

The Legacy Lives On At Emerald Farms

Step onto Emerald Farms in Winchester, Ohio, and you'll immediately feel the effects of families, both people and cows, as naturally as taking a deep breath. The four Fenton siblings, their spouses and their children all work to preserve the tradition of developing outstanding Ayrshire cattle while encouraging their younger family members to experience a variety of opportunities. Add in outside employment and farm diversification, and you have a family that labors together for one common goal – to make Emerald Farms and the family prosper.

The scenic southern Ohio farm has been in the Fenton family since the early 1800's. Jerseys and crossbred cows were milked until 1949. Doug remembers his dad (Tom Sr.) attended an Ayrshire Sale in Northern Ohio in nearly zero degree weather and brought home two calves in the back seat of the car. By the 1970's, the herd had evolved into a complete Ayrshire herd. Today the farm is owned in partnership with brothers Doug, Tom Jr. and Ron Fenton and their sister JoAnn Jodrey.

A Diverse Agricultural Operation

Emerald Farms consists of 500 acres on the main farm, while Tom Jr. and his family own an adjoining 300 acre farm. Hay is grown on the majority of the land along with 150 acres of soybeans and 40 acres of burley tobacco. Today the dairy herd consists of 175 Registered Ayrshires along with two Jerseys, a Brown Swiss and a Milking Shorthorn for a "little diversity at the shows". The herd includes 100 mature and dry cows along with 75 heifers. Bulls from the top cows are raised to sell or use on the farm. They also house and milk a herd of Milking Shorthorns for neighbors, Dave and Cindy Climer, and hosted the feature farm tour during the 2009 National Milking Shorthorn Convention.

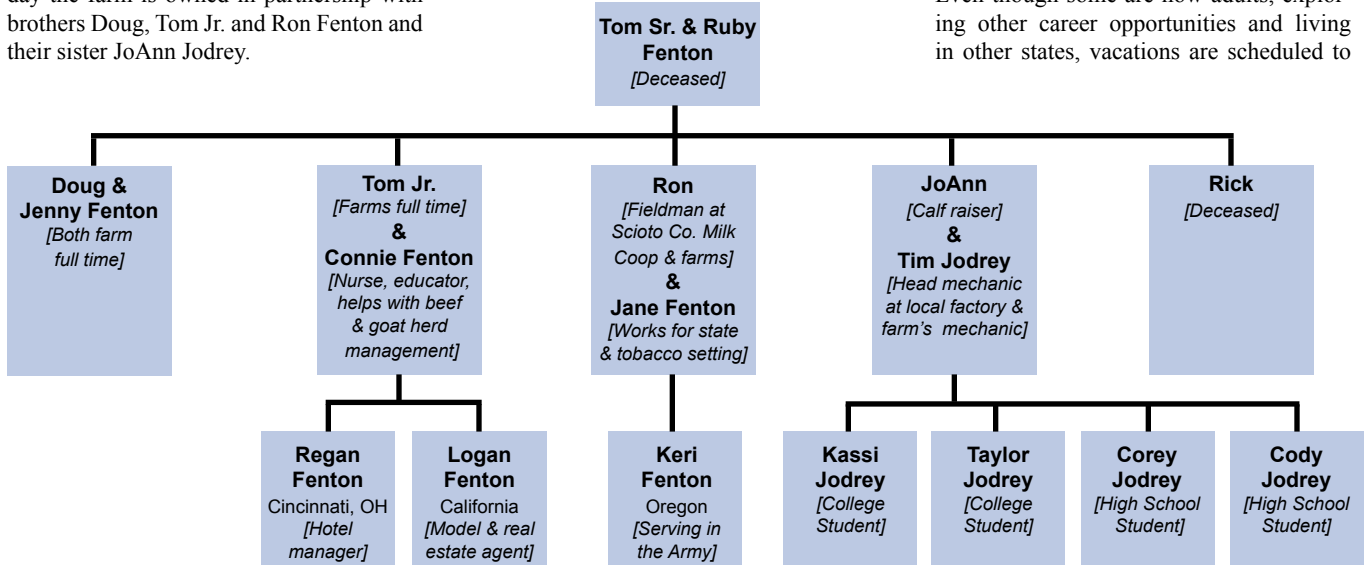
In addition to the dairy cattle, there is a herd of 40 sows from which commercial feeder pigs are sold and a registered Tamworth herd that is shown and sold for breeding stock. Club pigs are also sold to local 4-H members for showing. There are

two beef herds: a commercial herd which is owned by Emerald Farms and another owned by Tom Jr. and his family which focuses on raising and selling club calves. The family keeps three Belgian horses as a tribute to their father. Tom Sr. worked his fields with horses and enjoyed driving them in local parades. Their "latest venture" is the addition of a small Boer goat herd. After a very successful year in the show ring, it looks like the herd will increase in size in its second year.

