

## Six Young Jersey Breeders to Be Honored in Ohio

The AJCA Board of Directors has named six recipients of the Young Jersey Breeder Award for 2018. They are Wendy Bok, Defiance, Ohio; Leah and Jason James, Mineral Point, Wis.; Robert and Gail Klinkner, Viroqua, Wis.; Amy and Elizabeth Marcot, Greenville, Ill.; James Pearson, Lincolnton, N.C.; and Jennifer Zumbach, Coggon, Iowa.

The first Young Breeder Awards were presented in 1976. Since then, more than 280 producers have received this award, including this year's recipients.

The Young Breeder Award is presented to individuals or couples younger than the age of 40 on January 1 of the year nominated who merit recognition for their expertise in dairy farming, breeding Jersey cattle, participation in American Jersey Cattle Association (AJCA) and National All-Jersey Inc. (NAJ) programs, and leadership in Jersey and other dairy and agriculture organizations.

The 2018 honorees will receive their awards during the Young Jersey Breeders Luncheon on Saturday, June 30, at noon.

### Wendy Bok

Receiving her first Jersey calf at the age of three, Wendy Bok has had a lifelong love and passion for the Jersey breed and the dairy industry. Currently, Wendy manages Bok's Jerseys Farm, Defiance, Ohio, where she milks 380 Jersey cows with her parents, Sam and Julie, her brother, Andy, and her two daughters, Renee and Sara.

When she was younger, Wendy was very active in both local and national Jersey youth activities. Throughout her junior Jersey career, she won numerous production awards in both Ohio and at a national level. She purchased her first Pot O'Gold heifer, Sooner Doll of Summer Hope, when she was just seven. "Sooner Doll" went on to win the 1996 Pot O'Gold Contest, and is not the only contest winner Wendy raised during her time as a Jersey youth.

The 1996 Pot O'Gold Sale did not necessarily go as Wendy had intended. She had gone to the sale planning on reinvesting her winnings from "Sooner Doll" into a full sister of that same cow. When that heifer went for more than her budget allowed, Wendy purchased Berrettas Linette instead, who actually has some of the same sires in her pedigree as "Sooner Doll." Looking back, Wendy said she was happy she ended

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**Wendy Bok**  
Renee and Sara



**Jason and Leah James**  
Brenlee

### Leah and Jason James

Leah and Jason James own and operate Pine-Valley Farm, Mineral Point, Wis. While Leah has owned Jerseys since her childhood, brown cows didn't find a home at Pine-Valley until 2011.

The couple is the third-generation to milk cows at Pine-Valley. Currently, they milk a 175-cow mixed herd that includes more than 50 Registered Jerseys. They also raise all their young stock on the 200-acre farm.

Jason earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Platteville while Leah received hers from the University of Wisconsin-River Falls. Leah began the "New Heights" prefix with her sister Londa when they introduced Jerseys into their father's Holstein herd during their youth. When Leah and Jason married in 2011, most of the "New Heights" cattle were moved to Pine-Valley.

The first Jersey to make its home at Pine-Valley was a purchase that Leah and Londa made at the All American Sale in 2009. Harmony Corners Copper is currently on her sixth lactation and just scored Excellent-92%," She has an Excellent-91% daughter sired by Avonlea CF GT Balls of Fire-ET with records over 18,500 lbs. milk and 1,000 lbs. fat and has had an everlasting impact on Pine-Valley. "Our philosophy has always been and will continue to be to use bulls that will return the most profit to our

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**Robert and Gail Klinkner**

### Robert and Gail Klinkner

Robert and Gail Klinkner own and operate Pine Prairie Jerseys, Viroqua, Wis. Over the years, they have faced many hardships, but they have managed to stay on top of it all.

Although Rob was not raised on a farm, he gained a love for the Jersey breed by working on a neighboring dairy. When he turned 13, he was able to purchase his first Jersey, Fenwis Peep T Perky. In high school, Rob was actively involved in FFA and 4-H and exhibited at the Wisconsin State Fair.

Gail grew up on a Holstein farm near Westby, Wis. She was involved in many dairy youth programs, including 4-H and FFA.

The duo began dating at the Wisconsin State Fair after realizing their mutual love of the dairy industry and all it has to offer. After high school, they both attended the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Rob

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**Beth and Amy Marcoot**



**James and Danielle Pearson**



**Jennifer Zumbach**  
Dave, Karl, Will, Anna, Neal

### **Amy and Elizabeth Marcoot**

Amy and Elizabeth “Beth” Marcoot have only known brown for as long as they can remember. They are the seventh generation of Marcoots to breed and own Jerseys in the United States, and the third generation to milk at the farm’s current location in Greenville, Ill.

