

Ernie Kueffner Named Dairy Shrine Distinguished Dairy Cattle Breeder

Ernest W. Kueffner of Kueffner Holsteins and Jerseys and South Mountain Jerseys is named the Dairy Shrine's 2022 Distinguished Dairy Cattle Breeder. This award is given annually to an active, progressive dairy breeder who excels in managing their dairy herd based on sound genetic and business principles.

Kueffner has built a successful and profitable career around breeding, buying and selling cattle that exemplify the Holstein and Jersey breeds. His roots go back to Wisconsin, where his family built the Fullpail Sale Barn that he would eventually purchase. Kueffner managed all aspects of the business, including auctioneering alongside his father. He acquired his first two farms in Wisconsin in the 1970's before relocating to North Carolina to manage two dairies for Buttke Dairy Enterprises. It was around this time that Kueffner also exported some high-quality Holstein heifers to Hungary and Spain. He then spent another ten years with a herd of his own, which he sold at the remarkably successful Kueffner 24Karat Sale in 1996. The '90's are also marked with Holstein and Jersey sales to Brazil that went on to be champions at their respective shows.

Kueffner continued to influence dairy genetics across the country, moving to Maryland in 1997 to care for his own cattle once again. A few years later, he seized the opportunity to work with Arethusa Farms in Litchfield, CT. By 2004, Kueffner and his wife, Terri Packard moved there to manage the farm full-time, taking their own cattle along with them. In 2013, the Kueffner family returned to Maryland, where they continue to breed and develop Holsteins, Jerseys and the occasional Brown Swiss. His cattle sales over the last decade total more than 860 head, not including heifers sold after calving.

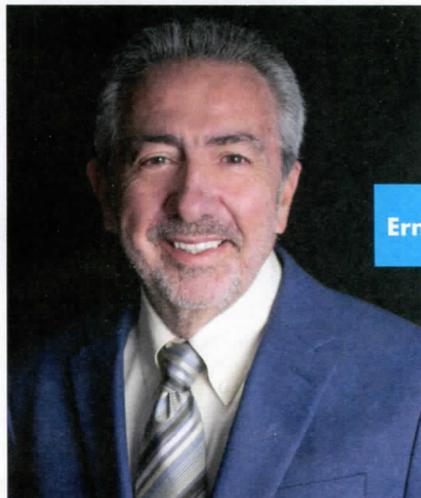
Throughout his career, Kueffner has bred more than 600 excellent females and males in the US and Canada. Globally recognized cows include South Mountain Voltage Radiant, EO Siemers Ashlyns Angel, Ernest-Anthony SD Tobi-ET, Ernest-Anthony SC Vivian and Ernest-Anthony Thriller. Ernest-Anthony Aleeza-ET was at one time the number one PTAT heifer in the breed at +4.65. She is now

+3.56 PTAT +2016 TPI and classified VG88 in her first lactation. Kueffner has received countless honors and played a role with innumerable winners at World Dairy Expo, The Royal Agricultural Winter Fair and the National Jersey Jug. In addition to these accolades, he has had a hand in too many All-American winners and nominees to count.

"I have had the honor to own some of the best-known show cows in the business," Kueffner says. "Ashlyn, Tina and Veronica are household names to breeders around the world. The biggest thrill for me is that they proved to be tremendous brood cows who continue to have an impact on their breeds many generations later."

Kueffner's breeding philosophy is centered around the utmost care for the cow. He says, "To be successful in the dairy business, whether showing, selling or marketing milk, the cows have to come first." In developing generations of superior dairy cattle, Kueffner strives to improve the faults of the individual while maintaining the positive type traits that exist. He homes in on pedigrees and cow families to produce cows with excellent mammarys, correct feet and legs and wide, flat rumps. Kueffner does not use any mating programs: he has always tried to see the milking daughters of a bull in person before using him. He says, "A cow's pedigree plays a major role in her potential for developing into an outstanding individual. When it comes to the bottom line, pedigrees are essential for marketing. You must be able to sell sons, daughters and embryos to get a return on your investment."

Kueffner's involvement in the dairy industry, outside of his own work, is a testament to his passion and knowledge of the ideal dairy cow. He has served on the World Dairy Expo Dairy Cattle Exhibitors Committee, Board of Directors, Building Committee for World Dairy



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Expo and the Overbagging Committee. Most recently, he has contributed his expertise to the Open Show Committee for the All-American Jersey Show. Awards of note include the A.C. "Whitie" Thompson award in 2002, honoring a herdsman who exhibits exemplary leadership and sportsmanship throughout the show.

"My cattle come first," Kueffner summarizes. "I enjoy watching them reach their potential by succeeding in the show ring and building pedigrees through classification and production testing. The cattle I have bred have had tremendous success in the show ring – but the cattle and embryos I have sold have had a larger effect. They are the foundation for cattle breeders around the world and I am thrilled when I hear about daughters, granddaughters and great granddaughters excelling for these breeders."

Ernie Kueffner will receive the Distinguished Dairy Cattle Breeder award at the Dairy Shrine Awards Banquet on Monday, October 3rd in Madison, Wisconsin. His portrait will then be displayed in National Dairy Shrine's Dairy Hall of Fame and Museum in Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin. For more information about National Dairy Shrine, the banquet or this year's award winners, please contact National Dairy Shrine at info@dairyshrine.org or visit their website at www.dairyshrine.org. ●