

# Holstein Association Improves Marketing, Services

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*Editor*

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. — Since hiring a chief executive officer and adopting a business plan, the National Holstein Association has already shown a profit on bottom-line operations compared to substantial months of losses just a short time ago.

"I am pleased to report that the early results show that the plan is working," said John M. Meyer, chief executive officer of the association, Brattleboro, Vt.

Meyer spoke Wednesday morning during the annual meeting at the National Holstein Convention at the Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City.

"We believe in the Holstein cow, and know that she is the cornerstone of the dairy industry," said Meyer.

Through May, the association shows a profit on operations of \$447,000, compared to a loss in 2001 in the first five months of \$780,000. There has been a bottom-line improvement of about \$1.23 million.

This marked the 13th year the association has shown a loss in its operation, Meyer noted.

The 2002 business plan has incorporated 15 separate objectives, which includes increasing the number of registrations and registration revenue by 3 percent to 328,000; increase the annual total of regular transfers from 49,000 forecasted for 2001 to 59,000 in 2002, thus increasing revenue; increasing revenue from Basic ID (34 new herds signed up year to date); packaging products and pricing incentives for customers; implementation of a national ID program for all bovines in place by the end of 2003; expanding ID programs and services in foreign countries; improving working relationship with U.S. AI companies; outsourcing export services associated with marketing Holstein cattle in Mexico; combining Holstein's database and Internet capabilities plus direct marketing to sell live cattle in Mexico; expansion of the Holstein Foundation; and other measures.

"Although the financial condition of the Holstein Association has been dismal in recent years, we cannot dwell on the past," Meyer said. "Rather, we must look to the future of this association and the Holstein cow we all believe in."

The Holstein board of directors has been busy, too, incorporating plans to improve services.

"The board wanted to hear the thoughts and concerns of our grass roots, so we hosted nine regional meetings across the U.S.," said Joann Hartman, Holstein Association USA president, Waterloo, Ill., Wednesday morning at the annual meeting.

"We listened to the strong feelings at these meetings of specific topics our members related to us," she said. The topics included ethics, TPI, finances, and to consider the discontinuation of programs not being used or those in the red.

Hartman appointed a TPI committee to meet and work diligently, she said, with the Genetic Advancement Committee to consider "if we can improve the TPI formula for members to feel more comfortable," she said. "That is what we are looking for, to improve the breed as well as equality for all size herds."

Some concerns: production records, percentage RHA animals, and others. The association members need to "let folks know how we feel about the credibility of our industry, honesty and integrity in the show ring, milk records, and a full disclosure of the identification of percentage RHA animals by showing their percentages on their pedigrees in catalogs as well as advertising or any time information is pres-

ented. As producers and Registered Holstein breeders, if you tell them loud and strong enough, they will listen."

The board and delegates need to work with young adults, noted Hartman, to get them involved in the governance process. "They are our future, and provide a fresh perspective on the challenges facing the dairy industry."




John M. Meyer, with wife Vicki, Wednesday at the National Holstein Convention. Photo by Andy Andrews, editor

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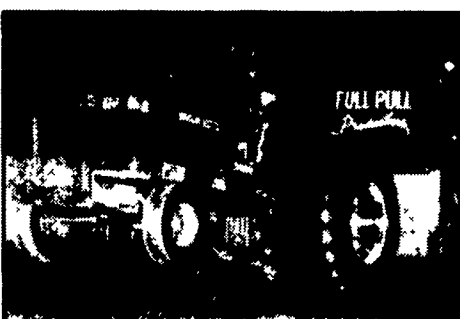

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