After graduating from high school, Amy attended the University of Illinois and completed a bachelor’s degree in kinesiology and agriculture education. She then attended Eastern Illinois University to obtain a master’s degree in counseling. Amy then spent the next 16 months in Turkey helping with a startup company.

Beth also attended the University of Illinois after she graduated from high school, where she earned a bachelor’s degree in human development and family studies. She spent the next two years working as a counselor and program

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### **James B. Pearson**

James B. Pearson, Jr., Piedmont Jerseys, Lincolnton, N.C., has always known that his career would be in the dairy industry. It all started when he began showing Jerseys at the local county fair when he was 10. He has not looked back since.

After high school, James attended North Carolina State University where he earned degrees in both animal science and agricultural business management. While in college, he was a member of animal science and dairy science clubs while also serving as vice president of Farmhouse Fraternity.

“James never waived on his desire to be a dairy farmer milking Jersey cows,” wrote Herby D. Lutz in a letter of support. “James returned to the farm following graduation and has mastered all aspects of a large grazing dairy in the southwest and the cows have truly excelled under his guidance.”

James returned to the farm in 2012 to help supervise the day-to-day chores, such as crop production and animal nutrition. Currently, James owns 52 Jerseys, of which 23 are milking and have a rolling herd average of 18,479 lbs. milk, 850 lbs. fat, and 664 lbs. protein as of December 2017. The herd has been enrolled in REAP since January 1997, and the farm also utilizes AJCA’s Equity program and regional young sire sampling.

When working on the mating for his herd, James focuses on milk production, JUI, A2A2, and type. “With these traits, I feel that I will produce a cow that will be

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### **Jennifer Zumbach**

According to Jennifer Zumbach, Jerseys are a part of her DNA. She was born and raised on the family farm, Kunde Jersey Farm, Manchester, Iowa, and she has been through it all.

Early in her childhood, the family farm had a barn fire that killed nearly all their young stock. After the incident, the family took in some cattle for a friend to help increase their numbers for a few years. Unknowingly, the new cattle were infected with Johne’s Disease, and the infection broke loose through the herd for a couple of years. “My dad has compared it to an iceberg—if you can see some, then there are so many more infected that you can’t see,” wrote Jennifer in her application letter.

Jennifer and her family bounced back from the outbreak through rigorous testing, culling, and vaccinating. “We could have sold our herd and started over, but we decided to push through and build from the genetics that remained,” wrote Jennifer.

Throughout the ordeal, Jennifer remained active in several Jersey organizations. In 1998, she was crowned Iowa Jersey Princess and Alternate Iowa Dairy Princess. Over the course of that year, she traveled over 4,000 miles throughout Iowa promoting the dairy industry at various events, such as county dairy banquets and board meetings.

Her stint in Jersey royalty continued when she was crowned the 1998 National Jersey Queen. This title allowed Jennifer to travel to national shows and annual meetings as well as to events hosted around the world. She went to Australia in April 1999 to attend the World Jersey Conference and forged friendships that remain strong today. While there, Jennifer was able to set up a summer internship for her to work on a dairy on the Island of Jersey. “It was a great opportunity to grow personally, sharpen my farm goals, and learn different techniques,” wrote Jennifer of the internship.

The following year, Jennifer was voted Iowa Jersey Cattle Club secretary and treasurer, and she remains in that post today. Along with that position, she is the editor for the club’s publication, the *Iowa Jersey Today*. Jennifer also helped with the 2007 AJCA-NAJ Annual Meetings in Iowa.

In 2001, Jennifer graduated from Iowa State University with a degree in dairy science. While in college, she served as president of the dairy science club, was the

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## Bok

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up with “Linette” since she went on to win the 1998 National Youth Production Contest and the 1999 Pot O’Gold Contest. She is a former #1 JPI cow. “Linette” also had two sons go to A.I., Bok Bold Daniel Linette Lucky and Bok Apache Linette Lofton.

At the 2000 Pot O’Gold Sale, Wendy bought a full sister to “Linette,” Schrim Berretta Lindy-ET. In 2003, “Lindy” was the winner of the Pot O’Gold Contest and Wendy sold Bok Barkly Lindy Lucy, a “Lindy” daughter, at the National Heifer Sale.

