

Visualize the Future of the Jersey Breed

Address of

Donald S. Sherman, President
to the 139th Annual Meeting of the
American Jersey Cattle Association,
June 30, 2007, Sioux Falls, S.D.

As I picked up my *June Jersey Journal* to read that we are meeting this year in “Jersey Heaven,” and I read the editorial, I thought, “Wow, Iowa has replaced Hilmar.” AJCA Director Eric Lyon has dropped a few hints of this at past Board meetings, but you have to admit, he’s a bit biased. The Lyon family is truly pure Jersey.

But now that we’re here, I think that you will agree: This meeting has lived up to its advance billing. Congratulations, and thank you, to our Iowa hosts for a wonderful week!

It’s my pleasure to address you this morning at the 139th Annual Meeting of the American Jersey Cattle Association.

I just might be the only AJCA president to serve three years as president but chairing the Annual Meeting four times. The first annual meeting I called to order was as vice president at the 2000 Annual Meeting, when Paul Chittenden was unable to attend because of surgery.

In each case, it has been a privilege to do so, but never more so this year.

That is because 2006 was another great year of growth for USJersey, in spite of the poor dairy economy that prevailed last year.

The association recorded over 70,000 registrations for the third year in a row. That also gave us eight (8) years in a row over 60,000 registrations. I think we could see 75,000 registrations in 2007.

2006 semen sales of Jersey bulls in our domestic market was 1,424,679 units, an increase of 7.4% over 2005. On top of that, another 728,388 units were exported, a 12.6% increase over 2005.

The Association appraised 68,666 cows and had 109,702 cows on performance

programs at the end of the year.

The Dairy Industry

Dairying is a demanding business. We as Jersey breeders—together with the Jersey cow—have stood the test of time. We’ve watched breed numbers dwindle from the 1960’s through the 1980’s.

However we’ve seen a tremendous change in milk marketing in the past decade and a half, putting our Jersey cow on a level playing field where she has demonstrated her real value.



The 2007-2008 Board of Directors of the American Jersey Cattle Association. First row, from left: Neal Smith, Executive Secretary and Chief Executive Officer; David Chamberlain, President; Dennis Egelston, Vice President; Eric Lyon, chair of the Finance Committee;. Second row: Paula Wolf; Bob Stryk, chair of the Registration Committee; Jim VanBuskirk; Libby Bleakney; Charles Steer, Chris Sorenson; William Grammer; Rick Doran, chair of Development Committee; Scott Wickstrom, chair of the Breed Improvement Committee; and Craig Rhein.

Look at our Jersey bull line-up. Never before have we had such an outstanding list of well-balanced bulls for production and functional type. Never before have we had such choice to pick the kind of bull we like. Never before have we seen such commitment to sampling young sires.

With vision and outstanding leadership from the membership, staff and directors, our association has seen continuous growth in its programs and services. No other breed association has accomplished this feat in the past decade.

It is imperative that we continue to grow the business of USJersey. I am certain it is possible, because we have opportunities for growth that we have never had before and our momentum is building.

Last month in Dalhart, Texas at the USJersey Bottom Line 6 event, over 300 people attended the Avi-Lanche Jerseys Open House. Many were not dairy people but most were industry related. An invitation-only dinner that same night saw over 200 served. The next day the Bottom Line seminar continued with talks on designing and building facilities for Jerseys, and the Dalhart Jersey (heifer) Ranch was toured by over 200 people.

It was a great event. Everyone enjoyed themselves. Best of all, it was a show of Jersey momentum witnessed by people in the dairy industry, the general ag community—and most of all, the bankers.

The Jersey in the Press

This month, *Dairy Hotline* magazine published a feature article on Jerseys. Three stories on the Jersey breed and Jersey people were printed in *Progressive Dairyman*. In the *Hoard's West* June issue, editor Dennis Halladay wrote in his “Western Watch” column:

“Income-wise, the second half of 2007 looks like it will be fun for the Western dairy producers. Not just a little fun, but a **lot**—as in wishing you owned Jerseys and shipped to a cheese plant.

(For you fortunate folks who already do, try to hide the grins and hold down the chuckling).

Observations made by writers like Dennis Halladay of *Hoard's* magazine, reports on Jersey events like Bottom Line 6, and articles on the Jersey breed and Jersey people in magazines and newspapers across the country are making dairymen **think** . . . about Jerseys . . . about why the Jersey cow population is growing . . . and about our thriving, growing Association and its services that add value to Jersey cattle and Jersey milk.

I challenge each of you—breeders, staff, directors and Presidents—to cultivate these opportunities and help every dairyman who is **thinking** about Jerseys to **become**

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an owner of Jerseys and user of USJersey services.

Let's grasp these opportunities and grow, while we have the momentum.

Thank You for Your Jersey Passion

Family is most important to all of us and the Jersey cow has been part of our family my whole life.

I feel privileged to have been a part of our growth: to have served as an AJCA director under three different Presidents and two different Executive Secretaries, and for the past three years as your president. I hope that I have promoted new opportunities and kept traditional ideas alive with teamwork and input from AJCA members, staff and directors.

In closing:

- We must seize every opportunity to grow the Jersey breed.
- We need to find new ways to continue our prosperity and strengthen our Jersey breed association.

With the future of the Jersey breed and the future of our great Association in mind, I truly have appreciated the opportunity to serve as your AJCA President.

To each and every one of you, I say, "Thank you."