

# THE PULSE

Fall 2024 • Holstein Association USA, Inc.



**U.S. REGISTERED HOLSTEINS®**

THE WORLD'S PERFECT COW



# BRINGING THE HOLSTEIN COMMUNITY TOGETHER AT NATIONAL CONVENTION

The 2024 National Holstein Convention in Salt Lake City is in the books, and by all accounts, it was a successful one. This year's event, attended by well over 700 Holstein enthusiasts, was different than past conventions because it was the first National Convention planned and carried out by our national association. So, let's step back and remind ourselves why?

For the last while, it was becoming evident that state associations have been finding it more difficult to host conventions for a variety of reasons. Kentucky in 2023 was the last state that stepped up to offer to be a host state. After considerable discussion with the board, staff, and membership, the concept of our association managing National Conventions in the future was enthusiastically embraced.

### A convention to remember

Conventions in the future will look much like the conventions of the past. We will continue to offer a format and activities that attendees enjoy. The annual business meeting, educational events, and time for social activities rank high on everyone's preference. Planners will continue to offer a broad range of events that will appeal to a wider segment of the industry.

New this year was the Holstein Horizons seminar. The day long event highlighted speakers and round table discussions on topics pertinent to the dairy industry. Attendees were offered the opportunity to ask questions and comment. The event received rave reviews from attendees, both young and old.

The Junior Convention continues to be a refreshing experience for all. We can be proud of our Junior members and the positive message they present to our industry. Going forward, convention planners will work to make events even more exciting, and appeal to more young prospective dairy enthusiasts.

**The long-standing tradition of our National Conventions being a "must attend" event for our members will remain.**

The proof of this year's convention success can be highlighted by the results of the post-convention survey.

One convention attendee reported, "Junior events as a whole were my favorite part of the National Convention. They were very well done this year in both the social capacity and contests."

Another wrote in their survey, "The convention gives everyone an opportunity to share ideas and discuss farming in different areas of the country. It also gives old friends time to visit."

### Looking ahead

While financial considerations will always play a role in planning for these events, keeping the cost reasonable for families and attendees is of utmost importance. The new feature of online and early registration was widely accepted. Significant savings were made available by this method of payment.

Planners for next year's convention in St. Louis, Missouri, are already excited about implementing positive changes learned from this year's experience. To stay up-to-date on the latest information on the 2025 Convention, visit [www.holsteinconvention.com](http://www.holsteinconvention.com) or follow National Holstein Convention on Facebook or Instagram.

Venues will change, certain activities will change, depending on the geographic location, but the long-standing tradition of our national conventions being a "must attend" event for our members will remain. It will present opportunities to hold annual meetings in locations that never before would be possible (i.e. Orlando, in 2026).

Kudos to Holstein staff, and all that made the 2024 National Holstein convention a great success! I hope to see and visit with many of you at the 2025 Convention in St. Louis next summer.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John". The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional style.

**John Burket, President  
Holstein Association USA, Inc.**

# REGISTERED HOLSTEIN® DEMAND SURGES



**N**ow is a great time to be a Registered Holstein breeder! Current market conditions combined with the quality and versatility of the Holstein breed have made the demand for your cattle skyrocket!

The strategy of using beef semen on Holsteins, which has become quite common for a number of years, has created high demand not only for Holstein/beef cross bull calves but also

Registered Holstein calves, heifers and cows, like we haven't seen in many years. According to USDA, total replacement heifer inventory in the United States has dropped more than 263,000 head this year compared to last. Currently, there are approximately 4.06 million dairy heifers weighing 500 pounds and over, which is the smallest inventory on record since 2004.

USDA releases another report that encompasses the total inventory of beef cows, milk cows, bulls, replacement heifers, other steers and heifers, and the calf crop for the current year. The All-Cattle and Calves Report from January 1 of this year was 87.2 million total head. This represents USDA's lowest inventory since 1951.

The calf crop which consists of both beef and dairy animals, as does the previous report, was estimated at 33.6 million head. This is the smallest calf crop since 1948 when it stood at 33.1 million head. It's no wonder why there's so much demand for your cattle right now.

In the USDA's Report for the month ending Saturday, August 31, 2024, it reported that No. 1 Holstein heifer calves weighing 80-130 pounds averaged \$647.66. We know of Holstein heifer calves bringing much more than that, and it's not uncommon to see Holstein/beef bull calves selling for \$900.00.

