Farnej Holsteins is owned and operated by Tom and Rick Simons along with their sons Mark and Adam who will someday take over in their fathers footsteps. The farm was started in 1960 by Joseph Simon, their father. Tom and Rick formed a partnership in 1985 and bought Joe out and started making their own management decisions. “We’re most proud of the fact that we have the next generation to take over the farm.” Tom said as he pointed to Mark and Adam.

Farnej currently milks 250 cows twice a day, their rolling herd average is 27,500 lbs, a 4.5 Fat and a 3.6 Protein. They have a pretty large embryo program and currently have up to 250 heifer calves born a year and 50 bulls per year, they also genomic test everything born at the farm. “We rely on our genomic results to identify the top tier of our heifers to be bred to sexed semen while the bottom is used for replacement heifers, this continuously increases our genetic level while controlling our heifer population.” said Adam.

When discussing what they do with this top tier of young stock they went into detail about their sire selection. Mark, who makes the majority of the mating decisions, said, “We use bulls who are mostly over +950 NM$ and over +2800 GTPI, we do use a few Type bulls that are over +4.0 PTAT and +5.0 UDC, we also focus on components to make sure we can increase our Fat since we do only milk twice a day.”

Before walking into the barn to take a look at some of their cattle we talked about some of their accomplishments, one of the first to be mentioned was their Focus on the Future – Farnej Sale in 2013, the sale averaged $15,470 on 112 lots. The 2nd high seller, Farnej-TBR-BH Vickie-ET went onto become EX-94. A lot of the cattle that were sold in this sale averaged $15,470 on 112 lots. The 2nd high seller, Farnear-TBR-BH Vickie-ET went onto become EX-94. A lot of the cattle that were sold in this sale averaged $15,470 on 112 lots.

As we started to walk down their tie-stall barn, we were shown many cows who are dams or family members of sires like Twitch, Jumpstart Mmani and Delta-Lambda. Tom went into some of the young stock they are eager about. “We’re excited about using bulls like Captain, Nashville, Twitch, and Jumpstart. Nashville’s seem to be really nice sires, they are medium in size, good feet and legs and seem to have a lot of ambition.” Mark then added, “Some of the bulls we are proud of are Delta-Lambda, he’s getting close to having a proof and offers high genomic, nice production and really nice udders and his type is close to 3.0.

Some of the daughters that we’ve seen are really good uddered and nice foot and leg and were really excited about here! Other bulls are Mr Farnej Twitch, a Helix son that goes back to a Delta who’s a very nice young cow, another bull is Altitude Red, he’s +3.75 on Type, he put on some good udders his Dam is a 95 point. McCutchen that was Grand Champion at our State Fair and Nominated as All-American. She’s our first homebred 95 point cow.”

Mark went further into some of their success. “We’ve been privileged to be involved in two of the most breed leading individuals in the industry, being Delicious and Apple, both animals are going down as having the most impact in a lot of peoples herds on a Type side and a genomic side. Delicious putting more bulls into AI than a lot of cows, her family has been one of our most uniformed cow families. With Delta’s being made extremely well, milk hard and breed back every time, even the Dracos, Denvors, and Dynamos, pretty much anything out of that family has worked really well.”

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As we continued to discuss their genetics and what their future will hold it was mentioned that A2A2 and Feed Efficiency are two things they believe will impact the breeding decisions. Mark and Tom agree with today’s consumer being more conscious of where their food is coming from and what is in the products that A2A2 may be a trait that is seen as a better product option for many consumers. When it comes to Feed Efficiency, Rick added, “It’s important because you will be trying to feed a smaller cow with less feed while keeping your production up, becoming more environmentally friendly through using less resources. You won’t need the big cows to produce the amount of milk you need.”

While our time at Farnej wrapped up we wanted to get a little insight into why they decide to partner with STgenetics when it comes to their bull program. It was a quick response from Rick, “Our partnership with STgenetics is a really nice opportunity for us, it create a great place for the bulls from our breeding program. We also get to use some of the newest bulls in the industry and see their young stock quicker, it’s an exciting thing to be able to get the bulls, use the bulls easily and get them out into the market for other farmers to use.”

For more information on STgenetics sires, contact your STgenetics representative. In the U.S. you can reach out to the Dairy Call Center at 844 828-7849 or Dairy@STgen.com stgen.com | facebook | twitter