

American Kerry Cattle Breeders Meeting Minutes

From the August 18, 2007 Meeting in Albany, New York

The meeting was held at the Shaker Meeting House in the Watervliet Shaker Historic District, America's first Shaker Settlement. Robert Reilly arranged for this special meeting place and also gave a brief history at the end of the meeting. Attendees shared a lunch of pizza, salad, and assorted Bobolink cheeses and breads.

Agenda items:

1. Shannon Nichols led the meeting and welcomed the attendees. Each attendee then introduced themselves to the group. Attending this meeting were:
 - a. Dana Wakefield – Potsdam, New York
 - b. Dave Adams – Troy, New Hampshire
 - c. Jonathan White – Vernon, New Jersey
 - d. Jeanette Beranger – ALBC, Pittsboro, North Carolina
 - e. Robert “Bob” Reilly – Albany, New York
 - f. Jon Larason – Plimoth Plantation, Plymouth, Massachusetts
 - g. Sean Stanton – Great Barrington, Massachusetts
 - h. Liz MacKenzie – Rare Breeds Canada
 - i. Ted Lawrence – Rare Breeds Canada
 - j. Patti Adams – Overbrook, Kansas
 - k. Shannon Nichols – Madison, New York

2. **Status and Recent Developments in the U.S. Herd:**
 - a. Shannon Nichols reported that she has located 70 live animals that are purebred Kerries in the United States. Not all of these animals are registered. Some of the unregistered animals could be registered through the Canadian registry if additional documentation is obtained on them. Additional animals may become eligible for registration if DNA-testing is done to confirm sire and dam. Shannon emphasized the need for Kerry breeders to report births in a timely manner and to register their animals with Ireland or Canada. Important genetic contributions to the Kerry breed are put at risk when breeders fail to keep updated written hard copy records and make timely and accurate registrations. Shannon is currently helping several breeders get their registration paperwork in order and submitted.
 - b. Biosecurity issues were discussed. Bovine Leukosis Virus (BLV) is a primary concern at this time. The popular Kerry bull, Winterset Serendipity Sam, reg. #4249, recently tested positive for BLV. Shannon has been in contact with Cornell University to find out what can be done to manage animals that test positive. Information concerning BLV and recommended herd management practice is available at: <http://nyschap.vet.cornell.edu/module/leukosis/section1/BLV%20brochure.pdf> . Another Kerry bull, Mountain Shade Ebon, reg. #4386, recently tested as moderately high risk for Johnes using a preliminary screening test; however he'd been screened under “stressed condition” after shipping from Indiana to New York with low body condition score. Ebon will be retested using a more specific test method in order to verify his Johnes status. Shannon

recommended that all breeders test their Kerry cattle for BLV, Johnes, Blue Tongue, Anaplasmosis, and BVD to determine herd status in regard to these common diseases. Most states also require testing for TB and Brucellosis prior to interstate transport. Dana Wakefield has compiled information on many of these diseases and it's available from her upon request.

3. Status and Recent Developments in the Canadian Herd:

- a. Ted Lawrence, Rare Breeds Canada (RBC) Chair, reported on the status of the Canadian herd. There are two groups in Canada, one in Alberta (led by Patric Lyster) with 34 Kerries; and one in the Niagra region (Doug Law, Henry Bakker, Larry Moore) with 18 Kerries. Patric Lyster has the Kerries that were previously owned by RBC. Larry Moore has the Kerries that were previously owned by Brian Krick.

4. Genotyping:

- a. Shannon Nichols reported that DNA-genotype and parentage verification testing is currently available through the University of California-Davis (Veterinary Genetics Laboratory – Cattle Testing; <http://www.vgl.ucdavis.edu/>) and also at Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas. The American Dexter Cattle Association (ADCA) currently uses the Texas A&M laboratory for all its genetic testing, including genotype, parentage verification, red/dun color factor, and Chondrodysplasia. Sampling instructions and fee schedule is given at: http://www.region7adca.com/adca_testing_forms.htm . ADCA members get a special rate for these testing services, non-members pay a slightly higher fee. An ADCA membership costs \$30 per year.
- b. Ted Lawrence reported on a genetic research project led by Dr. Yves Plante, University of Saskatchewan. Dr. Plante has offered to do a DNA-genotype study of Kerries in North America and is currently asking for donations of genetic material (tail hairs, semen, etc.). Ted passed out copies of the “Donation Agreement” and asked for breeders to consider volunteering. The more Kerry breeders that participate, the better the understanding will be of the Kerry DNA-genotype characteristics in North America. Herd specific and breeder specific results will not be reported, since this is a general overall study of the breed. These genetic resource donations are made to the Canadian Animal and Poultry Genetic Resource Program operated by Agriculture and Agri-Food in partnership with the University of Saskatchewan. Patti Adams has a copy of the “Donation Agreement” and it is available upon request.

5. Registrations of Kerry Cattle:

- a. Shannon Nichols reported that the Kerry Cattle Society in Ireland is now using “Grassroots” as their new registry software. Shannon has gone through the Kerry Herdbooks Vol. 63, 64, and 65 to compile pedigrees on the Kerries in the US. She is still looking for Herdbook Vol. 62 and earlier herdbooks, in order to extend this pedigree information back further. Shannon has traced specific U.S. and Canadian families, with information provided by breeders. This information will be available to any Kerry breeders shortly via electronic copy for free (via email) or for \$15 in a bound book with U.S. Kerry cattle found in herd survey.

