

## Junior Awards Featured at New York Picnic

An awards ceremony for juniors was the highlight of the New York Jersey Cattle Club summer picnic. The event was hosted by Anthony and Debbie Crothers and their daughters, Blake and Kennedy, 18-year-old twins, Camryn, 8, and Maci, 7, at their farm in Pitcher, N.Y., on July 16, 2017.

Rachel Eichorst, Pitcher, was crowned as the 2017 New York Jersey Queen. The high school senior is the daughter of Robert and Angela Eichorst. She plans to continue her education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where she will major in agriculture business. Her herd of 10 Registered Jerseys is managed at Riverside Dairy LLC, a 1,200-cow Holstein dairy where her father is a managing partner.

Rachel is treasurer of the Cortland County 4-H Club and was named first alternate dairy princess in the contest sponsored by the Chenango County Dairy Promoters. She also participates in dairy quiz bowl and shows at the local and state levels.

Kylie Lehr, Canastota, was named winner of the youth achievement contest. The daughter of John and Lynda Lehr is a freshman at Cornell University majoring in animal science. She operates Ky-Hi Jerseys, a herd of 20 Registered Jerseys, raising heifers on her family farm and cows on four other dairies with milking facilities.

Kylie attended Jersey Youth Academy in 2017 and recently received the Bob Toole Youth Award. She actively participates in All American festivities. She consigned to the sale four times and won a yield deviation protein award in the 2011 junior show with herd matriarch, Havs Lovabull Watchfull-P, Excellent-93%. She has been secretary of the New York Junior Jersey Cattle Club the past two years and was selected for Cornell University's Junior Dairy Leader program.

Maxwell Chittenden, Schodack Landing, received the New York Jersey Cattle Club scholarship. The son of Alan and Donna Chittenden is a sophomore at the State College of New York College of Agriculture and Technology at Cobleskill, majoring in agriculture engineering. He takes a special interest in the farming side of the family business, Dutch Hollow Farm, feeding on weekends and during the summer and helping with planting and harvesting.

He attended Jersey Youth Academy in 2017 and is the breeder of the popular active A.I. bull, Dutch Hollow Oliver-P, GJPI +118.

In the youth production contest, Lowell Chamberlain, Wyoming, placed first in the division for cows calving before 30 months-of-age with Hi-Top Paul Buttons.

The Desirable-77% daughter of D&E Paul-ET, GJPI +77, made a record with an m.e. of 32,036-1,406-1,046 and a value of \$8,665.54. Actual production is 23,580 lbs. milk, 1,068 lbs. fat and 772 lbs. protein at 1-9.

In the division for cows calving over 30 months-of-age, Nathan Lawton, Newark Valley, placed first with Lawtons Legal Peanut. The Excellent-90% daughter of Tollenaars Impuls Legal 233-ET, GJPI +71, made a 3-10 record of 27,450 lbs. milk, 1,291 lbs. fat and 1,071 lbs. protein and a value of \$8,528.79. The m.e. on her second lactation is 27,919-1,298-1,091.

Other juniors to place in the division for younger cows were: Ryan Lawton, Newark Valley, second; Maxwell Chittenden, third; and Lydia Chittenden, Schodack Landing, fourth.

Other juniors earning prizes in the division for older cows were: Meagan Chittenden, Schodack Landing, second; Emily Chittenden, Schodack Landing, third; and Jasmine Noteboom, Warwick, fourth.

Members also heard reports from committee chairs and selected nominees for national Jersey awards. There was also brief discussion about the 2019 AJCA-NAJ Annual Meetings to be hosted by New York Jersey breeders in Saratoga Springs.

AJCA-NAJ Area Representative Sara Barlass provided insight on cattle marketing conditions. She encouraged breeders to vaccinate for brucellosis to ensure their cattle can be sold to dairies in western states, where demand is currently high and calfhood vaccination mandated.

### Farm Tour

Anthony and Debbie moved to New York in May 2007 after farming with his family in Maryland for eight years. They established the dairy herd, Underground Genetics, with Holsteins and a few Jerseys as a hobby. Thanks to feed efficiency and merchandising opportunities, however, the "hobby" herd has grown, with Jerseys now representing the bulk of the 80-cow herd. Underground Genetics is enrolled on REAP and has a 2016 lactation average of 17,301 lbs. milk, 853 lbs. fat and 639 lbs. protein. The herd includes 31 Excellent and 23 Very Good cows and has an appraisal average of 89.3%.

Jersey breeders were given opportunity to see how the Crothers' have built the farm from the ground up, transforming it from acreage with a barn and house, both in need of repair, to the operation it is today. To get started, the Crothers' purchased a used, double-six parlor and a new bulk tank. They took out some of the freestalls in the barn to make room for a bedded pack for heifers and put on a new roof. Calves from

weaning through six months-of-age are raised in four bedded-pack pens in a calf barn built three years ago. Baby calves are raised in hutches. The new calf barn has been a tremendous help in transitioning calves from hutches to group housing, where they must compete for feed.

Cleanliness and milk quality are paramount to the Crothers. The freestall barn is cleaned daily and the heifer packs groomed up to four times a day. Underground Genetics has been among the top three herds for milk quality for their milk cooperative, Preble Milk Cooperative Inc., for many years, with somatic cell and persistent infection counts consistently below 100,000.

An extensive invitro fertilization program at Underground Genetics allows the Crothers' to heavily merchandise their best genetics. Last year, more than 100 head were sold privately and through consignment sales.

Showing is a favorite pastime for the family. Among the recent successes are Grand and Reserve Grand Champion laurels at the 2016 Mid-Atlantic Regional Junior Jersey Show for Kennedy and Blake with WF Fire Sunrise and TJ Classic Action Venus, respectively. "Venus" was also named 2016 Junior All American Senior Two-Year-Old. Several other individuals bred by the Crothers' have earned All American honors as well.