From my vantage point, I see milk supplies remaining tight for the foreseeable future. This environment will drive the demand and price for your Registered Holstein calves, heifers and cows. If you haven't been contacted already by other dairies looking to expand their herd, you likely will.

For those of you looking to buy or sell Registered Holsteins, consider placing an ad on our Marketplace on the Holstein Association USA website. The Marketplace is a convenient

and user-friendly way of selling or buying high quality Holstein calves, heifers, embryos, and breeding bulls along with promoting upcoming sales and dispersals. Holstein Marketplace is an exclusive classified section available at [www.holsteinusa.com/marketplace](http://www.holsteinusa.com/marketplace).

Don't be surprised if you see your Holstein heifer calves commanding more money than Holstein/beef cross bull calves by the end of this year or early next.

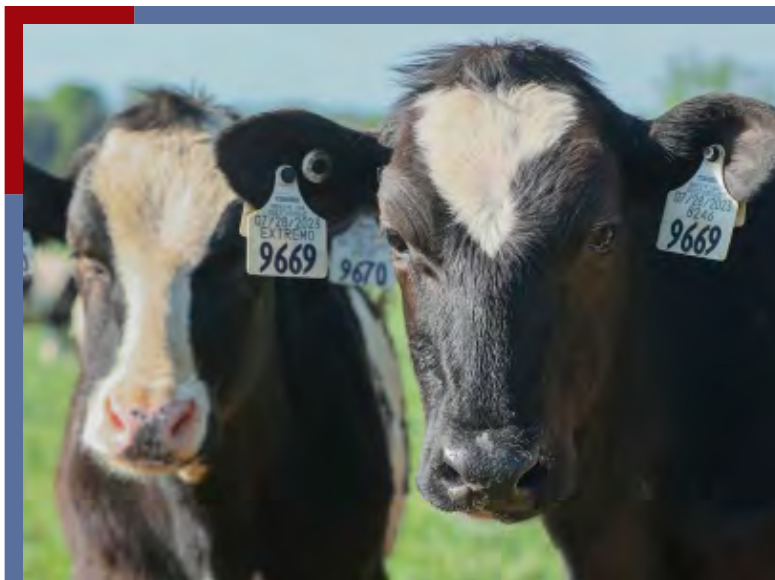
As I write this column, September corn is selling for \$3.87 and soybeans are selling for \$9.91. These prices bode well for everyone selling milk and many dairies are trying to increase their herd size quickly and take advantage of these low input costs.

If you're interested in selling any of your Registered Holsteins, don't be shy, be fair to yourself and reflect the value of your quality genetics and the meaningful data you have behind them to market your animals.

The high powered and convincing data that comes from your pedigrees, and the other programs we provide you shows the value behind your Registered Holsteins that grade animals don't have. Data and information are always king, and the value is heightened when demand is high like it is today.

Now is the perfect time for you to take advantage of this wonderful market opportunity!

**John M. Meyer, Chief Executive Officer  
Holstein Association USA, Inc.**



# A WORLD OF A DIFFERENCE

Genetic technology enables Bon Homme Colony to make fast progress.

Sitting just off the banks of the Lewis and Clark Lake, which is part of the Missouri River, is Bon Homme Hutterian Brethen, Inc. Located near Tabor, South Dakota, Bon Homme is the first Hutterite colony in the United States. The bustling community is home to a variety of agricultural and entrepreneurial endeavors, including dairy, beef, pigs, sheep, broilers, crops, a 20-acre garden, a feed mill, and a manufacturing company.

“Our ancestors moved here from Ukraine in 1874. That’s kind of when the dairy got started,” says herdsman Martin Stahl, who manages the dairy alongside Joel Waldner.

Almost 200 people call Bon Homme Colony home, where faith and farming are the cornerstones of their daily lives. The dairy has evolved since the late 1800s, and today they milk 360 Registered Holsteins® twice a day in a 36-stall rotatory parlor.

Just as the landscape of the farm has changed as the years have gone on, growing and evolving to support each new generation, so have the genetics of their dairy herd. However, one thing continues to ring true – the emphasis on being self-sufficient.

This principle has driven them to use genetic technology to make their Holsteins more profitable. The investment in advancing their herd of Registered Holsteins is paying off in many ways.

## Unlocking genetic progress

When the Bon Homme colony expanded their dairy from 100 cows to their current size of 360 cows in 2008, they purchased

any affordable Holstein cows they could find. As Martin and Joel begin working with the expanded herd, they recognized a need for better genetics.

