



SUCCESSFUL JERSEY DAY HELD AT JASMYN, HOME OF MOUNT MAGALIES JERSEYS



The Highveld Jersey Club presented a well-organised and most enjoyable Jersey Day on 25th October 2023 with around 100 dairy enthusiasts in attendance.



The Erasmus family, Desmond, Derek, Michelle, Hannelie, their children, and dairy manager Trevor Trollope pulled out all the stops to ensure a pleasant and informative dairy day. Attended by Club's members along with a variety of individuals who in their own capacity have an impact on the dairy industry as well as a contingent of veterinary students from Onderstepoort. Des acknowledged the important part played by his brother Raymond in building up the Mount Magalies herd from scratch.

The day kicked off with a viewing of the milking herd, divided into two groups of 60 cows each, the high producers and the first calvers. Des Erasmus explained how pleased they were with a newly introduced housing system, where the cows now rest on deep litter inside an open-sided barn, equipped with multiple fans to keep the air moving during the heat of the day.



A trough runs the full length of the shed, along a concrete floor for ease of mechanical cleaning and feeding, the only hard surface on which the cows have to stand. Although the groups have access to spacious loafing areas outside, they remain lying comfortably on the deep litter, chewing their cuds contentedly, however during the winter months, they will most likely venture outside into the sun.

Despite the large number of animals confined in each pen, the cows and their udders were remarkably clean. Even as a horde of visitors moved between them, the cows were relaxed and many remained lying down. The overall impression was one of happy, healthy cows, despite the stresses of modern dairy production. While it might be too early to tell, at this stage their hooves appeared to be in good trim.

John Terblanche (Jersey SA) and James Paterson gave a brief commentary on individual animals as the visitors moved through the herd. They tried to emphasise the important traits necessary for a long, healthy, and productive life to ensure a profitable cow.



Daarna het almal na die amfiteater beweeg vir die formele gedeelte van die program, gehou onder die bekwame toesig van Leon Botha (Afgri). Trevor Colby het almal verwelkom en die borge bedank en hulle aan die vergadering voorgestel.

Trevor het die vraag aan die vergadering gestel; Hoekom sukkel Jersey telers om die ware kostes, om 'n vers tot op die punt van eerste kalwing te bring, van die kopers te verhaal? Van die groter telers teenwoordig het bereken dat dit tussen R22,000 en R25,000 kos om 'n Jerseyvers tot kalwing te kry en dat bitter min van hulle daardie uitgawe terug kan kry uit die verkoop van n vers. Die gemiddelde prys wat telers tans kry is tussen R17,000 en R20,000, dus 'n verlies van omtrent R5000 per vers verkoop.



Die gevolgtrekking was dat dit maar 'n kwessie van "supply and demand" was en dat telers net meer kostebewus hul taak sal moet aanpak – nie so maklik nie, soos die volgende spreker sou uitspel.

Chris Fourie (DMC) het 'n insiggewende toespraak gelewer, juis oor die doeltreffende grootmaak van suiwelverse. Hy het die belangrikheid van selfs die kleinste besonderhede in so 'n onderneming

beklemtoon; van die hantering en toediening van die eerste biesmelk, stiptelike inenting teen die heersende kalfsiektes, gerieflike en skoon behuising, voldoende en die korrekte voeding vir elke stadium van die vers se ontwikkeling. Enige terugslag vir 'n vers oor haar twee jaar ontwikkelingsperiode sal by haar bly en haar toekomstige produktiwiteit benadeel. Opsommend, duur aan aandag en duur aan uitgawes, maar geen kort of goedkoop uitweg nie.

Gert van Zyl (DairySmid) stressed the importance of foot and hoof care in dairy cows. Painful feet impair the cow's ability to move around freely, to fight for space at the feed trough, or to graze out on pastures (often a considerable distance from the dairy), all resulting in a decrease in her production and fertility (heat detection). Foot and leg problems account for a significant percentage of involuntary culling amongst dairy cows, ranked third highest after fertility and health (mastitis) problems.

Hoof trimming and care, using DairySmid's sophisticated equipment, causes the animal minimal stress and is quick and safe. Regular monitoring of the herd's feet and hooves is essential to identify possible problems and to intervene timeously before the cow's productivity is affected or the problem becomes chronic.





Young Timothy Colby, a student at NWU, Potchefstroom, made the case that established dairymen, often on the elderly and conservative side, needed to employ younger people who are better equipped to keep up with and exploit the considerable advantages of fast-developing technology related to more profitable production. Younger, tech-savvy people are more accustomed to understanding and implementing the necessary changes in technological systems. He made the case that the result

is twofold, the young individual gains experience, and the commercial farmer becomes exposed to new innovations in the industry.



Two leading buyers of Jersey milk in Gauteng, Morris Bandini of Bandini Cheese, and Rob Ward, Chief Executive Officer of Douglasdale, brought a sobering message to the meeting – that the present upwardly trending on-farm milk price was at or very near to its peak, thus likely to start declining soon. Such cycles in the dairy industry have plagued dairy farmers and milk buyers since the demise of the Dairy and Milk Control Boards some 35 years ago and are likely to do so well into the future, with no solution to the problem likely.

Both milk buyers stressed that they were looking for quality milk, high in milk solids, excellent bacterial count, and low SCC, and were prepared to pay a premium for such milk. Efficient and well-managed Jersey herds on the highveld are well-positioned to take advantage of this need and receive the higher price.



Die baie interessante program word afgesluit met die prysuitdeling van Jersey SA se Modelkudde toekennings vir 2022.

Die Beste Genetiese Kudde in Suid Afrika gaan aan Ivor Reid se Haystack Jerseys en vir Model Kuddes (wat onder die top 5 in Suid Afrika val) aan Leon Thom van Leon-Thom Jerseys. Veels geluk aan albei vir julle uitstekende prestasies.

