

Employees are Key

2008 MMPA OYDC Runners-up Scott and Kristie Lamb



Ask Scott and Kristie Lamb what makes a difference on the Jeddo area dairy they farm with Scott's parents Max and Phyllis, and they'll likely tell you it's simply a matter of having local, trustworthy employees. The peace of mind responsible employees give the Lambs allows them to attend meetings like the recent Outstanding Young Dairy Cooperators conference held in August where the couple was chosen as the 2008 OYDC Runners-up.

"Our employees are a great asset to the farm," Scott says. "They enable me to go to meetings and be involved in MMPA. We can trust them and don't have to worry. I know that everything's going to be taken care of."

Being able to leave the farm also enables Scott to be involved in other aspects of the dairy industry and MMPA. Through the cooperative, Scott serves as president and a delegate of the St. Clair-Macomb Local. At the state level, he is a member of the Advisory Committee and was recently elected to the Resolutions Committee.

"It's nice to have input in MMPA, and I feel the board and staff of MMPA listen to us," Scott says. "Being involved in the Advisory Committee also helps me to have a better view of what our cooperative is doing."

Scott is also involved in the local DHI, serving as the area's vice president. Scott says he's glad to be involved in the organization which helps him keep track of his cows, especially now that the Lambs are working to improve the genetics of their herd through AI breeding.

"We went from bull breeding to having Jeff Shinn of Genex do all our breeding on the cows two years ago," Scott says. "Jeff used to dairy farm and I knew he was good with the cows. When he told me he was working for Genex, I told him he was hired."

Scott was satisfied with the herds' pregnancy rates using bull breeding but decided to switch to AI breeding to improve the genetics of their herd of Holsteins. Most

of the heifers are still bred by bull, but all cows and several heifers with good genetics are now AI bred.

“We are using sexed semen on the cows and heifers in the cooler months and having a good success rate,” Scott says. “That is helping us grow the herd.”

Scott and Kristie’s goal is to expand their herd of 220 milking and dry cows through their own replacements by approximately 15 percent each year. The couple is growing the herd to increase the farm’s bottom line as well as making room should any of their children, Wyatt, 8, Madyson, 6, Lane, 5 and Savannah, 2, decide they’d like to dairy farm with their parents.

The older children already help out in the pens and parlor, saying they enjoy living and working on the farm. Scott says Wyatt is a big help in the parlor and Madyson has taken charge of naming many of the cows—several of them are named “Princess.”

“We’re a fourth generation dairy farm,” Scott says of his family’s farm. “I’m happy we have that history. The kids love the farm and say they would like to farm someday, maybe they will be the fifth generation of dairy farmers to farm here.”

The kids enjoy helping bring the cows in at milking time, a task that was worrisome to Scott and Kristie when they used a bull to breed the cows.

“Another reason we switched from the bull to AI breeding the cows is that we have little kids and we don’t want them in with the cows if a bull is in there—we just feel it is safer,” Scott says. “Now the cows seem even quieter and gentler without the bull running with them.”

With school age children and a farm that sits on a main road not too far from town, the Lambs soon found themselves hosting farm tours. At first, they had small groups, such as preschools and scouting troops. This is the first year the Lambs taught local elementary students—along with their teachers and some parents—what dairy farming is all about.

“The tours aren’t just for the kids, but for the parents too,” Kristie says. “A majority of the people are so far removed from farming these days.”

The Lamb’s farm is located in a rural area, but only 20 miles away from Port Huron, giving them the opportunity to agriculturally educate both rural non-farm residents as well as people who live in the city suburbs. The Lambs say people touring the farm are amazed to learn that cows don’t take a break from milking or eating on weekends or holidays, and the dairy farmer still has to make sure their cows are well cared for no matter what day it is.

“Most of the people who come here on tours just don’t understand how much work goes in to producing a gallon of milk.” Scott says.

~ *Lamb Dairy Farm* ~



Scott and Kristie Lamb, with their children: Wyatt, 8, Lane, 5, Madyson, 6, and Savannah, 2.

One Thing that Makes a Difference on Our Farm is...

Local Employees

~ *MMPA Members of* ~

District 7

St. Clair-Macomb local

~ *Herd size* ~

220 milking and dry

~ *Replacements* ~

200

~ *Acres Farmed* ~

900

~ *Milking Set-Up* ~

Double-8 herringbone

~ *Ag and Dairy Involvement* ~

Through MMPA, Scott is president of the St. Clair-Macomb local and a delegate. He is Secretary of District 7 and serves on the MMPA State Resolutions and Advisory Committees. He is vice president of the local DHI and formerly served on the St. Clair County Farm Bureau board of directors. Kristie has her own tax and accounting service where she aids many area farmers (including Lamb Farms). Kristie is the Local’s Dairy Communicator.