



# REPRODUCTIVE EXCELLENCE REWARDED

## The 2012 DCRC Reproduction Award Winners

The final results are in and the Dairy Cattle Reproduction Council is proud to announce the winners of its 2012 Reproduction Awards. Now in its fourth year, the program received 54 highly competitive nominations from 17 states and three countries.

This year, 18 dairies are being honored for their exceptional reproductive accomplishments, with five herds singled out for platinum honors, the highest award presented. Herd data for all nominees were analyzed by a panel of experts and an independent analytic program. The analyses evaluated raw data on every cow that calved on the dairy between January 1, 2011 and December 31, 2011.

After the comparisons were completed, finalists were ranked based on various reproductive parameters and selected to receive Platinum, Gold, Silver or Honorable Mention honors. The 2012 award winners will be recognized at the 2012 DCRC Annual Meeting on November 8 – 9 in Sacramento, California.

### CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OF THE 2012 AWARD WINNERS!

PLATINUM				
<b>Collins Dairy</b> Greenleaf, Wis.	<b>Dutchland Dairy</b> Rolfe, Iowa	<b>Kloppe Dairy Farm</b> New Haven, Mo.	<b>Schilling Farms, LLC</b> Darlington, Wis.	<b>Sunburst Dairy</b> Belleville, Wis.
GOLD		SILVER		HONORABLE MENTION
<b>Curtin Dairy LP</b> Cassville, N.Y.	<b>Green Mountain Dairy</b> Highgate Center, Vt.	<b>Austin Dairy</b> Black Earth, Wis.	<b>Breitenmoser Family Farm</b> Merrill, Wis.	<b>Baudhuin Grandview Dairy</b> Casco, Wis.
<b>Harmony Grove Dairy</b> Waynesboro, Ga.	<b>Martin Dairy LLC</b> Tillamook, Ore.	<b>Edgewood Dairy</b> Purdy, Mo.	<b>Rock Bottom Dairy</b> Rock Rapids, Iowa	<b>Majestic Meadows Dairy, LLC</b> Sheboygan Falls, Wis.
<b>Michel Ranch and Dairy</b> Waterford, Calif.				<b>Stonyvale Inc.</b> Exeter, Maine
				<b>Syracuse Dairies</b> Syracuse, Kan.



**COLLINS DAIRY** is a 702-cow Holstein dairy located near Greenleaf, Wisconsin, with a rolling herd average of 27,068 pounds of milk.



**DUTCHLAND DAIRY**, located near Rolfe, Iowa, is home to 1,116 Holstein and crossbred cows. The rolling herd average is 23,221 pounds of milk.



**KLOPPE DAIRY FARM** is a 335-cow Jersey dairy located near New Haven, Missouri, with a rolling herd average of 14,556 pounds of milk. They farm approximately 1,100 acres and have eight full-time employees—seven of whom are family members—and five part-time employees.



**SCHILLING FARMS, LLC** is located in Darlington, Wisconsin. Schilling Farms is a corporation comprised of Bill and Barb Schilling and their two sons, Andy and Brian. The operation is run by three full-time family members and four hired employees. Schilling Farms currently milks 621 Holstein cows and crops approximately 900 acres.



**SUNBURST DAIRY** is a 541-cow Holstein dairy located near Belleville, Wisconsin, with a rolling herd average of 30,195 pounds of milk.



## TELL US ABOUT YOUR REPRODUCTIVE PROGRAM.

**Collins Dairy:** It starts with a 75-day voluntary waiting period (VWP), with all cows set up to be bred between 72 and 79 days in milk and all cows checked to see if they are synchronized by our veterinarian when prebreeding prostaglandin is given. We use a basic two-dose prostaglandin presynchronization program with the two doses given 14 days apart and a 14-day period before the start of the Ovsynch protocol.

