

World Wide Sires: 45 Years of Supplying American Genetics to the World



John Schouten is the General Manager of World Wide Sires, and has worked for the company now for 30 years.

For farmers in much of the dairy world, their World Wide Sires distributor is the source of many of the most elite sires in the industry. With a global marketing network that reaches virtually all dairy countries, World Wide Sires is a true global player in the field of cattle genetics.

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been working with WWS for 30 years. He started his career on the family farm in California where they milked 2,000 cows, but after 4 years he decided to join the WWS team. 'At the time I envisaged perhaps 4 or 5 years with the company, so to reach 30 years is a little hard to believe. I find it so inspiring to connect with people from so many different parts of the world yet all have a kindred spirit and a shared passion and love for the dairy cow. Having that shared background and a common cause makes it so easy to get to know and enjoy the company of people no matter what country they are from. It's a lot of fun but also very rewarding to know that you are helping people around the world to breed better cattle.'

LARGEST MARKET

In 2001, Bill Clark sold WWS and it was purchased by a 50 – 50 partnership of Accelerated Genetics and Select Sires. Both are farmer-owned co-operatives, and both supply 3 directors to the 6-member board that today runs WWS. Throughout the 80s and 90s the major markets for WWS were in Western Europe, but over the last decade demand from such countries as China, Australia and Russia has grown considerably. Indeed, today China is the largest volume market for WWS in terms of numbers of doses of semen. While the head offices are in California, WWS has a shipping-depot in Ohio where all products are packaged for shipment to different countries around the globe. Since last year when Select Sires purchased the Canadian AI company Generations, product is now also shipped from Canada too.

ELEVATION

Cal-Clark Holsteins was the name of Bill Clark's herd in California, and it's most famous product was the bull Cal-Clark Board Chairman, sired by

a Chief son and out of an Elevation daughter. Chairman was among the bulls that had significant volumes of semen marketed around the world through WWS in the 80s, but his impact was expanded dramatically by his famous son To-Mar Blackstar, who dominated global breeding in the early 90s. Blackstar's angular, silky black offspring made him popular wherever he was used, and he became one of the most heavily used sires of sons ever. Back in the 70s the bull that really opened doors for WWS - and indeed for American Holsteins on the world stage - was Round Oak Rag Apple Elevation. There have been other bulls capable of making some truly exceptional individuals in the way that Elevation could, but it is doubtful if any other bull was as consistent at taking those ordinary 75-point cows and producing 85-point daughters. With this ability, Elevation became one of the great foundation sires of the "Holsteinization" process that swept through the dairy industry around the globe.

PLEASING RESULTS

'It's always a pleasure to see the success people have had with bulls we supplied,' comments John. 'I recently read of the cow in the UK - a Tesk x Blackstar x Bell, 3 generations of WWS bulls - that had produced over 200,000 kg.' Another occasion that was a source of pride for John was when he attended the All-Japan show in 2005 when over half the cows exhibited were sired by Regancrest Elton Durham. 'Of course Durham was a bull whose semen only qualified



Select Sires in Ohio is part owner and a major supplier of World Wide Sires. Currently the top 6 TPI bulls on the US proven sire list, and 3 of the top 5 genomic bulls, are located here at Select.

It is 45 years ago next year that Californian dairyman Bill Clark made a major contribution to shaping the dairy cow of the world. Clark had a passion for cows, a passion for people, and a passion for the international dairy industry. He was a man of vision, and had a dream of taking the genetics of the American dairy cow to the world. He made that dream a reality by establishing a company he named World Wide Sires (WWS). Today the headquarters of WWS remains in Visalia, California. That's dairy heartland in the US as it is located in Tulare County, which has more dairy cows producing more milk than any other county in the nation.

SHARED PASSION

WWS operates in 70 countries in many different parts of the world, though it does not sell into the North, Central or South American markets. 'We follow Bill Clark's philosophy of working with the best people in each country,' explains General Manager John Schouten. 'We primarily work with exclusive agents in many countries, but in Australia, New Zealand and the Netherlands we have solely owned subsidiaries. In China, Russia and Hungary we work with joint ventures, and in Saudi Arabia and the UAE we retail direct to the farmers.' The first of October will be an anniversary for John for he will have

for very few markets, but his achievements that day were certainly impressive, and we marketed many of his sons all over the world.' Another bull John mentions as having a major impact, was O-Man, who sparked the worldwide push towards a healthy, trouble-free cow. More recently a bull with global reach was Ensenada Taboo Planet, the high-milk bull whose sons ushered in the genomic era. In fact, with Planet, his sons, grandsons and great-grandsons, for the first time semen from 4 generations of bulls that were still alive was being marketed around the world at the same time. Other famous sires that have been part of the WWS sire line-up down through the years include Carlin-M Ivanhoe Bell, Walkway Chief Mark, Arlinda Rotate, Bis-May Tradition Cleitus, Rothrock Tradition Leadman, Emprise Bell Elton and MJR Blackstar Emory.

FOCUS ON SERVICE

Of course WWS has had more than just semen in its product range, with embryos from the elite

through to commercial level animals from each of the dairy breeds available too. Over recent years, WWS has added greater focus to supplying consulting and training services to help customers provide the level of management and care for their cattle to achieve maximum performance from the superior genetics. For this purpose, the WWS Training Centre in Washington State was created. Primarily large herd managers from all around the world receive training in nutrition and reproduction technology that helps them capitalize on their investment in genetics. This training facility has staff of 7 employees. A computer mating program known as World-wide Mating Service (WMS) provides a genetic consultation for sire selection. The program has flexible options depending on the amount of available identification and data on the herd, and helps provide protection against inbreeding and genetic recessives. It also keeps track of semen inventory and tracks genetic progress. WWS has created 6 unique total-indexes to help

farmers refine their selection of bulls from the WWS' portfolio that best meet their breeding objectives. In addition, WWS has developed a customized index option. This tool offers breeding enthusiasts the opportunity to select the criteria they value, and to identify WWS bulls that best meet their breeding objectives. As the representative of the two main AI co-operatives of the US, World Wide Sires has the genetic supply to ensure that it remains a major global player in the international cattle improvement industry in the years ahead. ●