

Garry's Meadow Fresh

Garry's Meadow Fresh bottles milk from Lady-Lane Jersey Farm in Mulino, Ore. The dairy owned by Garry Hansen has been bottling non-homogenized, low-heat pasteurized All-Jersey milk in glass bottles since May 2009. The product line includes whole milk, 2% milk, nonfat milk, chocolate milk, whipping cream, half and half and eggnog in season.



Garry's Meadow Fresh is sold in 25 retail outlets in the greater Portland area, including nine locations for New Seasons Market and three for Whole Foods. Consumers can also get milk from the Lady-Lane Jersey herd at the Beaverton Farmer's Market, the Hollywood Farmer's Market and the Portland Farmer's Market at Portland State University, one of the country's largest and most well-known farmer's markets.

The milking string at Lady Lane Jersey Farm is 45 cows. Hansen, a third-generation dairy producer, has been operating his own business on a farm that borders the one on which he was raised since 1992. The herd is enrolled on REAP.

"I made the decision to establish the bottling business in 2005," said Hansen. "I was at a crossroads and figured I had two choices to survive as a farmer: start a niche market or go organic. Organic wasn't a perfect fit for me, so I chose to bottle milk."

Hansen purchased processing equipment from a dairy in Vancouver that was no longer in operation and sought guidance from the gentleman who owned the plant. It took about 3 ½ years to get the business up and running. Milk is vat-pasteurized in the mildest form possible (145 degrees Fahrenheit for 30 minutes) to ensure the product is not only safe, but full of flavor.

“I had initially planned to bottle in plastic jugs,” Hansen recalled. “But after I talked to several customers at my first farmer’s market, I decided to use glass bottles instead. The fit between All-Jersey milk and my customers is so much better.”

Garry’s Meadow Fresh has been an All-Jersey producer-distributor from day one.

“The Queen of Quality logo helps me differentiate my product from the rest,” said Hansen. “I am selling to a very different market in Portland. Consumers here are very educated about their food. They are familiar with low-heat pasteurization and know the difference between homogenized and non-homogenized milk. They want a minimally processed product that is dense with nutrients and taste. The Queen of Quality logo helps them find my product.”

Milk quality is another part of the business that has become important to Hansen since he began bottling milk from his herd of Registered Jersey cows.

“We don’t get a shelf life with low-heat pasteurization, so have to make sure milk is clean from the start.”

Though strong demand for Garry’s Meadow Fresh Jersey Milk Products means Hansen no longer has to handle every aspect of the business, he still makes an effort to maintain contact with consumers on a routine basis.

“It is important for me to be at the farmer’s markets so customers can put a face with the product and know who is putting food on their table.”



Lady-Lane Jerseys at the 2012 All-American show in Louisville, Kentucky