

WORLD JERSEY CATTLE BUREAU

PRESIDENT'S REPORT for the Annual Council Meetings in Guatemala – Nov 2023

Later this month we are meeting up in Guatemala for our Annual Council meetings and tour, and this will be the first totally in-person event since the Covid-19 pandemic intervened to disrupt our traditional annual events. The programme will run in conjunction with the Latin America Jersey Forum and we are looking forward to having a broad participation from the region as well as from many other countries around the world.

As can be seen from the Vice President's reports for our five regions, the Jersey cow continues to flourish globally despite the numerous challenges that the whole of agriculture and particularly dairy farming faces. The Jersey breed continues to be the only dairy breed that is growing numerically worldwide, and is the second-most numerous.

September 2022 saw our annual meetings taking place in France alongside the events of the European Jersey Forum (EJF), and we are extremely grateful to the EJF and Jersiaise France for hosting us. We held the first part of the Bureau's annual Council meeting in person, and the second part was held virtually as we had done in 2020 and 2021, and this worked very well.

Prior to that tour, there was an informal tour to Jersey Island, and I thank the Royal Jersey Agricultural & Horticultural Society (RJA&HS) for generously hosting those that attended that tremendous week, seeing how the cow has improved so dramatically since importation of international genetics was allowed from 2008.

One of the outcomes of our meetings in France was to initiate a Strategic Plan to map out the future for the World Jersey Cattle Bureau. Alison Gibb (VP Asia & Oceania) was elected to chair a Focus Group made up of representatives of the breed from around the world, and they held a series of virtual meetings earlier on this year. Their report will be presented to the Council at our meetings in Guatemala and once a clear pathway for the future of the Bureau has been agreed, it is intended to begin implementation of some very exciting initiatives.

I am confident that the adoption of the Strategic Plan will enable the Bureau to move forward in the future in this fast-changing world as a relevant and purposeful organisation for the furtherance of the Jersey breed globally, better linking up with national associations and thousands of breeders in all corners of the world.

During 2023 I have been fortunate to spend time travelling to many countries to hold meetings with some national organisations and to see Jersey breeders and their cattle, taking the time to understand some of the challenges that they face as well as sharing some great times.

In January and February I was in Australia and New Zealand, and visited International Dairy Week as well as the New Zealand Dairy Event, two world-class southern hemisphere shows. I saw many fabulous cows at the shows and also on the fifty or so farms I visited during my two months away,

and also got down to grass-roots by attending some area club events and meetings, the very backbone of where the enthusiasm for our breed begins and is nurtured.

In June I travelled to Zambia and Malawi to see how the Jersey breed is being promoted and developing through projects funded by Jersey Overseas Aid and run through the RJA&HS to help to bring families out of poverty and provide sustainable livelihoods for small scale farmers. During that trip I attended the African Jersey Forum conference in Blantyre, Malawi with over fifty others from across many African countries. The conference was also live-streamed with sizeable hub groups joining us from Rwanda, Ethiopia and Jersey Island as well as hundred from around the world logging on to listen to some very inspiring papers from experts in their fields.

On the way home I visited Kenya and saw some great cows and was able to discuss the challenges that dairying faces in this country where I was raised.

In September I was in the United Kingdom judging an On-Farm Challenge, and during a very busy week in the south west of England I was able to interact with fifteen herd owners discussing the challenges they face as well as being in my element discussing breeding plans that work for their unique situations.

In September the European Jersey Forum held their annual meeting in the Netherlands, and I was sorry to miss this years' event due to a clash with my judging in the UK, but I am assured that the event was a great success attracting over 60 people from 10 countries.

The world still faces some serious challenges caused by conflicts, and my message from last year is still relevant and deserves repeating. It is vitally important for nations to secure their own food and energy supplies. Scientifically proven to have a lower environmental footprint compared to other dairy breeds, the Jersey cow has a vital role to play in the future to provide a more sustainable food source for the planet's rising population, and the Bureau must play its part in identifying and encouraging research into the benefits of the breed.

There is no doubt that our Jersey cow is the most adaptable and practical of all dairy breeds to provide viable livelihoods across all the regions of the world, and it is up to us, the guardians of this fabulous "brown cow" to nurture her natural qualities for the benefit of the whole world.

My five Vice Presidents do sterling work to keep the Jersey flag flying in their respective regions, and I know that they in turn receive much support from national associations and individual breeders in their areas of the world.

My sincere thanks to our Secretary (Roger Trehwella) and Hon Treasurer (Trevor Saunders) for providing the support mechanism to me for the running of the Bureau's day-to-day business which covers a surprisingly wide range of topics and responsibilities.

With the whole of the Officer team meeting regularly on-line via Zoom, we are able to meet in real time to address issues and plan for the future, something that was not possible until a few years ago

when the relevant technology became available to everyone. We operate as a cohesive team and we challenge each other to perform and deliver for the betterment of the Jersey breed.

And finally, to all Bureau members and Jersey breeders and enthusiasts and their families around the world, I wish you continued success with your Jerseys and businesses. We have a tremendous cow that is increasingly playing a more prominent and important role in the global dairy industry to help feed the world. We are perhaps sometimes reticent about extolling the virtues of our wonderful Jersey cow, and I believe we must all make a concerted effort to change this by being more effective in spreading the good news story about our little gem.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephen V Le Feuvre
President, WJCB
November 2023