

## The Jersey: More Desirable in More Markets

*Address of  
James Ahlem, President  
to the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of National  
All-Jersey Inc., June 29, 2007, Sioux  
Falls, S.D.*

It is great to be in Iowa, or is it Heaven? With the milk prices lately, I know I am definitely in Heaven.

National All-Jersey has been really successful in bringing milk prices back to these levels. Well, that may be a tad bit overstated and maybe even a bit ridiculous, but what I can say with confidence is that it is largely through the efforts of National All-Jersey that many of us were able to survive the last year and one-half.

Without multiple component pricing how much more difficult would things have been? If you had to sell a few animals, were the prices still holding fairly well? What resources were you able to turn to when you had questions? These are the type of questions that the leadership and staff of our Jersey organizations ask themselves every day and a big reason why we continue to prosper and grow.

It feels good to look out at everyone who is here today and also to everyone who is active in their state and local Jersey activities. You are the larger leadership of the Jersey breed.

At our March Board meetings I talked about Board leadership and as I prepared for this meeting I realized that it ties into the fact that USJersey is the leader of the entire breed and how we need to continue to be a visionary organization.

I found an online site called CREATETHEFUTURE.COM where they talked about visionary leadership.

### The New Profile of Leadership

This new organization possesses some of the following characteristics: They are

visionary and future focused, spending most of their decision-making time looking forward. It possesses an entrepreneurial spirit, understanding that they operate in a fast changing marketplace seeking products and services to meet emerging customer needs. The new organization is a risk taker, balancing the need to take chances with the traditional stewardship responsibilities of organizational service. In the new organization, leaders also look



The 2007-2008 Board of Directors of National All-Jersey Inc. Front row, from left: Erick Metzger, General Manager; James Ahlem, President; James Huffard, Vice President; Neal Smith, Executive Secretary and Chief Executive Officer; Second row, from left: Eric Lyon; Rick Doran; David Chamberlain, AJCA President; Calvin Graber; Kelvin Moss; Dave Endres, Finance Chair; Sarah Mullen, Program Assistant. Not pictured: Norman Martin, Nico de Boer, and John Kokoski.

for creative ways to connect their organizations to the world around them, exploring and imagining new forms of partnerships and alliances that will support their missions and advance their strategic plans. This new organization also has a deep appreciation of the strength of diversity, understanding that diversity helps to assure a higher level of responsiveness to customers and also promotes creativity, innovation and organizational learning.

### Are We Part of this New Profile?

I think in many ways, we as NAJ are like this. Not that we planned to be this way but because the Jersey cow gives so many advantages that it is much easier to be a risk taker and succeed.

The past success of NAJ has been that it is visionary and future focused. We need to continue that tradition. We have a staff that is extremely talented and motivated and also visionary and future focused. We need to continue to grow membership through contact and education of the advantages of Jersey. I think that we are beginning to understand the strength of diversity.

I was visiting with a friend at the farm show in Tulare, Calif., who now milks more Jerseys than Holsteins but he said in his heart he is still black and white but he really loves his Jerseys. Who is more diverse?

I think most Jersey breeders don't mind if someone also has black and white but it is really tough for the opposite to be true as many of you here can attest to. We have been successful in a fast changing market place.

Our milk has properties that make it more desirable in high value markets, and we have captured much of that value, but there is a lot still on the table that needs to be pulled in. Erick continues to work at keeping our advantages in the pricing

arena but it is a system that is broken and will need to be rebuilt in the near future. NAJ must be there to make sure that high value milk is placed in the right markets that maximize the return for those who produce it while also maximizing the returns of those who convert it. The time is right to form new alliances and partnerships that support our missions and strategic plans.

In closing, I would like to thank all of you for taking the time to come to this meeting today and for your continued support of National All-Jersey, and a special thank you to all the staff of USJersey who so often go way beyond of what is asked of them to make this a successful organization. Owning Jerseys must be what Heaven is all about.