

"Why Jerseys?"

Dani Karn, answered our question on "Why Jerseys?". Dani farms with her family in Woodstock under the Karnvilla prefix. Dani was the Champion Junior Showperson, and Reserve Grand Champions Showperson at the 2018 TD Canadian 4H Dairy Classic, with her 4H calf, *Hollylane Viral Shania*.



How did you get interested in Jerseys?

For my second calf club project, I was offered the opportunity to show a sweet jersey calf named Roesbett VR Barbie Doll, owned by Gerry Roefs and family. It was a fantastic experience ! Since then, this is the breed that I prefer to train and show.

Where did you find information on the breed to make your decisions?

I think that my own experience training and showing jersey calves is the primary factor that has contributed to my decision. However, seeing the Jersey Breed display at the Outdoor Farm show, other jerseys at shows I attend and visiting herds and sales with my Dad have also been great resources to gather information about the breed.

Who mentored you or assisted you?

I have a few connections to Jerseys. Although Karnvilla is known as a Holstein herd, my Grandma Edith (my dad's mom) actually grew up on a Jersey farm on the 10th line in Oxford County. She has always enjoyed the fact that we have introduced some brown into the herd and likes to follow my accomplishments with Jersey calves. I look up to my brother Derek (Karnation Jerseys), who has set an example for me in the show ring. He does a lot at home on the farm so that I can attend various shows. He teases me about the jerseys, reminding me that they can be super stubborn because I spoil them. At one time, our home farm, was owned by Durno Innes, and housed some Jerseys in the 1940's & 50's. Lastly, my parents have encouraged and mentored me the most. My dad was very involved in 4-H growing up. He has patiently taught me to fine tune my showmanship skills , to have the right approach and finesse at just the right moments . He is teaching me to clip and set top lines and I hope to get better at those fitting skills. My mom and dad have taught me to encourage others, to stay grounded and most importantly, to win or lose graciously.

Why do you like the breed?

To date, I have shown 5 calves as 4-H projects and I really love this breed. First , they are so undeniably cute and sweet looking. Second, they are a great size for me proportionally and they stay a manageable size throughout the length of the show season. Best of all, each of these calves have had so much character and personality that they make our time training together really enjoyable. I do spend a lot of time training but, never find it tedious. I really feel like I have managed to form a special bond with each of them and that this bond helps to keep us connected and in sync in the show ring. I train them with patience and love and I feel like they give me love in return. We now milk two of the calves I have shown . So, they are now contributing to the finances of the farm and are easily meeting our criteria of productivity because of their high components. I enjoy the fact that they still look for the chin scratches and hugs when they see me in the barn.



Your goals

We have recently met a goal and acquired the Karnvilla Jerseys prefix and are currently milking 6 jersey cows in the herd but have a total of 12. I plan to continue saving my money to be able to buy exceptional calves that will hopefully be successful in the showing and then, later in our herd. I am looking for long term success, beyond the 4-H season and to build progeny from the animals I buy. I like to judge cattle too and have learned to appreciate the conformation and pedigree of a beautiful calf, that will hopefully mature into a beautiful, productive cow. I'd like to see our small jersey herd get bigger with special top pedigreed Jerseys and animals that I have shown as 4-H projects. I would like to be involved in the breed and feeding program for our Jersey's and any other decisions for this herd. I just turned 15 and after high school, I hope to attend University and to one day work in the Agricultural sector. All the experiences I will gain through 4-H and working on our home farm, will definitely be to my benefit in the future.

Future advice you would have to anyone interested in Jerseys or introducing Jerseys into their herd.

It has been 5 years since I was given the opportunity to have my first jersey 4-H calf and I have grown to love and appreciate this breed. I would suggest that new, young members try this breed as an option for showing cattle as they are smaller and more manageable. If possible, raise her beyond the 4-H season, calve her out and see what kind of cow she develops into, because the Jersey breed is an efficient breed that have high components and great hoof health. I think we all have to keep an open mind about the best options for managing our farms and meeting production and financial goals in the future. I am proud to own a few jerseys and to have had a part in introducing them to our existing herd both as 4-H projects and now highly contributing producers.