

2004 Young Breeder Award

Ron and Michelle Heins

Ron and Michelle Heins are the 2004 Young Breeder Award Recipients.

During the 125th National Brown Swiss Convention, Ron and Michelle Heins (Amber Rae Farm) of Eyota, MN, were honored as recipients of the 2004 National Brown Swiss Young Breeder Award. A plaque depicting this honor with a plexiglass area for their favorite photo was presented to Ron & Michelle at the National Awards gathering on Thursday, June 30. They also received free registration to the National Convention as part of their award.

Nominees for this award must be 40 years of age or less as of January 1, 2005, have been an active member of the Association for at least five years, and nominated by a state officer or active member.

Ron and Michelle have been active Brown Swiss breeders since their marriage in 1984 when Ron "inherited" Michelle's Swiss. Michelle's first Swiss (Shelby) was purchased in 1980, and a great majority of their herd today traces back to Shelby or their first purchase together, Irish Hill Dotti, in 1989 at the Iowa State Sale. Dotti was a gem as she produced 42,160m, 1832f, and 1387p in 365 days at 10 years of age. She is scored '4E91'



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and won the national milk production award, the J. P. Eves Trophy, in 1998.

Their current herd consists of 76 cows and 74 young stock. Current Rolling Herd Average on 76 cows is 17,449 milk, 752 fat, and 623 protein. They have tested since 1984, classified since 1990, and have been on the Association's Brown Swiss Advantage (BSA) Program since 1989. Amber Rae has been a Genetic Honor herd for several years,

indicating their herd is in the top 25% of herds on the Association's testing program.

Their biggest honor and most memorable moment was when they hosted one of the farm tours during the 2004 National Convention held in Minnesota last year. They are both active in the community as well as Brown Swiss circles. Ron is currently the Minnesota State Brown Swiss President, has served as Vice President of the Olmsted County DHIA board from 1991-1995, and the Olmsted County ADA board from 1987-1990. Michelle has served as Minnesota Canton 1 Secretary and they both serve on many church committees, are dairy leaders for their 4-H club and active in their children's school and extra-curricular activities.

Their personal goals revolve around their children: Alana-13, Lukas-9, and Lexey-2½. As Gerald Bratland, former National Brown Swiss President states, "Their greatest attribute is dedication to their family and fellow Brown Swiss breeders. Character and respect is something that has to be earned. Ron and Michelle Heins have earned that respect and make outstanding recipients of the National Young Breeder Award."

Congratulations, Ron and Michelle!