

The Canadian Jersey

The Canadian Jersey has been developed from imports of superior breeding stock mainly from Jersey with a few from England. These importations started about a century ago, but in more recent times some genetic material has been imported from the United States.

Over 50 years ago, the Canadian cow Brampton Basilua established a world championship butterfat production record of 596.1 kg (1 313 lb) of fat with 8 631.4 kg (19 012 lb) of milk in three-times-daily milking. This amazing record stood for many years and it would be difficult to name any one cow that has made greater contributions to the breed.

The Jersey population in Canada is estimated at between 35 000 and 40 000 head of registered cattle. The Jersey cow is, on the basis of individual size and weight, an efficient converter of feed into food – her production may vary from 9 to 25 times her body weight.

This breed stands up well to rigorous winters, despite a misleading refinement of appearance: in tropical climates the natural dun or fawn colour protects from heat and direct sunlight, so that production and butterfat content of the milk are maintained at a consistently high level.

High production within the breed is considered of paramount importance. The 1984 national average for all cows on the official testing program is 4 484 kg (9 865 lb) milk and 227 kg (499 lb) butterfat, i.e. 5.06 percent in 305 days in twice-daily milking. The average protein is 3.90 percent.

