



WOODS HILL FARM: CARRYING ON A TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

Woods Hill Farm in Turin, New York, is home to 788 milk cows with a 80 pound tank average on three times a day milking with a 4.15 percent butterfat and 3.31 percent protein. In addition, they have received the Superior Milk Award for 15 plus years from their creamery.

The Woods Hill Farm debut is both unique and inspiring. Mike Branigan answered a help-wanted ad in the local paper that landed him more than just a job—he eventually became part owner of Woods Hill Farm. Mike’s wife, Emily, left her day-job as a pharmacy technician for an opportunity to manage and raise the calves at Woods Hill.

“We are blessed to have such a wonderful opportunity to take over this farm,” said Emily. “We love our life and love working with our cows.”

In 2017, their youngest son, Corey became part owner and plays an active role on helping manage the farms day to day tasks.

Woods Hill believes profitability starts with each newborn calf and they go to great lengths to manage their herd—cows and heifers—the best they can. They also believe that the milk check is king and hone in on producing high-quality, high-component milk. They group their cows by production and days in lactation. In addition, Woods Hill cows are well cared for—lie in sand beds, pens are sized for maximizing comfort, and cows are fed top quality forages. The farm incorporated CRV’s Ovalert system in 2016, that detects and identifies health and fertility signals earlier and more effectively than the human eye.

Tim Fargo, Area Sales Manager, CRV, has worked closely with Woods Hill for several years and in 2010, took the wheel of leading genetic selections with the farm. “Since incorporating CRV genetics in their herd, Woods Hill has seen tremendous increase in both percent of fat and protein year over year without sacrificing milk,” says Tim. “The proof is in the milk check, that has allowed them to stay profitable in a time where most have not.”

Woods Hill’s main focus when it comes to their breeding program is to create healthy cows that produce high-component milk with a major emphasis on improving efficiency. Current service sires they are using are: Jacuzzi Red, Empire, Lunar, Castor, Japan, Larry, Skippy, Spade and Eagle. Tim not only understands Woods Hill goals of breeding healthy, long-lasting, efficient cows, but recognizes that the Branigan family wants to live the CRV motto, Better Cows for a Better Life.”

“Using more Dutch Holstein genetics, through CRV, has allowed them to reach their goals and to live a Better Life,” said Tim.

Woods Hill has a strict breeding goals and when it comes to mating them, they look at fat and protein percent’s, as they believe it is the most heritable traits. “Woods Hill focuses on breeding cows that make the most money—milk, fat and protein,” said Tim. With the use of elite CRV genetics and first-rate management, Woods Hill has been able to push forward despite being in a tough dairy economy—allowing them to turn their vision into their reality. “We love what we do,” said Emily. “We were handed a farm that exemplified deep-rooted passion and plan to carry this legacy forward.”