By the time Wendy’s junior Jersey career had come to an end, she had won the Pot O’Gold Contest a total of seven times. Wendy looks forward to having her daughters compete in the contest in the coming years.

“She is proof that Jersey youth programs help develop the next generation of successful Jersey dairymen to lead our industry,” said Herby D. Lutz, Chester, S.C., Select Sires dairy sire analyst, in a letter of support.

After high school, Wendy attended Northwest State College, a local college. She continued to help on the farm while she worked towards her business management degree.

Wendy is actively involved with numerous organizations. She is a past delegate for COBA Select Sires, a member of the Ohio Jersey Breeders Association and the AJCA. Wendy is also an active member of Ohio Farm Bureau and the Farm Credit Advisory Committee.

She enjoys promoting the dairy industry and the Jersey breed while also giving back to the community. During the spring, Wendy opens the dairy to the public and gives tours to local school children, 4-H kids, and boy and girl scouts. She also supports local 4-H by allowing kids from around the county to lease out some of her heifers.

“Wendy enjoys hosting field trips to the dairy to help educate kids about dairy farming and dairy products. It is so important that we have leaders that are willing to make the effort to have a positive influence on the public perception of the dairy industry,” wrote Sherry Smith, Glenford, Ohio, Bullseye Dairy Consulting.

Wendy and her family currently milk 92 cows in a double-12 herringbone parlor, with a rolling herd average of 17,840 lbs. milk, 785 lbs. fat, and 599 lbs. protein as of December 2017. Bok’s Jersey Farm ships their milk to Arp’s Dairy. The Bok herd is a charter member of the REAP program, and they utilize other AJCA programs such as type appraisal, Equity, and regional young sire sampling.

One of the recent renovation projects that Wendy is proud of is the calf barn. The new barn has heated floors and is designed to stay warm through the winter months.

In the future, Wendy plans to expand the farm and be more efficient with her barns and buildings. She would like to expand the calf barn to have pens available for weaned calves. Wendy is also hoping to build more individual calving pens in the farm’s maternity barn.

Wendy says that she has always strived for raising healthy and happy cows. She plans to continue increasing the herd’s milk production while also breeding for type, with the goal of having more Excellent cows in the herd.

## Marcoot

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manager at a Christian wilderness camp in southern Illinois. Beth later went to Southern Illinois University to complete her master’s degree in therapeutic recreation and was honored as the 2012 Graduate Student of the Year.

By this time, the small family farm was struggling to stay afloat, so both girls returned home and became sole owners of Marcoot Jersey Farm. After nearly two years of research, planning, and working with world renowned cheese makers, the Marcoot Jersey Creamery was built. While the plans for the creamery were underway, Amy and Beth realized that they want to be able to use the creamery to educate the public about the dairy industry. This led them to installing windows in the milk bottling room and the cheese production room so that visitors to the farm can see how different products are produced.

The first cheese was made on the farm in early 2010 and was sold in June of that year. From the time Marcoot Jersey Creamery was started through today, the only milk the creamery has used has come from their Jersey herd. Amy and Beth currently make 20 varieties of pasteurized cheeses, including mozzarella and Topsy Cheddar, which is made with a local brewery’s Pale Ale.

The sisters also saw that agritourism could have a large impact on their farm. They are less than 45 miles away from St. Louis and the farm is well designed for tours. Amy and Beth developed self-guided and organized tours of the creamery and farm, and their agritourism business has steadily increased over the years. In 2017, Marcoot Jersey Farm was visited by over 25,000 people.

“With the interest consumers have in

knowing where their food comes from, the tourism side of the business creates confidence in the consumer about the quality of the product,” wrote Roger Marcoot, Greenville, Ill., in a letter of support.

The duo has won several awards for both their agritourism ventures and their wide variety of cheeses. Some of these include Sauce Magazine’s Class of 2011 “Ones to Watch,” and being named Best Artisan Cheese by *Feast* magazine from 2011 through 2017. Amy and Beth have made multiple television appearances and have been featured in numerous local and national magazines.

Currently, Amy serves as president of Marcoot Jersey Farm, Inc. and Marcoot Jersey Creamery LLC while Beth is the vice president of both. Amy’s main focus is on the management of the creamery, including marketing and sales, new food product development, and managing the employees. Beth manages the farm and herd, making breeding decisions, keeping herd records, and maintaining animal health.