“We decided to start genomic testing in 2015 to see where we sit on a genetic level and started breeding off of that information,” Joel explained.

Martin and Joel saw positive results quickly and decided to take their genetic program to the next level by using embryo transfer. To get their foot in the door, they began working with Jim Vierhout. He brought embryos in and implanted them in recipients from the Bon Homme herd. Over time, as the genetics of the herd improved, they started using donors from their own herd.

Martin described the transformation of their herd, a result of using tools like genomics and embryo transfer, as “a world of a difference.” It also changed how they thought about their cows when making breeding decisions.

“We treat every animal as an individual,” Joel says. “Every individual animal has a unique story. Either they’re good recipients or they’re good donors.”

Eventually, Martin and Joel decided it was time to become more self-sufficient. They attended a two-day training course at Agtech in Manhattan, Kansas, which offers hands-on classes in bovine embryo transfer and artificial insemination to dairy and beef producers and veterinarians.

There, they learned how to transfer embryos and flush cows. While Martin and Joel agree it was a lot of information to take in, they say it was helpful to rely on each other.



**“The Holstein Association is a big part because of the mating program, especially the inbreeding calculator. I use that program every day.”**

**- Joel Waldner**





L-R: Herdsmen Martin Stahl and Joel Waldner work together to improve the genetics of the Registered Holstein herd at Bon Homme Colony in South Dakota.



BHC Gameday 3879-ET is an elite animal in their breeding program. Photo credit: Austin Ripp

“We got some compliments at the school about how well we worked together,” Martin remembers. “It would be a lot harder if we didn’t have each other to bounce problems off of,” Joel adds.

Now, Joel and Martin flush and implant at least 25 embryos every two weeks, doing all the embryo transfer work themselves. The investment they made in the training program and equipment such as microscopes, an incubator, and freezer, has paid off.

### Boosting value

With the genetics of their herd rapidly improving, Bon Homme began registering and classifying their cows as well. The herd is on Holstein COMPLETE, which integrates Holstein Association USA’s core products and services into a cost-effective package.

“The Holstein Association is a big part because of the mating program, especially the inbreeding calculator,” Joel said. “I use that program every day.”

Martin concentrates on cow reproduction, while Joel focuses on the heifers. Joel oversees picking bulls and uses the inbreeding calculator on Holstein Association USA’s website to help guide his decisions. He describes it as a fun job.

“We breed for good udders, good feet and legs, high TPI, and high net merit animals,” Joel says. “We look for the weak point in both the bull and dam and try to breed accordingly.”

Bon Homme’s focus on genetics is garnering success, and after the August 2024 genetic update, two animals on the Top 200 High Ranking TPI Genomic Females list from Holstein Association USA have their BHC prefix.

It’s also opened opportunities to market their Registered Holstein genetics. In addition to regularly selling heifers, they’ve sold embryos internationally to Germany and France. They’ve also had an animal in the World Classic Sale at World

Dairy Expo regularly for the past several years, underscoring the demand for their cattle.

Back in the barn, genetic improvements have added pounds of components to their tank.

“We have a 4.6 average on fat with 80 pounds of milk,” Martin says. “That’s one of the improvements we’ve seen.”

### Future in focus

The Registered Holstein herd at Bon Homme has come a long way in a short time. Animals like BHC Gameday 3879-ET, who is over +3200 GTPI, illustrate the progress made.

Although there are no milking daughters from 3879 in the herd yet, she has several offspring over +3200 GTPI and they’ve had over 50 pregnancies out of her. They’re excited about the future impact her offspring will have in their herd and beyond.

Martin and Joel agree, making thoughtful breeding decisions and watching the herd improve as a result makes dairy farming more fulfilling.

“I enjoy putting in embryos and then on the other end, doing the preg check, and seeing the results,” Martin says. “It’s fun to see the genetic increase.”

The herdsmen also recognize the added revenue high-quality Registered Holstein genetics provide. For cows that don’t breed back on the first cycle, they often breed them to beef bulls, raising the resulting beef-on-dairy crosses through to harvest.

“There are more profit sources on a dairy,” Joel explains. “There’s milk, which is the big one, there’s beef, and there’s genetic potential.”

At the end of the day, it’s not just the cows that make dairy farming worth it, but the people they work with along the way.

“The key to our success has been working together with industry people and among ourselves,” Joel emphasizes.

