed over the years. Currently Earl & Pleasy still help a good bit (Don's quick to point out the value of his parents' help). In May, 1986, Don & Jill added another "helper", their son, Garrett. April, 1991 brought another "hired man", son Jason.

The two boys have already started to "share" the responsibilities of farming. Garrett is the cropsman, helping grandpa in the fields; Jason is the cow man, helping mom and dad around the barns. In the fall of 1992, additional manpower was added in the form of Don's nephew, Tom Greenleaf.

For the past several years Stoney Hollow Jerseys have started to merchandise breeding stock. Their first bull, Stoney Hollow Diplomat, was sold to ABS in July, 1992. The future plans are to increase this facet of their operation.

When asked about his future plans for the dairy herd, Don's reply is, "Right now we are at a pretty profitable level. I like the (level of) components of the milk we're shipping now. I'm not sure we'd make a whole lot more money if we continue to push harder. Bottom line is, the cost must be justified to give it a try."



Don Stonerook with one of his prize Jerseys, Stoney Hollow Legend Josie 326 days, 17,686 milk, 964 fat, 603 protein.

We at Pennfield appreciate the opportunity to work with the Stonerook Family and wish them continued success.



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