



SOUTHEASTERN

*Jarred and Tiisha Boyce of Easton, Md., strive
for quality cattle and quality cheese.*



HOLSTEIN NEWS



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Periodical Do Not Delay - Timed Material

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On the cover

Featured on the cover is the Boyce family, Jarred, Trisha and son, Trace. The Boyce family recently received recognition for being among the top 200 BAA Holstein herds in the country.

The heifer featured with them is Delt-Air KT Kutlass who was 2nd place and 1st place Bred and Owned Spring Calf at the 2018 All-American Dairy Show

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Southeastern Holstein News
17 W. Fourth St.
Waynesboro, PA 17268
717-762-5021

Joanna CalimerEditor
Telephone & Fax (717)762-5021 - 17 W. 4th St., Waynesboro, PA 17268 southeast@pa.net

Ginger CalimerGraphics & Layout Editor
southeast@pa.net

Benjamin Newberry National Director
Telephone (478)784-7682 - 5074 Newberry Rd., Lizella, GA 31052

Mike Hendrix.....Southeast Representative
Telephone (540)320-6128 - 2337 Grayson Pkwy, Independence, VA 24348 mhendrix@holstein.com

Sandy McCauley.....Southeast Representative
Telephone (717)371-7353 smccauley@holstein.com

Patrick Twining.....Southeast Representative
Telephone (440) 529-9159 -109 Main St., Rochester, OH 44090 ptwining@holstein.com

State Editors

Mrs. Charmayne BuskerState Editor, Delaware
Telephone (302) 398-4764 - 1676 Drapers Corner Rd., Harrington, DE 19952

Cassie Wagner State Editor, Georgia
Telephone (706) 831 - 4412 - 4315 Whitaker Rd., GA 30814 gaholsteins@yahoo.com

Alice Snedegar..... State Editor, Kentucky
Telephone (606) 209-3159 - 1544 Poplar Grove Rd, Flemingsburg, KY 41041 alicapplegate@hotmail.com

Josh SandersState Editor, Maryland
Telephone (732) 406-4949 - 670 Mehring Rd., Littlestown, PA 17340 sandersj91@hotmail.com

Mrs. Mary Strickland.....State Editor, North Carolina
Telephone (252) 459-3391 - 5382 Sykes Rd., Nashville, NC 27856

Tina Horn.....State Editor, South Carolina
Telephone (803) 276-1091 - 1860 Wilson Rd., Newberry, SC 29108 thorn@clemonson.edu

Ryan Gardner.....State Editor, Tennessee
Telephone (931)698-2126 - 5536 Leipers Creek Rd., Santa Fe, TN 38482 rrg2103@yahoo.com

Terry PerottiState Editor, Virginia
Telephone (540)-820-4342 - 1533 Lee Highway., Verona, VA 22842 ny2vadairywoman@yahoo.com

Sandy Davis.....State Editor, West Virginia
Telephone (304) 267-9096 - 13828 Apple Harvest Dr., Martinsburg, WV 25403 turtlewin2864@aol.com

Executive Committee

President James Cook
Vice President..... Denny Remsburg
SecretaryRebecca Daubert
TreasurerJoanna Calimer

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Jarred and Trisha Boyce with three of their cows that are high producing well pedigreed cows that represent what they aim for in their breeding program.

Breeding for Balance

By Katelyn Allen

In Trisha and Jarred Boyce's herd on the eastern shore of Maryland, balance is a necessary key. "Extremes aren't profitable in our system," says Trisha. The system she refers to is one that encompasses the dairy as well as Chapel's Country Creamery in Easton, where they make their milk into eight unique cheeses that are sold around the Delmarva area. However, the family points out that they are still in the business for the cows—and it shows in the quality of their animals. In fact, the couple recently received recognition for being among the top 200 BAA Holstein herds in the country. They also ranked second in the state with a BAA of 109.3 on 37 head classified during 2018.