# SEAMLESS EAR TAG ORDERING

Holstein Association USA launches MyHolstein online tag store.



The MyHolstein online tag store provides everything needed to easily and efficiently order ear tags at your fingertips. The new platform elevates the ordering experience from start to finish, with several new features and a simplified process.

Holstein Association USA staff have been placing ear tag orders through the MyHolstein tag store since last summer and over 1.2 million tags have already been processed through the system. Features like order history, faster turnaround time, tracking numbers, and mobile device compatibility are just a few benefits of the online tag store.

## Key features

The MyHolstein online tag store showcases several brand-new features designed with feedback we heard from our customers. The functionality and information available on the site make ordering tags easier and more efficient than ever, while providing more useful information with the click of a button. Here's a look at the core features available to you in the tag store.

**Order anytime, anywhere** – You will be able to place your order from start to finish through the online portal. The site is compatible on a computer, smartphone, or tablet, making it easy to use from any location at any time of day.

**Order confirmation and shipping tracking** – You will get an order confirmation email after you submit your order and an email with tracking information as soon as your order ships. This will allow you to more easily keep tabs on your tags from the time you order to the time it arrives at your doorstep.

**Faster turnaround time** – Tag orders are sent directly to Allflex as soon as users hit the “Check Out” button, eliminating processing delays and resulting in a faster turnaround time. This also means the order will be printed exactly as it's been submitted, so be sure to double-check your order is correct before checking out.

**New tag options** – Some new tag options will be made available on the new site, including maxi tags with the herd management number printed on both sides of the tag.

**Order history** – You will have easy access to your order history, which includes many convenient features, such as a list of previous orders. If you want to place a tag order identical to one in your order history, simply click “Order Again” and enter the quantity and herd management number series you want, without having to re-configure all the other options (style, color, etc.).

**Download 840 numbers** – Your Order History also provides a downloadable file of 840 numbers, making them easy to load into your herd management software. Click “Export 840s” to download an Excel file with your 840 numbers directly onto your computer.

**Pre-filled information** – When you log into the MyHolstein online store, your premises ID number will be pre-loaded based on what is saved in the Holstein Association USA system for your account. You can choose a quantity of tags and the starting herd management ID number, and the ending number will be automatically populated for you. Shipping addresses will also be pre-loaded from our system.

**Clearly displayed information** – As you navigate the website to select your tag product categories and options, you will see a picture of every tag product offered along with written descriptions and



specifications. As you choose the color, back type, and print size options you want, the picture will update automatically to show the exact product you're ordering.

**Transparent pricing** - Pricing is clearly displayed on the page and you can easily view any volume discounts that may be offered.

### How to sign up

To place your next tag order, visit [www.myholstein.com](http://www.myholstein.com) and create an account using your Holstein Association USA account number. You will also need access to the email address associated with your account. Click "Create Account" and navigate through the steps to set your username and password.

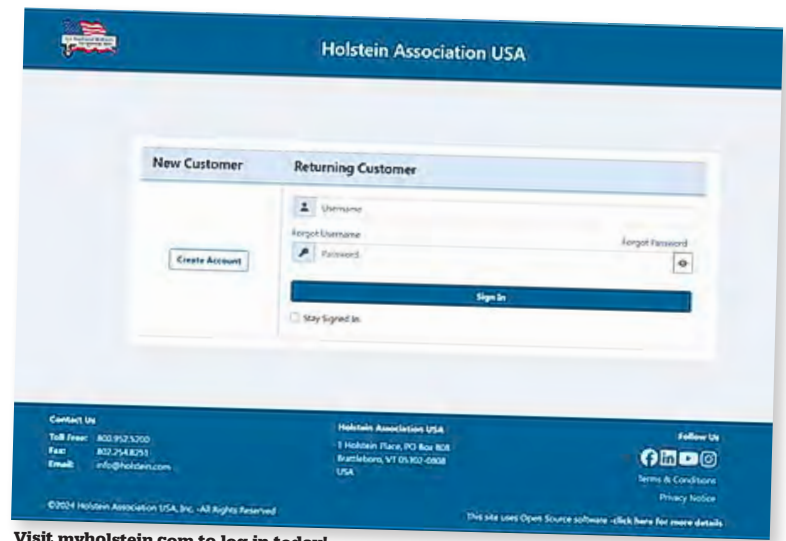
Once you have your username and password set, you can easily log in and place ear tag orders whenever it's convenient for you. If you have any issues creating a log in, the Customer Service team is ready to assist you at 800.952.5200.

