

Wolfe family named 2018 McKown Master Breeder

The philosophy at Ovaltop has always been to breed a top herd of registered Holsteins while improving each generation by pursuing exceptional type, outstanding production, and enhanced genetic potential. The Wolfe family has surely accomplished those goals.

Ovaltop Holsteins of Richfield Springs, N.Y., has been selected by the Klussendorf Association as the tenth recipient of the Robert "Whitey" McKown Master Breeder Award. This award recognizes a well-managed breeder and herd that has been successful at showing and judging dairy cattle. Winners exemplify all qualities of the Klussendorf Award, including ability, character, endeavor, and sportsmanship. The Wolfe family will be formally recognized at the 52nd World Dairy Expo in Madison, Wis.

Howard, Ginny, Doug, and Mike Wolfe have developed Ovaltop Holsteins into the highly recognized herd it is today. Ovaltop Holsteins' prefix dates to 1929 and has bred 170 Excellent cows. They have bred four Excellent 94-point cows, 13 Excellent 93-point cows, 23 Excellent 92-point cows, 43 Excellent 91-point cows, 87 Excellent 90-point cows, along with 427 cows scored at Very Good. In addition, they have developed 25 other Excellent cows that were purchased from other herds.

The Wolfe family was originally from New Jersey but relocated to Richfield Springs, N.Y., in 1977 where they milk 90 cows. The herd is 100 percent registered Holsteins and they farm 500 acres of land. The Ovaltop herd is a 28-time Progressive Breeder of Registry (PBR) herd, which is currently the longest winning streak in the state of New York. The Wolfe's lactation average on the 90-cow herd is 26,519 pounds of milk and a Breed Age Average (BAA) of 110.3, ranking them in the top 100 herds in the entire United States.

One of their favorite cows that just finished its career is Ovaltop Chesapeake Nikita-ET (4E-93). She is part of a multigenerational homebred Excellent group that started with Lemax Valiant Nada (3E-94-DOM) and was one of Mike Wolfe's best show cows. The Wolfes also bred one Gold Medal (GM) Sire, 8 Gold Medal Dams (GMD), and 11 Dam of Merits (DOM).

Never afraid to add foundation genetics to their herd, Ovaltop has integrated members of the most prestigious cow families of the breed. Cow families include C Glenridge Citation Roxy (EX-97-GMD), Cherown SY Delilah (EX-96), C Alanvale Inspiration Tina (EX-95 GMD-DOM), KHW Regiment Apple-Red-ET (EX-96-DOM), and many others.

Howard and Ginny have also been honored by the New York State Holstein Association along with the national association for their dedication and commitment to the Holstein industry. They were the 2000 New York State Active Master Breeders, New York Holstein Association's highest honor. Ginny was named "Friend of New York Holstein" in 2011.

Many times, the family has been honored with



Doug, Mike, Howard, and Ginny Wolfe

Premier Breeder and Premier Exhibitor on the local and regional level, New York State Fair, New York Spring Red and White Show, New York International Spring Holstein Show, Pennsylvania All-American Red and White Shows, and other prestigious shows, along with numerous All-New York and Junior All-New York awards. Several Ovaltop bred animals have also been nominated for All-American honors.

The Ovaltop show team also takes pride in their multiple herdsman awards at shows. Their display is always attractive, neat, and appealing to visitors.

The entire family has been active in the local Otsego-Herkimer-Montgomery (O-H-M) Holstein Club and all its activities. Mike and Monica Wolfe, representing the next generation, have four children, the oldest of which are very involved in the local Holstein Club and 4-H. They enjoy showing and cows as much as the rest of the family.

Mike's brother, Doug, currently serves on the Show Committee for the New York Holstein Association, which he chaired for several years, and Ginny is chairperson of the Publications Committee. Ovaltop is a longtime, monthly advertiser in the *New York Holstein News*. Both Doug and Mike are accomplished judges and have officiated at shows throughout New York and the Northeast.

The entire Wolfe family is passionate about agriculture and breeding an outstanding herd of registered Holsteins. Their dedication to their farm, their local and state Holstein associations, and their community have earned them the honor of being named the 2018 McKown Master Breeder.

The Robert "Whitey" McKown Memorial Breeder Award was made possible by the family and friends of the 1997 Honorary Klussendorf honoree after his passing in 2009. Whitey joined the *Holstein World* staff in 1956 and became widely respected as he traveled nationally and internationally, reporting on shows, sales, meetings, and other Holstein events. He was president of National Dairy Shrine in 1987.