These achievements are even more impressive when considering that Trisha and Jarred have only been dairying at their current facility for about two years. But make no mistake, they are no strangers to the industry. Both hailing from southern Pennsylvania, Jarred grew up working on and eventually managing multiple local dairy farms. Trisha was instrumental in her family's dairy as many young people are, active in youth organizations and showing their animals. Even after the farm's dispersal, she continued to work with her dad, raising and marketing some heifers to and for local dairymen while also working as a nurse. It was a special group of 15 of those heifers, from the herds at Tayacres Farm and Hickorymea Farms in Airville, Pa., that put her and Jarred's plans of getting back into farming into action.

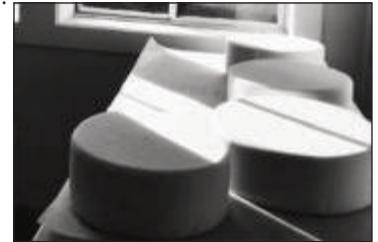
Their herd then expanded with milking cows purchased from the Schenning family of Strawberry-Acres, the Smiths at My Lady's Manor, and a few Jerseys from the Arrowsmiths at Hillacres. Sunnybend in York, Pa. was the source of some springing heifers. Trisha is quick to point out how gracious these farms were to allow her and Jarred to come in and hand-pick the animals they wanted to develop their herd. Many of the initial purchases proved to be solid foundation cows that remain part of the farm's successes today. For instance, Strawberry-Acres Loni Karr (EX-93), daughter of a homebred Strawberry-Acres bull, is the dam of a King Tut daughter that was second Spring Calf and first Bred and Owned at this year's All-American show for Trisha and Jarred. Unsuccessful attempts at flushing may mean that genetic progress proceeds at a more natural rate here, but the Boyces work hard to create and maintain good-uddered, good-legged, moderate-sized cows that will milk.

As evidenced by the BAA awards, type plays a big role in sire

selection on this farm; no bulls below +2.00 PTAT are used. However, good milk is also especially important since 15-20% of the milk produced is used in the cheesemaking process right on the farm. Service sires must have acceptable numbers for fat and protein levels and be below 3.00 for SCC. Of course, the Jerseys in the herd help boost component levels, but the Boyces enjoy the Holsteins too much to go fully Jersey. Still, those Holsteins are averaging around 85 pounds of milk with 4.3% fat and 3.3% protein, levels that work very well for their line of hard cheeses. The higher-fat Jersey milk is more suited for their soft cheeses.

Trisha recognizes that she takes her time evaluating pedigrees, records, and bull proofs to make mating decisions that will work with their cow families. If a certain bull hasn't settled well with their cows, or has sired calves easily getting sick, he won't be ordered again regardless of numbers. High genomic bulls have not gained much traction with the Boyces, as they prefer to be more aggressive in the cheese business than in the genomic game. Some aAa mating is considered along with linear evaluations because the Strawberry-Acres cows had numbers when they were purchased. This is a system that has further contributed to the idea of breeding balanced cows. The BAA recognition from Holstein Association USA reflects the work of the past five years, notes Trisha, and is a bright spot in today's industry.

Bay Blue cheese made on the farm from their cows pasteurized milk at 1 day of age.



The cheese enterprise has been another bright spot for this farm, allowing Jarred and Trisha to replace their supplemental off-farm incomes with a business that keeps them closer to their family and the cows. The opportunity to reinvent their product, with much more control over the marketing and development processes from start to finish, was what had drawn them to the idea of a value-added approach in the first place. The creamery had already been making cheese since 2004, and when it became available to operate along with the farm, it was a great fit for the couple. Jarred was able to learn the cheesemaking process, and with even more experience and growth in the future, Chapel's Country Creamery hopes to continue expanding their wholesale markets.

Good cheese made from good milk that comes from good cows—the Boyces certainly seem to have found all three with their system. It's the focus on breeding healthy, happy cows that makes this balance work.



Delt-Air KT Kutlass was 2nd place and 1st place Bred and Owned Spring Calf at the All-American Dairy Show 2018.