### Future of MyHolstein.com

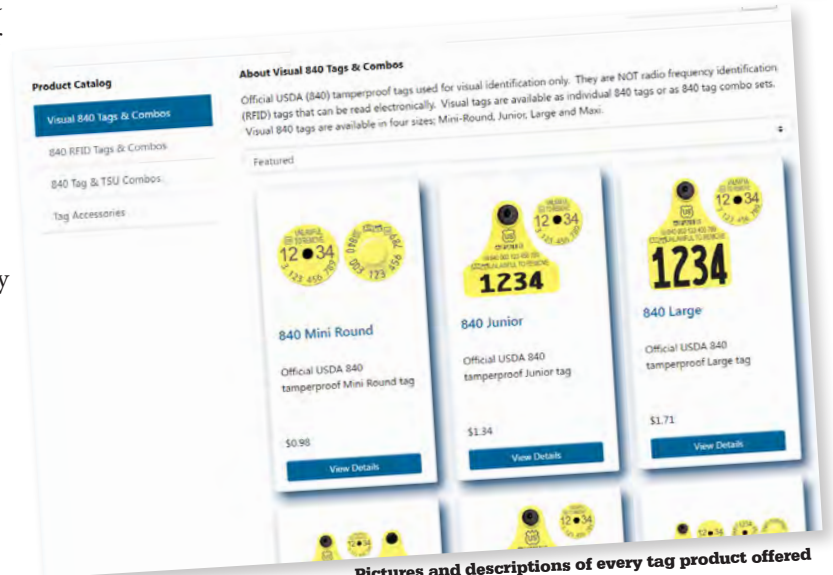
The MyHolstein tag store is the first member-facing component of Holstein Association USA's Elevation project. Elevation is a multi-year project aimed at enhancing all aspects of Holstein Association USA's information technology services, both internal and external. Over the past few years, the team at Holstein Association USA has evaluated and upgraded hardware and servers to allow our systems to run faster and more efficiently.

The MyHolstein online portal is currently home for the new online ear tag order site and many more features will be added over time. The next phase of the project is to re-write the EASY ID software many members use to register calves. Another feature currently being worked on is a paperless way to access invoices and statements.

Over time, you will also be able to access your herd and genetic reports within the portal and download documents such as digital registration certificates. For now, we hope you enjoy the enhanced tag ordering experience on [www.myholstein.com](http://www.myholstein.com), while looking forward to the exciting new tools coming in the future!



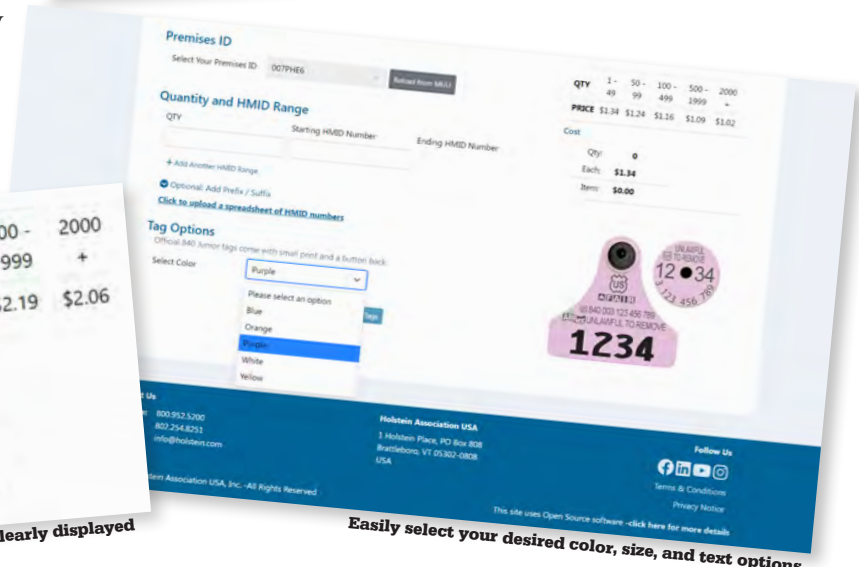
Visit [myholstein.com](http://myholstein.com) to log in today!



