

SALUTING ATLANTIC CANADIAN AGRICULTURE



Burrows family: A love for dairy farming and for their community

By Maurice Rees

Prominent dairy farmers, Jim and Leslie Burrows, Green Oaks, represent Nova Scotia in a new book, Dairy Farmers, Deeply Rooted for a Strong Future published by Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC).

Showcasing the contributions of Canadian dairy farmers in the building and growth of our country, the book was created in celebration of the 150th anniversary of Canada. The book traces the emergence of dairy farming in each of Canada's provinces through the personal stories of a family of dairy farmers who have been farming for many generations.

Jim and his wife Leslie own Clover Crest Farm, which was established in 1765. The family milks 90 cows, and they are in the process of transitioning the farm to the next generation. Son Alexander, a veterinarian and the farm's resident cow expert, and Jason Nelson, the farmhand who will become a co-owner with Alexander when the time comes, have gradually started to take on more and more responsibility as they look to the future. Still, Jim continues to work tirelessly to ensure that his cows are happy and well looked after, such as ensuring the best diet possible for the cows through working with crop and cow nutrition-

ists.

"Family dairy farms are integral to feeding Canadians, and are vitally important to the thread and fabric of Canada as a whole," said Jim Burrows. "Our family has been a part of the Green Oak community for generations, and we are very happy that this will continue with our son Alexander, and farmhand Jason. I'm so proud of the work our family has done to produce milk sustainably over the years, and I am excited to see how our farm will continue to evolve to produce Canadian quality milk."

For 251 years, Clover Crest Farm has been a mainstay in Green Oak, Nova Scotia. The Moore's were part of the first significant migration of about 8,000 men and women who left New England for the Atlantic colonies of British North America.

The Burrows ancestors immigrated to the region amidst the U.S. Civil War, and when William Burrows married Laura Moore in 1871, he was given the farm since property wasn't transferred to female descendants. It wasn't until the late 1960s that Jim's family farm fully immersed itself in dairy. Today, Jim and Leslie Burrows milk 90 cows and are in the process of transitioning the farm to the next generation—their son Alexander and employee Jason Nelson.

In the early days, farming was about subsistence. Families produced enough to eat and sold what they could, but most farmers sought supplemental income. Jim met his match when he married Leslie. A town girl by birth, she took to farming as though she were born for it. Leslie says she's "always had the heart of a farmer."

Prior to the late 1960s, the insecurity of the dairy market prevented many dairy farmers from investing in their farms, leaving the industry unstable and farmers wondering whether they could continue. That changed with the arrival of supply management. With their newfound stability, farmers like the Burrows feel confident investing in technology and automation for their farms, creating a viable future for the family farm, and allowing it to grow and adapt to a changing society. For Leslie, the family farm is still a "very integral part of the Canadian landscape and important to the thread and fabric of our country."

Over the last 35 years, Jim marvels at how much farming has changed. "It's become much more of a team approach," he says. When he

Pictured above are Alexander Burrows, Leslie Burrows, Jim Burrows and Jason Nelson. Clover Crest Farm is in the process of being transitioned from Leslie and Jim Burrows to son, Alexander and employee, Jason Nelson. (Submitted)

started farming, he had to be a jack of all trades; today he focuses on his strengths and works with crop and cow nutritionists to grow the right food for his cows.

Jim's son Alexander is a veterinarian and has become one of the farm's most important experts. With Alexander on staff, Jim says herd management has improved tremendously—from breeding, to milk production, to cow comfort and raising the healthiest cows. "Alexander has more expertise than Jason and I could ever dream of having," says Jim. Alexander is living out his childhood dream as, Leslie says, growing up he would ask whether he could be both a farmer and a vet. Being a vet gives him plenty of animal knowledge but it's also allowed him to visit many farms and, in the process,



learn from other farmers. The Burrows installed a free access milk feeder so calves have access all day long after Alexander saw it work so successfully on other farms.

Jim thinks of farmers as the earliest environmental-

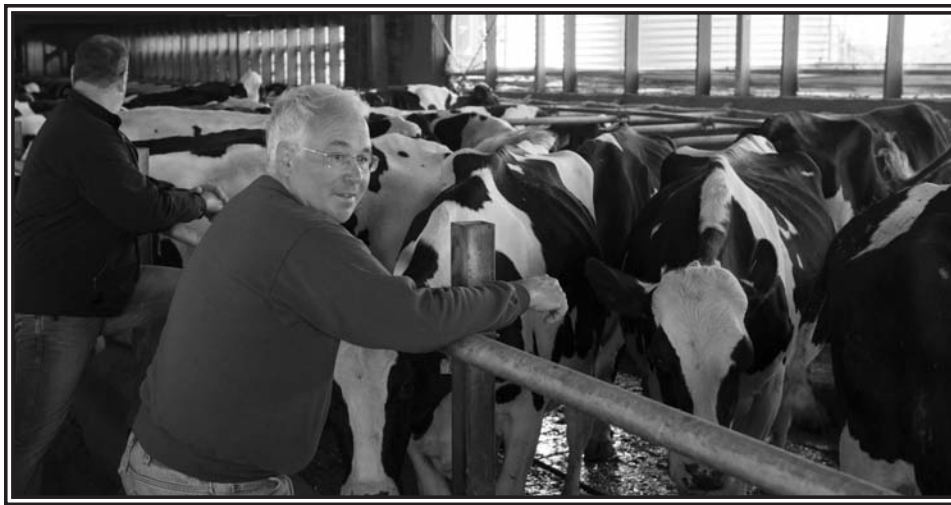
ists because they realized if they don't take care of their land and their animals, they won't be around long enough to stay in business. "What you do with your land has to be sustainable and when I look back over the last 50 years on this farm, we've made such huge improvements," he says. "People are much more conscious of doing things properly."

Farming is very much about family but the bonds of family aren't always tied by blood. When Jason joined the farm, he did so hoping he could eventually become a partner. He loves dairy farming and is grateful to have found a farm to call home with a family that has embraced him.

To read the Burrows family and Clover Crest Farm's full story, please visit www.dairyfarmers.ca for a PDF version of the book.



One of the prize Holstein dairy cows decides to check out the camera and photographer. (Submitted)



Jim Burrows, foreground and Jason Nelson, current employee and future co-owner checking the herd in the barn. (Submitted)

Great Village Planning July 1st Celebrations

By Maurice Rees

Great Village will be a beehive of activity on Saturday, July 1st with several events taking place from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm. Organizers are working hard to ensure there will be plenty of fun for all ages to celebrate Canada's 150th birthday.

Other than the children's parade all activities will take place at the Faith Baptist Church Field. The day's activities will commence at 10:00 am with the Children's Parade from Great Village Elementary to the FBC field. At the field there will be local talent, food, games, vendors and birthday cake.

Since there is limited seating, organizers suggest people bring a folding chair and only Service Dogs will be permitted onto the grounds. Car and vehicle enthusiasts will appreciate the gigantic show and shine, which will include all makes and years. Those requir-

ing more information or wishing to register for the show and shine should contact Doug Campbell at 902-890-9846.

With the Great Village Legion, Branch 72 anticipating a major expansion to the legion facility donations will be accepted for the building fund. Great Village Canada Day organizing committee will be donating any profits from the day's celebrations to the Branch 72 Building fund.



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