The Family

The entire family is involved in the farm even though they may work and/or live away from the farm. The siblings and their spouses, Jenny, Connie, Jane, and Tim, juggle responsibilities on the farm with off-the-farm employment. (See family tree.)

The sixth and youngest generation - Keri, Regan and Logan Fenton and Kassi, Taylor, Cody and Corey Jodrey - also play important roles in the farm operation. Even though some are now adults, exploring other career opportunities and living in other states, vacations are scheduled to



come home and help on the farm and at the shows. The Jodrey children all live on the farm and assist with all aspects of the operation. Their major responsibilities include feeding calves, relief milking and caring for and training show calves, pigs and goats.

Determining who shows what animals can be a challenge with several youth showing. At Emerald Farms, the kids have always made these decisions, and they take good care of each other. If someone has a bad year, they will get the best heifer the next year. If it is someone's last year in 4-H, they will get the best animals.

Involvement in Ayrshire organizations continues to be a priority as family members select activities and organizations they can be involved with while ensuring there are others to do the work at home. Currently Tom serves on the ABA Board of Directors while Doug is a Director for the Ohio Ayrshire Breeders' Association. Ron makes the trip to Madison with the show herd. Tom, Doug and Jenny all serve on various ABA committees.

Doug, Tom Jr., Ron and JoAnn all participated in youth activities growing up and showed Ayrshires at county, state, and national shows. Doug met Jenny Cheek from Lemola Farm, NC at an Ayrshire event in Georgia, which was the start of another Ayrshire union. (Jenny became the biggest Tar Heels fan in the Buckeye state.) The next generation has followed in their footsteps on the tanbark trail and Ayrshire activities. Kassi served as the 2008 Runner-Up National Ayrshire Princess.

Emerald Farms is a dedicated supporter of youth activities as they have sponsored awards and supported the Ayrshire Youth Auction and Youth Calendar on the national scene. They have encouraged and supported youth activities in Ohio as consignors for the Ohio Jackpot Calf program and as donors of calves for the Calf Raffle. Doug and Jenny were inducted into the Ohio State Fair Hall of Fame in 2009 in recognition of Emerald Farms' 40-plus years of showing at the

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— Doug Fenton



**Fenton siblings (left to right):
Ron, JoAnn, Doug & Tom**

Ohio State Fair and service as advisors for the Ohio Junior Ayrshire Breeders' Association. The recognition of their efforts is not limited to the dairy industry as Tom Jr. was selected for the Ohio State Fair Swine Hall of Fame.

Breeding Philosophy

"From the very beginning of the Ayrshire herd, cow families have played a very important role; and we still have members of cow families that started 40 or 50 years ago," explains Doug. Many popular AI sires have been used over the years. Some bulls worked and some didn't. The family's philosophy has been that just because a bull has a great proof

doesn't mean he will 'click' in their herd. Sires that have had a positive impact at Emerald Farms herd include: Green Valley Lucky, Emerald Farms Classy Aristocrat, Oak Ridge Flashy Classic, Selwood Greta's Boy 2, Woodland View Pru Olympic 2,

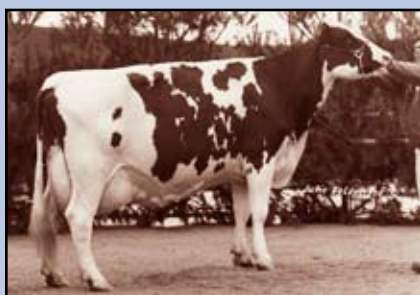
Woodland View Jake, Emerald Farms Pru Mistique, Royalcroft Brendan and Emerald Farms Lori's Trump.

"We like to use bulls from strong cow families – not just a good dam or a good sire," said Doug. They select for milk production, stature, correct feet and legs and quality udders. Disposition is also very important because the cows are milked in a stanchion barn. Only sires that are 100 percent purebred Ayrshire are used in the herd. A homebred bull is run with the heifers while the milking herd is bred by AI using both proven and young sires. Sexed semen has also been used. Some of their own bulls are collected to obtain a larger number of daughters out of sires with promising first-crop heifers. Over the past several years, the Emerald Farms show string has been largely sired by their own homebred bulls.