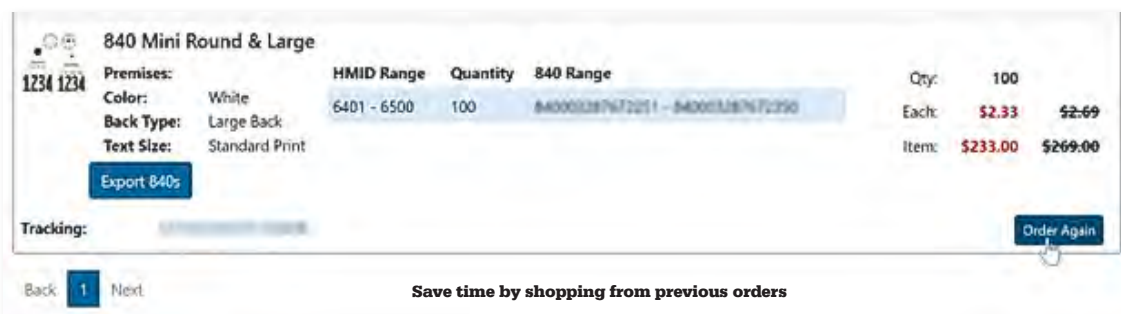
Pictures and descriptions of every tag product offered



Quantity discounts and price clearly displayed



Easily select your desired color, size, and text options



Save time by shopping from previous orders

# A COMPLEMENTARY PAIRING

How the HOLSIm™ program drives collaboration for Holstein and beef producers.



L-R: Alma, Michael, Jillian, and Rollie Young



L-R: Mark and Pat Towns

**A**s demand for Beef-on-Holstein cross animals surges, Registered Holstein® breeders have an unprecedented opportunity to generate additional revenue. Breeders can tap into this growing market by selectively breeding a portion of their less profitable animals to elite beef sires.

This booming market is also driving a new level of collaboration between the beef and dairy industries, fostering partnerships to enhance the quality of beef animals and unite both sectors in working toward a common goal — a higher-yielding and more consistent beef product.

## A unified effort

The collaboration between Towns Farms, located just outside Janesville, Wisconsin, and Young Family Beef in Edgerton, Wisconsin, illustrates how harmonious the partnerships between beef and dairy producers can be.

Towns Farms is a family-owned corporation managed by Pat and Mark Towns, along with Scott and Nancy Towns. Together, they milk 465 Registered Holsteins. To manage heifer inventories while generating additional income, Towns Farms utilizes the HOLSIm program offered by Holstein Association USA. This program eliminates the guesswork in Beef-on-Holstein sire selection by providing the HOLSIm List, which features elite SimAngus bulls most complementary to Holstein cows.

“When we first started breeding beef crosses, everyone said to use Angus, and it was nice because the calves were small and good for calving ease, but they were almost too small, and we were leaving some potential there,” Mark Towns reflects. “With the Simmental influence, I do think we get a little bit of a bigger calf.”

The SimAngus breed merges the best traits of both Angus and Simmental: Angus contributes high marbling content, while Simmental adds red meat yield, enhancing the shape and area of the ribeye. Bulls on this list are chosen based on high-index criteria relevant to both dairy and beef producers, including calving ease, ribeye area, marbling, moderate frame size, and carcass length—all in a homozygous black and polled package.

Towns Farms produces around 175 Beef-on-Holstein crosses annually, selling them as day-old calves to nearby beef producers Michael and Jillian Young and their two young children, Rollie (6) and Alma (3) of Young Family Beef.

## Collaboration for consistency

Michael Young, along with his father Howie and brother Johnny, manage all the animal and crop operations at Young Family Beef, where they raise around 200 Angus and SimAngus cross animals, alongside a few other breeds. Michael has been impressed with the HOLSIm calves so far. “I really like the Simmental’s influence on the crosses, they seem a little bit stockier and stouter, and it seems like they grow really nice,” Michael Young shares.

He also notes the program’s focus on elite genetics, combined with similar frame and carcass traits, has increased uniformity among this group of calves.

To maintain quality and consistency, the team at Young Family Beef only purchases animals from two farms and focuses heavily on health and nutrition. They keep a close eye on all the animals and are proactive about maintaining herd health through vaccinations and treatments. Michael has also worked with a nutrition partner to develop a feed regimen that works well for these Beef-on-Holstein crosses.



The established trust with animal suppliers, such as Towns Farms, ensures reliable channels for sourcing animals, benefiting both beef and dairy producers. This trust also supports the exchange of information, including dam and sire data, genetic factors, and performance feedback.

