

USA Country Report 2013 World Guernsey Conference



Current conditions in the US dairy industry are providing challenges for US dairymen. Although milk prices are high, high feed and fuel costs are keeping profit margins low. Since we last met in Canada, the AGA and our members have certainly seen better times than those leading up to 2010. 2009 was perhaps the worst year ever for dairy farm economics with almost all members losing significant equity in their operations just to stay in business. The AGA has operated with a profit for the last three years (2010-12). Despite this, total new Guernseys registered has dropped with a significant loss of 500 registrations from 2011 to 2012.



Registrations

2012 – 4,131

2011 - 4,635

2010 – 4,844

2009 – 4,315

A renewed emphasis has been placed on improving reproduction in the breed along with a desired improvement in protein yields and percent. We feel we have made great strides in improving type traits associated with longevity as well as fat percent in the breed and now must concentrate on reproduction and protein. To work towards this goal the CPI/PTI formula has been changed to place 7% of the weight on Daughter Pregnancy Rate (DPR) and 35% on protein. In 2012, Coulee Crest Nick Lorilyn, EX-90, became the first 2nd-generation cow to make over 40,000 pounds of milk.



Coulee Crest Nick Lorilyn, EX-90

Demand has been strong for Registered Guernseys in the US with many sale highlights. AGA has exported embryos to Thailand, Finland, Argentina, Australia and Japan in recent years. The 2013 National Convention Sale set a record for National Convention Sales with an average of \$5,952 on 44 head and a \$28,500 top seller. The 2012 National Convention Sale saw 94 embryos average \$501 each. The 2012 Spring For Colors Sale averaged \$4,650 on 18 open heifers to be the highest averaging breed in this all-breed sale. The 2011 Four Winds Dispersal averaged over \$5,000 with a \$12,000 top, highlighting the strong market throughout the sale.

AGA's Guernsey Marketing Service has significantly increased semen marketing activity, going from just \$7,000 in semen marketed in 2009 to \$33,600 worth of semen marketed in 2012.

A2 milk and the natural advantage that the Guernsey cow maintains is a major issue in the US. AGA has been testing sires and publishing the A2 status for all known bulls. A steady market exists for A2 Guernsey cows going into family dairies and small, raw-milk dairies. The Chupp Farm dispersal represented the first significant public offering of A2 Guernseys with 25 individuals sold with known and published A2 status.

The AGA youth programs continue to be a source of pride for our members. Our schedule of shows, contests and recognition programs allows us to attract and maintain the next generation of US Guernsey breeders.



A2 Milk

- Testing Most Sires & Printing Results
- Selling to small-scale farms
Primarily Family Milk Cow & Raw Milk Dairies
Chupp Farm
Dispersal June 2013
26 Head Sold with known A2 Status

I will give a brief review of the young sires sampled in the breed in the last three years. I have noted the Parent Average for DPR of each group to show that individual selection for this trait, above the emphasis placed in the PTI formula, is clearly taking place.

2010 – 18 bulls sampled.

3 Breeder or Group Sampled

15 AI Sampled

Avg. DPR -.83

11 Different Sires – 6 Aaron, 3 Spider

13 Different MGS – 3 Royal Oak, 3 Tiller

2011 – 12 bulls sampled.

1 Breeder or Group Sampled

11 AI Sampled

Avg. DPR -.28

7 Different Sires – 3 Natural, 2 Goldust, 2 Yogi, 2 Tiller Les

9 Different MGS – 3 Tiller, 2 Enhancer

2012 – 14 bulls sampled.

4 Breeder or Group Sampled

10 AI Sampled

Avg. DPR -.11

Avg. DPR -.11

11 Different Sires – 3 Grumpy, 2 Natural

12 Different MGS - 2 Tiller Nick, 2 Idle Neer Success

2013 – 8 bulls sampled.

0 Breeder or Group Sampled

8 AI Sampled

Avg. DPR -.11

Avg. DPR -.11

7 Different Sires – 2 Alstar

6 Different MGS – 2 Tiller Les, 2 Challenge

Seth Johnson

Executive Secretary American Guernsey Association