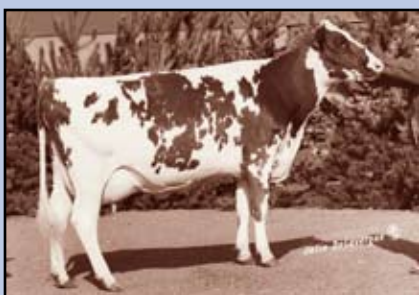
The Herd – Built on Strong Cow Families

The family says that without a doubt, the most influential cow family in the history of the farm was Emerald Farms Classy Lori. Lori, the All-American Senior Calf in 1983, Reserve All-American Senior

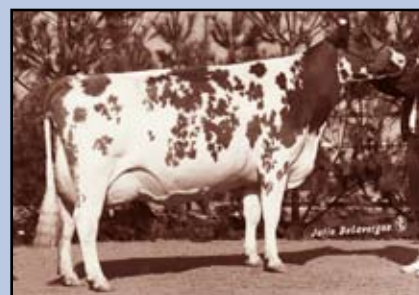
Foundation Cows at Emerald Farms



Emerald-Farms Classy Lori



Emerald-Farms Rebel Ethel



Cove Creek C Cathy

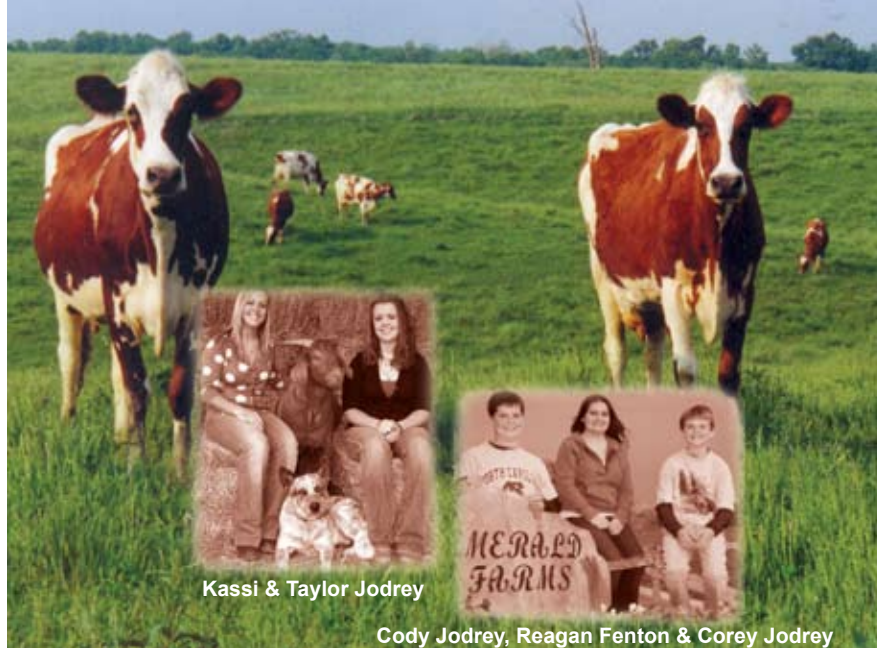
Yearling in 1984 and All-American Five Year Old in 1987, was classified Excellent 92-2E. She was sired by Oak-Ridge Flashy Classic and had records over 20,000 pounds of milk with well over 100,000 pounds lifetime. She was the dam of four Ohio State Fair Champions, one of whom became an All-American and two others received nominations. Her granddaughters and great-granddaughters have “bred true” carrying on the family name. Her son, Emerald Farms Lori’s Trump, impacted the herd by siring cows that walk uphill with lots of stature, style and beautiful udders. Trump daughters have been both state champions and national winners. Of the seven head in the 2009 Southern National Show string, three were from the Lori family.

Emerald Farms HL Nita, a cow that dates back to the 1970’s, also left her influence on the herd. The most memorable year for this cow family was when Fentons took three maternal sisters to the Ohio State Fair. All three won their individual classes, included the Futurity winner and one being named Champion. A fourth sister stayed home and paid the bills by milking over 20,000 lbs. of milk on a regular basis. Two animals from the Nita family also traveled to Louisville this year. Both have been received All-American and Junior All-American recognition, and the milking entry has over 21,000 pounds of milk.