Michael says Towns Farms values his insights as a beef producer and uses his feedback to guide their Beef-on-Holstein mating decisions.

“It takes one of the steps out of management because it’s a given on where they are going to go, and we appreciate getting feedback to understand how they perform all the way through,” Mark shares.

### Local beef, larger reach

The Young Family Beef brand is committed to providing affordable, local, quality beef directly to consumers while sharing their family farm story in a way that resonates with their customers. Michael’s wife Jillian manages the farm’s social media accounts, leveraging platforms like Instagram and Facebook to broaden their reach.

“We are able to reach a wider audience outside of our circle through social media,” Jillian Young says. “Storytelling is an incredible way of marketing. Being able to tell a story that people either relate to because they live on a farm or find intriguing because it’s not the life they live is powerful.”

Through their social media efforts, Young Family Beef markets 30-40 steers directly to consumers annually. What started with family and friends has grown through positive word of mouth.

Jillian notes one of the biggest draws for new customers is the recommendation from someone who has already purchased and enjoyed their products. They believe a satisfied customer is the best promoter, especially when they appreciate the local family farm, recognize the dedication needed to produce top-quality products, and share that story with others.

The future is bright for Young Family Beef as they aim to continuously improve the quality and consistency of their products while maintaining affordability and strengthening their relationships with the dairy farms they partner with.

### Partners for progress

As the Beef-on-Holstein market expands, the opportunity for dairy producers to work with beef producers will only grow, and it’s clear that the relationships between beef and dairy farmers are more important than ever.

By strengthening these partnerships and promoting transparency and communication, dairy farmers can enhance the value of their calves while beef producers can secure a reliable and consistent supply of high-quality calves.

The collaboration between Towns Farms and Young Family Beef demonstrates the potential of such synergies. By integrating their efforts, producers from both sectors can leverage their strengths to meet market demand while driving growth, profitability, and sustainability in beef production.



## HOLSim American Beef AI Sires List

Effective September 2024

The HOLSim list features the top 2% of SimAngus sires, as identified by the HOLSim Index. The index ranks bulls based on key criteria such as calving ease, ribeye area, marbling, moderate frame size, and carcass length—all in a homozygous black and polled package. The list below shows bulls that qualify for the HOLSim program and are currently available in AI.

Animal Reg Nbr	Name	Semen Availability
3861405	IR PRIMETIME	Marketplace Sires 712SM02001
4038066	C-3 NEXT UP NS B220 J939	Allied Genetic Resources
3564556	CCR BONAFIDE 5116F	Allied Genetic Resources
4193476	CCR CHOCTAW 0289K	Allied Genetic Resources
3874222	CLRS JETTISON 380J	Genex - 1SM1012
3874349	CLRS JUSTIFIED 7101J	Allied Genetic Resources
4031976	CLRS KANGAROO 956K	Allied Genetic Resources
4049838	FSCR K048 FREELANCE	Allied Genetic Resources
3882780	GIBBS HILLTOP 0062H	Allied Genetic Resources
4033441	GW MEDICINE MAN 200K	Allied Genetic Resources
3563620	HOOK’S GALILEO 210G	Allied Genetic Resources
3866492	HOOK’S JOURNEY 7J	Allied Genetic Resources
4158637	IR FLINTSTONE K568	Select Sires - 7SM144
3839823	IR LODESTAR H380	Alta - 11SM2068
3839824	IR RILEY H383	Select Sires - 714SM131
4124922	IRON CREEK NEVER SAY NEVER 9	Allied Genetic Resources
4192184	JC FORTUNATE J741L	Allied Genetic Resources
4192247	JC LOOKOUT 10L	Allied Genetic Resources
4209394	LONGCORE’S REVELATION	Alta - 11SM2096
4132536	PK EXACT K1049	Genex - 1SM1016
4149130	PK HIGHWAY	Genex - 1SM1014
4178314	PK JOURNEY	Alta - 11SM2091
4132535	PK SENTINEL	Genex - 1SM1015
3752744	SCHOOLEY HAGGARD A411H	Allied Genetic Resources
4202719	TERS LEOPOLD 316L	Allied Genetic Resources
3582542	TJ NEBRASKA 258G	Genex - 1SM1000
3928828	TSN ARCHITECT J618	Allied Genetic Resources



Scan the QR code to learn more about the HOLSim program, Young Family Beef and Towns Farms.