We have one of our artificial insemination (A.I.) technicians tail chalk the breeding pens once daily. We have him hold off on breeding animals until after their first timed service. This method has been very effective as he can focus in on finding repeat breeders 21 days after a timed A.I. He has been able to maintain 44 percent conception while breeding 25 percent of the herd to standing heats. We use the Ovsynch protocol for timed A.I. for 75 percent of our breedings.

**Dutchland Dairy:** We follow a 60-day VWP. Heifers are bred at 13 months of age. We use a two-dose presynch protocol then start Ovsynch 12 days later. We use tail chalk for heat detection and feel it has worked well for us.

We use the Ovsynch program and preg-check cows between 30 to 36 days. Open cows are then started on an Ovsynch program for resynchronization.

**Kloppe Dairy Farm:** Our veterinarian does a post-calving check on cows and first-calf heifers 30 days postpartum. We begin breeding at 55 days in milk or anytime thereafter when the animal has a good standing heat. We begin breeding heifers at 14 months of age as long as the animals are healthy and in good condition. Any cows late in the VWP with a cyst are given GnRH seven days prior to a prostaglandin, hopefully detected in heat and bred.

We breed exclusively on standing heats, using heat detection patches as a heat detection aid on cows. Cows are observed twice each day, for 15 minutes each time. One time daily, we compare the heat list to the stickers on the animals to make sure they are still in place and to observe any changes.

Any cow that is not seen in heat before 60 days in milk is enrolled in a synchronization program that includes two doses of prostaglandin 14 days apart. Cows are then bred six to 10 hours after standing heat. If a cow does not come into heat, she is given a dose of GnRH 14 days after the second prostaglandin, followed by prostaglandin seven days later, GnRH two days after that and bred the next day. Cows are observed for heats three times per day. All cows are bred by A.I.

**Schilling Farms:** We follow a 70-day VWP for mature cows and an 80-day VWP for first-calf heifers. All cows are given a prostaglandin at 21 to 24 days in milk to help clear up metritis/endometritis.

Cows are tail painted with detail paint and walked every day by our A.I. team. Heifers have heat detection patches applied prebreeding and then are painted when confirmed pregnant. The heifers are also observed while restrained in headlocks once per day.

Lactating cows are all bred on an Ovsynch 48-hour program for first service.



**Sunburst Dairy:** We have a 70- to 75-day VWP for cows in all lactations. Heifers are bred at 13 months of age. We use a double-Ovsynch protocol that we began using in 2008. One week prior to the first pregnancy check at 42 days, all animals are enrolled into a resynch program. We used CIDRs for third breedings and beyond.

Cows are visually observed for heat. Cows with CIDRs are tail chalked. We use a double Ovsynch and resynch program for the cows. All cows are enrolled unless they are coded do not breed.

### WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR PRODUCERS LOOKING TO IMPROVE HERD REPRODUCTION?

**Collins Dairy:** Feed good feedstuffs, maintain comfortable facilities with good flooring and regularly meet with your veterinarian and farm staff to stay on track.

**Dutchland Dairy:** Be on a reproductive (synch) program you and your veterinarian are confident in. Stick with it. Be consistent with your protocol and follow it.

**Kloppe Dairy:** Focus on maintaining good records and building a good relationship with your veterinarian to keep cow health top-of-mind.

**Schilling Farms:** Cow comfort, cooling, nutrition and fresh cow management are essential for a successful reproductive program. All four factors depend on each other for a successful breeding system. In addition, having set protocols and routines for synching and resynching has helped maintain excellent compliance essential to reproductive success. Find breeding companies that you feel comfortable with and that will spend adequate time monitoring the cows for heat.

**Sunburst Dairy:** Use your resources. Work with consultants, veterinarians and university/extension experts. Use your consultants to help you evaluate routines and listen to and follow suggestions.

Work with your A.I. company on reproduction and A.I. solutions, and have a good team of employees that follow SOPs because timeliness is everything. Conduct ongoing reviews of protocols. Cow comfort is essential—evaluate barn layout or remodel barn layout for cow comfort if necessary. Monitor cow health and feed intakes. Do not overcrowd, handle cattle calmly and keep good records.