One of the oldest cow families on the farm is the Fran family. This family dates back to 1954 and includes an All-American, an All-American nominee, and the top-selling cow at an Ohio Sale, offspring with over 20,000 pounds of milk and several Excellent cows. The Frans are known for their longevity, with the oldest family member living a “useful life” of 15 years.

In the show ring, the Ethel family has been quite successful. Emerald Farms Rebel Ethel placed second as a Senior Yearling at the World Dairy Expo. She was the only American heifer in the ring for Junior Champion. Ethel returned to Madison in 1988 as a 3-year-old and placed third in one of the largest classes in the history of World Dairy Expo. That same year, she was named Reserve Grand Champion at the Southern National Show in Louisville, Kentucky, just like her dam. The Fentons now call this family the “Elanas” after Emerald Farms Trump’s Elana, who was an All-American Senior Yearling in Milk and is now scored Excellent with over 20,000 pounds of milk.

A more recent cow family that has been successful in the show ring began with the purchase of Des Jardans Cornelius Zoe in 1999. Zoe went on to become Reserve Grand Champion of the Central National Junior Show. Almost every show string in recent years has included members of the Zoe family. The “Zoe” in the 2009 string



Kassi & Taylor Jodrey

Cody Jodrey, Reagan Fenton & Corey Jodrey

was Junior Champion at the Ohio State Fair Junior show and placed third at the International Junior Ayrshire Show in Madison and Reserve Junior Champion at the Southern National Junior Show in Louisville. Her granddam is a two-time class winner at the Ohio State Fair and the Futurity.

The “C Cathy” family is another outstanding line. Cove Creek C Cathy, an Aged Cow, was taken to the Royal, where she placed second in a class of 14. She was the only cow in the class who had not previous-

cows. Cove Creek C. Cathy, EX-94, is the highest scored cow in the Fenton herd.

Merchandising and Showing

Showing and advertising have been key elements in the Emerald Farms marketing program. They feel it’s important for people to know who you are and about your cattle. Emerald Farms merchandises their cattle in several state sales, including Ohio, Kentucky, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri and Wisconsin where they sell 30-40 head per year. A high percentage of heifers born have provided them with stock to sell. They know that nothing helps your reputation more than selling a good one!

The Fentons exhibit their cattle at various shows, including the Ohio State Fair, North Carolina State Fair, World Dairy Expo and North American International Livestock Exposition. They also show at the Adams and Highland County Fairs. They were privileged to have cows used for the Hoard’s Dairyman judging contest.

The picturesque sight of Ayrshires on pasture has inspired Jenny, Ron and Keri in developing their photography skills by giving them great subjects to work with. In addition to their own advertising purposes, several pictures from Emerald Farms have graced covers of the *Ayrshire Digest* and *Hoard’s Dairyman* and been used in Ayrshire promotional pieces.

Looking Ahead

With any business, it’s hard to predict what the future will hold; and the current economic conditions make this especially true for the dairy industry. “The sixth generation would like to keep the farm going but economics will have to get better for any one of them to make a living full-time at it,” explained Doug. We can safely predict that family, tradition, strong work ethic, and love and interest in the Ayrshire breed are legacies that will continue for generations to come at Emerald Farms.

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ly been a champion at the Royal or World Dairy Expo. Cathy went on to become Reserve All-Canadian and All-American Aged Cow that year. Her granddaughter followed in her footsteps and was the All-American Senior Yearling in Milk. A son of Trump’s Cathy will be the next homebred sire the Fentons will be using.

The cows are housed in a freestall barn and milked twice a day in a stanchion barn. They have access to pasture year-round except during wet weather. Haylage is fed to supplement the grazing. Currently there are three cows that have lifetime production of over 150,000 pounds with one producing a lifetime record of 195,000 pounds and seven more that are over 100,000 pounds lifetime. Several cows have records that exceed 20,000 pounds with the highest producing cow, Emerald Farms Cornelius Cathy, producing 26,940M 3.7% 996F 3.0% 781P at 6 years 11 months of age.

The Fentons have been strong supporters of ABA programs and participated in the REWARDS program for the last 10 years. Their last classification included 15 Excellent, 55 Very Good and 16 Good Plus