In the summer of 2017, Amy and Beth installed two robotic milkers to milk their herd of over 100 Jerseys. The new barn was built with several viewing windows so that farm visitors can watch the milking process. As of November 2017, the farm has a rolling herd average of 14,725 lbs. milk, 620 lbs. fat, and 540 lbs. protein on 82 cows. The herd has been enrolled in REAP since early 1998.

Although Amy and Beth do not have much free time, they are very active in their church and the Illinois Jersey Cattle Club. Beth is also active in several community activities with her husband and their two sons.

“Our goal is to build Marcoot Jersey Creamery LLC and Marcoot Jersey Farm Inc. into a sustainable business that can continue to be passed down to the future generations in honor of our family and our Jersey cattle,” wrote Amy and Beth in their application letter.

## Zumbach

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co-editor of the club yearbook, and helped begin Farm Fun Day, an event that brought local school kids out to the Iowa State dairy to learn about dairy farms and products.

After graduating, she returned home to expand her herd and help with the farm. Kunde Jersey Farm currently milks 220 Jerseys, 30 of which make up Jennifer's herd. As of December 2017, her cows have a rolling herd average of 17,671 lbs. milk, 903 lbs. fat, and 633 lbs. protein. Jennifer's herd also has an appraisal average of 85%. The herd is enrolled in REAP and contributes to Equity.

Jennifer is currently responsible for registering their heifers, taking care of the financial books, and managing their DHIA records. Being a mother of four (Karl, 7; Will, 5; Anna, 3; and Neal, 1), Jennifer helps with evening chores on the farm and brings the kids along. "I enjoy watching my kids work alongside my dad daily," wrote Jennifer.

Along with all of her on-farm responsibilities, Jennifer is involved in numerous dairy organizations. She is the Delaware County Dairy Committee Chair, a past president of the Delaware County Extension Council, and has been the Delaware County 4-H Dairy Quiz Bowl coach since 2002. Jennifer also helps her husband, Dave, on the farm he owns with his family, where they raise over 1,000 Holstein steers and farm 800 acres.

"Jennifer is a 'poster child,' in a good way, for all that is right about the farming community in the United States: she is passionate about proper care of animals and close to the land, devoted to family and community and specifically to the Jersey breed, and keen on developing the skills sets of the next generations," wrote Russell Gammon in a letter of support.

## Klinkner

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graduated from the short course with a dairy herd management and crops specialty in 2001 and Gail graduated in 2003 with a dairy herd management specialty. Both were dorm representatives during their time in Madison.

In early 2002, Rob worked out a rental agreement with a retired dairy farmer near Westby. This allowed him to be able to milk his own cows. In April 2002, he bought his first Jersey cows and named the herd Pine Prairie Jerseys. The herd was enrolled in REAP in February 2003, and Gail's Holsteins joined the herd shortly after the duo wed in June 2003.

The rental agreement was continued until October 2006, when the couple purchased the farm. Following the purchase, numerous updates were made to the facility, such as adding pasture mats for the cows, installing a modern milking system, and revamping the heifer barns.

Due to financial struggles, Rob and Gail sold a large chunk of their herd in July 2010. By 2013, Pine Prairie Jerseys had a full barn of milk cows again. In early 2014, the couple decided to pay off the rest of their debt by selling another large percentage of their herd. Today, their milking herd sits at 35 Jerseys and 20 Holsteins.

"It would have been much easier for them to declare bankruptcy, but Rob and Gail were absolutely determined that they would work their way out of their financial challenges and operate a profitable dairy farm," wrote Frank Friar, a consultant with the State of Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection Economic Development in a letter of support. "They clearly demonstrate the business savvy and commitment to own and operate a dairy farm in challenging economic conditions—now and in the future—and are always looking at a positive approach for improving their dairy farm business."

"We have worked hard to find the most efficient number of cows to milk and still maintain profitable margins," wrote Gail and Rob in their application letter. "Knowing exactly what inputs are per cow per day helps in having a positive bottom line."

Pine Prairies Jerseys has bred three Excellent-93% cows as well as several 91- and 92-point cows. Currently, the family has one Excellent-93%, six Excellent-90%, and 17 Very Good cows.

Along with staying busy on the farm, Rob and Gail are involved in multiple organizations. Rob has been the president of the Parish 4 Jersey Breeders for the past 10 years and currently serves on the board of the Wisconsin Jersey Association for the

second time. He also serves on the Vernon-Crawford DHIA board and has been a delegate for both Accelerated Genetics and East Central Select Sires. Gail has recently worked on reviving junior dairy organizations in their area. She helped form the Vernon County Junior Dairy Club, which is open to youth interested in any breed of dairy cattle.

