



2006 Provincial Sponsors



Congratulations to

Don and Joanne Russell

Dairy Farmers from Cobden

Ontario - CANADA'S

OUTSTANDING YOUNG

FARMERS

National winners Dec. 2006



DoJo Holsteins Inc. is owned and operated by Donald and Joanne Russell of Cobden with their four young children. The old saying "You're born with it or you marry into it!" did not apply to Don and Joanne. Their goal to become farmers was financed entirely by their city jobs. The major challenge was to convince any financial institution to work with them. Milk quota has been their largest and most important investment. They milked cows out of rented facilities for 3 years while commuting to full-time jobs. They moved their belongings, cattle and dreams to Renfrew County in 1998 with the purchase of a 150-acre farm. Don diversified his income by hiring his brother in a business that utilized Don's innovative scientific method of hoof trimming. By the third year, Don had two hoof racks and was servicing almost 20,000 cows all while Joanne was milking the cows at home with the children. The Russell's hire custom operators to do 90% of our fieldwork, which gives them accurate feed costs. The Environmental Farm Plan was used to identify high-risk points on the farm and solutions to problems. Many renovations were done to the old barn to increase cow comfort. Selling feeding programs helps Don keep up with the latest ration technologies, which they try on their own herd, first. In 2005 a change in their feeding program raised butterfat from 2.79% to 3.8%; now their herd BCA is 5th in the county. They are involved in their new community through holding positions in the local school, church and children's activities.