

celebrating Longevity

Holstein Canada - promoting Longevity, Profitability & Efficiency!



Niek, Mikayla with Colton, Henk, Lizette, Ruben and Justin



Beyonce On Stage at New Mars

Tars Cheema

New Mars Dairy in Millet, AB, is the first herd to present a second Longevity superstar. In early 2024, we profiled Denison Earnmart VG-88, who produced over 175,000kg in 11 lactations. Welcome to the stage...NEW MARS FEVER BEYONCE-EX-90 7E, with the same deep, open angular dairy frame as Earnmart, continues to add to her 172,761kgM, 6062kgF lifetime totals near the end of her very long 10th lactation.

Longevity is No Accident

A 2021 Master Breeder herd, New Mars milks 450 cows 3x, registers, classifies, milk records and has been genomically testing all heifers for the past 1.5 years. Heifers are bred heavily with sexed semen, while cows are bred 50% sexed/50% beef. Their beautiful seven year old barn is bright and open with generous stalls, sand bedding and no overcrowding – all very important factors supporting longevity. Big fans keep air fresh and moving, which besides cooling the cows, reduces fly irritation to near zero.

The Schrijvers are strong proponents of cow comfort and intensely focused on a **flawless** post-calving transition period. Henk, Lizette, Ruben, Niek and Justin together with seven dedicated staff are committed to early detection of any health issues – aided by the GEA Scout data which tracks rumination, mobility and much more. Wide sand-bedded stalls, rubber alley floors and a 3x/wk foot bath program further reduce stressors in the barn. Currently, the herd has 14 cows over 100,000kg lifetime (6-10 lactations)! "Last year, we sold 130 fresh 2 yr olds for dairy," Henk confirms (only possible because of exceptional herd longevity).

Was it Destiny?

Beyonce isn't the attention-grabbing diva her name might suggest – she's easy going and wouldn't even be noticeable if she wasn't typically first in line to the parlour. She has lived her entire life with the rest of the herd, but at 14 years old, she now stays with the transition cows for added visibility and less competition. Her 10 lactation average of 293-277-280 BCAs puts her just above herd average for milk. Her biggest lactation was 17,791 kg in 385 days as a 4 yr old (327-284-311 BCAs). "She is persistent with really long, flat lactation curves," explains Henk.

She has had no twins but seven were male calves – and even those didn't set her back. Without transition issues of RPs or metritis, she has sung her way through every lactation – with under 100,000 SCC lifetime average! But now late in her 10th, Henk says she has spiked high a couple tests. She's also had no feet problems over the years. "She is definitely a healthy cow," Henk states.

Fertility's Role

Beyonce has impressive calving intervals starting at 1-11 and calving regularly – averaging 58 days dry/lactation over her life with the longest dry period being 111 days. It took 1.7 breedings/preg on average, but three times, she needed three services. Now at 14 years old, and over 500 DIM, she is still milking 30 litres, but **open**. "We've tried a lot of things to get her to cycle," admits Henk. Fortunately, Beyonce is in no danger of being pulled from the stage, being problem-free and the family favourite.

Looking for Longevity Genes

Henk recognized, "There's not a lot behind this cow." Her dam was a 4 lactation 83 pt Dolman, and the next four dams all scored 'good' with 1-4 lactations. But tracing out the sires for a few generations revealed satisfying answers for genetic longevity. Starting with Crackholm Fever – Goldwyn x Emory – his proof ranked high for HerdLife, Daughter Fertility, Daughter Calving Ability and Mastitis Resistance. A few generations back in the Emory's pedigree is Rudolph crossed on a branch of his maternal line back to Jim-Mar-D Astronaut Gail!

Rudolph's calving ease, high fertility and persistence makes him a longevity star. Emory (with his Blackstar heritage) also appears in many longevity stories. Goldwyn himself left persistency, mastitis resistance and not many holes.

On the maternal side of Beyonce, Emory appears again; behind the granddam is Rudolph again, and further back we see sires like Lee, Blackstar and Aerostar – all contributing to clean bone, dairyness, good fertility and excellent udder texture.

Beyonce Performs in Good Company

Beyonce enjoyed her one public appearance at the 2022 NAHC show in Millet. She placed second in the

Production Class – this 8 yr old with 140,000kg...beat by a cow with half her milk.

Seemingly becoming ever-clearer... these exceptionally productive, long-living cows are the result of high-quality management, a cow-friendly, low-stress environment and good genes (even if the pedigree doesn't seem so impressive). The last piece may be the cow's own correct conformation as Henk points out, "Holstein Canada is on the right

track for longevity scoring."

The 14 cows over 100,000 lifetime at New Mars **average 88 points**. Lowest is 85 and six cows are 90 or higher! Correct in all the right places with body width/depth, legs that are correct in bone/foot/set and clean/soft udder texture.

If the Schrijvers can get Beyonce settled one more time, I have no doubt there's another *Grammy* in her future!



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