One of the couple's favorite activities is to show their cattle and local, state, and national shows. Their cattle have won numerous accolades at the Wisconsin Spring Spectacular Show, Minnesota State Fair, Wisconsin State Fair, and Vernon County Fair.

Rob and Gail are instilling their love of the Jersey breed and the dairy industry into their five children: Reagan, Garrison, Rubi, Ginger, and Rylan. Each of the children have their own Jerseys so that they can start building their own herds.

## Pearson

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profitable and have longevity,” wrote James in his application letter. James went on to say that he is planning to start genomic testing the herd and wants to have a 100% A2 herd in the future.

James is currently involved in many organizations. He is the past president and current vice president of Daniel’s Lutheran Church, on the board of directors for the North Carolina Jersey Breeder’s Association, and a member of the steering committee for the North Carolina Dairy Advantage.

When looking ahead, James has big plans for the future of Piedmont Jerseys. To make the farm profitable, James is adding on-farm processing. This allows his family to all stay involved with the farm without having to expand the herd. The current plan is to sell milk, ice cream, and eventually butter. James is also planning to have an on-farm store for the public to purchase products from while also seeing the farm.

“Our niche is to differ ourselves from the competition as a grass-fed herd and with the breeding of A2A2. With agritourism, we hope to eliminate the misconceptions of the milk process and allow the public to get the true farm to table experience,” wrote James.

## James

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bottom line,” wrote Leah in her application letter. The couple’s Jersey herd has steadily increased both in numbers and production, now with 52-milking Jerseys that have a rolling herd average of 17,202 lbs. milk, 858 lbs. fat, and 643 lbs. protein as of December 2017.

Pine-Valley Farm is currently home to 17 Excellent cows with an appraisal average of 86.1% on 52 cows. The herd has been enrolled in REAP since December 2011.

One cow that has made a large impact on Pine-Valley is Claeshoe Allstar Zoom Zoom Excellent-91%. Leah and Jason purchased “Zoom Zoom” at the National Heifer Sale in Arlington, Va., in 2014. Two “Zoom Zoom” offspring are currently on the 1.5% GJPI list, JX PVF Prop Joe Zip {4}-ET at #37 and JX PVF Prop Joe Zap {4}-ET at #122. “Zip” was formerly #2 on the list. “Zoom Zoom,” “Zip,” and “Zap” each have a son that is currently being sampled in A.I. “Zip” has a son by “World Cup {5}” that is at Genex. JX PVF WC Zinc {5}-ET is the leading G-Code bull with a GJPI of +205 and +752 CMS. Leah and Jason are excited to see what kind of impact this family can have on the Jersey breed.

Leah and Jason “have been keen and bold enough to use evolving technology like conventional embryo transfer and in-vitro fertilization to capitalize on the genetics of their best animals. They have also grasped the value of using high ranking young G-Code bulls heavily in their rising breeding program,” wrote Russell Gammon, Fergus, Ont., in a letter of support.

Along with developing impressive cow families across three breeds, Leah and Jason stay busy by being involved with numerous committees. The couple helps run the Southwestern Wisconsin Protein Show, volunteers at the Wisconsin Dairy Showcase Spring Show, and serves on the Viroqua Spring Show Committee. They are also active in the District 3 Holstein Association and the Wisconsin Milking Shorthorn Association. Leah and Jason both enjoy judging at local and state level shows during the summer. Jason is on the World Dairy Expo Exhibitors Committee and Leah is a superintendent for the World Dairy Expo National Collegiate Judging Contest. The couple also chairs the Iowa County All-Breeds Futurity.

Leah is a graduate of the Young Dairy Leaders Institute and Jason has participated in the Young Leaders Program through Foremost Farms. Both Leah and Jason have graduated from the Professional Dairy Producers of Wisconsin Managers Academy. Leah is also a past employee of

the AJCA, having worked as an appraiser and area representative after graduating from college.

“Having both not been ‘born’ into the Jersey family, we both agree that the people in the Jersey breed truly make it second to none. We are lucky to now count ourselves as part of the Jersey family and are most excited to share our love and passion for Jerseys with our daughter, Brenlyn. Brenlyn already has her start with her first Jersey, PVF Lemonhead Miss B,” wrote Leah.