- b. The Kerry Cattle Society in Ireland has suggested that all of the North American Kerries be registered in one central registry and it has recommended the CLRC for this purpose. Ron Black is the General Manager of the CLRC. Contact information: <http://www.clrc.ca/email.shtml>
- c. If US breeders choose to register their Kerries in Canada with the CLRC, the same rules apply as for the animals registered in Ireland with the Kerry Cattle Society Ltd. Pedigreed purebred Kerry cattle can be registered in either or both of these registries.
- d. The Kerry Cattle Society in Ireland has expressed to Shannon Nichols that their preference is for North American born Kerries to be registered with the CLRC. At this time, Ireland will not accept a separate U.S. registry, it wants all of the North American Kerry breeders to use the CLRC for Kerry cattle registrations.
- e. Ted Lawrence explained that the Canadian Livestock Records Corporation (CLRC) maintains a general registry for recognized breeds that do not have a breed society or association. Canadian herds of Kerry cattle are registered in this CLRC general registry. Ted reported that there have been a total of 118 registrations of Kerries in the CLRC general registry since 1993. In 2006, there were only 8 animals registered; in 2005 there were none; in 2004 there were 3 registrations from Wyoming, USA; in 2003 there were 4 registrations; and in 2002 there were 8 registrations. The CLRC registration fee is \$25.00 and the transfer fee is \$15.00.

6. Identifying Bulls and Semen Stocks:

- a. Shannon Nichols reported that Dave Sowter, owner of Depend-a-Bull Services in Verona, New York has put his property up for sale and is planning to retire very soon. North American Breeders in Berryville, Virginia can take over Depend-a-Bull's semen storage and bull collection services for Kerry cattle. This will make the travel distance considerably greater in the future for Kerry breeders in the New York, Massachusetts, New Hampshire area. Shannon suggested getting as many Kerry bulls collected as soon as possible before Depend-a-Bull shuts down its operation in Verona, New York. The Kerry bull, Mountain Shade Ebon, is currently at the Depend-a-Bull facility to be collected.

7. Importation of Kerry Semen and/or Embryos from Ireland:

- a. Shannon Nichols reported that there are currently three Kerry AI bulls that can be imported into the United States from Ireland: Castlough Oisin, Castlough Oak, and Newbridge Gerard. These are 0.25 cubic centimeter AI straws. There have been some viability issues associated with Castlough Oak and breeders may need to use 3-4 straws per insemination in order to get enough viable sperm for a breeding. Castlough Oisin is already found in many US and Canadian Kerry pedigrees through his son, Maplewood Sean, reg. #4137, and grandsons, Kelmscott Guinness, reg. #4295 and Winterset Serendipity Sam, reg. #4249.
- b. Robert Reilly is planning his annual trip to Ireland for September this year. He will be visiting with Miss Raymonde Hilliard (Castlough Herd, County Kerry) and will also be gathering information on potential AI bulls for importation into North America.
- c. Shannon Nichols reported that there is currently no embryo transfer work or flushing being done with Kerry cows in Ireland. ET offspring are eligible for

registration with the Kerry Cattle Society in Ireland, but require genotype testing and parentage verification documentation, along with prior application.

8. Formation of a More Formal Group of Breeders:

- a. Steering Committee – Shannon asked for volunteers to serve on a steering committee to help guide the formation of a North American Kerry Breed Association. The following people volunteered or were volunteered for this new committee:
 - i. Patric Lyster – Canadian representative (volunteered by Ted Lawrence and Liz MacKenzie, RBC)
 - ii. Jonathan White
 - iii. Dana Wakefield
 - iv. Dave Adams
 - v. Liz Lodge (volunteered by Jon Larason, Plimoth Plantation)
 - vi. Sean Stanton
 - vii. Shannon Nichols
- b. Project Committees – Volunteers were requested to serve on a Marketing Committee, a Semen Importation Committee, and a Pedigree/Genetics Committee.
 - i. Marketing Committee will consist of Jonathan White and Dana Wakefield and their first assignment is to prepare a poster display on the Kerry Cattle in North America for the upcoming ALBC meeting in November 2007.
 - ii. Semen Importation Committee will consist of Robert Reilly and Sean Stanton and their first assignment is to prepare for Bob's trip to Ireland in September 2007 and make sure that he has the help he needs in getting the paperwork, identifying the bulls to get semen from, etc.
 - iii. Pedigree/Genetics Committee will consist of Dana Wakefield, Patti Adams, and Shannon Nichols and their first assignment is to prepare instructions for collecting and submitting DNA samples and getting photos taken (side, front, and rear views) and compiled for each Kerry animal in the U.S. and Canada. This committee will also continue work on updating, compiling, and correcting pedigree information for each registered animal.

9. Fundraising and Marketing for any and all of the above objectives:

- a. Shannon Nichols reported that fundraising efforts and ideas are welcome anytime. She had sold some Kerry semen to a dairy for cross-breeding purposes and this provided the funds for helping defray the meeting costs. Dana Wakefield is currently working on a tee-shirt design with hopes of selling Kerry tee-shirts to raise additional funds. Other ideas are needed.

10. **Adjourn** – Meeting was adjourned at 3:30 pm and group photos were taken.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patti Adams

