



Work/Life Balance

Hesdon Holsteins

Delta, BC

By Morgan Sangster, HC Field Service Business Partner

PREFIX: Hesdon

PEOPLE INVOLVED: Alan and Celine Hessels and their children - Kayleigh (10), Sophia (8), James (6), Adriana (2) - and Jim and MaryAnn Hessels. Greg and Coral Hessels have their own prefix Hesgen but still help with work on the farm. Their children are Julianne (4), Vivian (3), Nathan (1) and baby due August 2018.

OF YEARS AS A HOLSTEIN CANADA MEMBER: 37 (Alan and Celine added 2 years ago)

OF COWS MILKED: 125 cows

OF ACRES FARMED: 140 acres

FACILITY TYPE: Freestall, double 10 parlour

HERD PRODUCTION AVERAGE:
245-264-256 BCA

HERD CLASSIFICATION (IF APPLICABLE):
2ME 2EX 43VG 79GP 14G

WHAT IS YOUR FEEDING SYSTEM? TMR, mature and 2 year old rations

ARE THERE OTHER BREEDS IN YOUR HERD?
No

HOLSTEIN CANADA SERVICES USED:
Registration, Classification, NLID



HOW MUCH HAS YOUR TYPICAL DAY CHANGED SINCE HAVING KIDS (OR SINCE STARTING AN OFF-FARM JOB)?

We wouldn't say our day has changed that much, but it has gotten busier and you always have a little sidekick when doing any farm job! It takes a little more effort to get out the door for chores and we need to be more organized since we are usually in a rush.

HOW DO YOU FIND THE TIME TO SUCCESSFULLY MANAGE YOUR BUSINESS, WITHOUT SACRIFICING QUALITY FAMILY TIME?

We always planned to have our children be involved in our operation. We found that quality time could be found having your baby with you in a highchair in the parlour, or your two year old in the feed tractor and your six year old helping with calf feeding. Our children truly love and enjoy helping us. This is our life as a family and we are a team.

ARE THERE ANY THINGS YOU HAD TO GIVE UP OR CHANGE AFTER STARTING A FAMILY?

We have date nights a little less often and we have to think twice if we can say yes to any event we'd like to attend, but we do have a wonderful support system on both sides of the family who help often with our children.

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR YOUNG FARMING COUPLES WHO PLAN TO HAVE KIDS?

Remember to have confidence on the tough days that you are giving your child a life to be envious of! Children remember the time you spend, not the things you give them. As well, babies really do sleep best in the fresh air!



DO YOU HAVE ANY OFF-FARM COMMITMENTS THAT MAKE MANAGING THE FARM MORE CHALLENGING?

We are both on one or two boards or committees that we often struggle to find the energy for, but we also know that this is the kind of work ethic we really want to pass on to our children.

DO YOU FIND YOUR WORK/LIFE BALANCE TO BE UNMANAGEABLE AT TIMES?

Oh, there are always days that are rough! Nobody wants to get up to milk after being up half the night with a sick baby.

HOW DO YOU COPE? Some days, you just need to hand your spouse a beer and take those kiddos up to bed, no questions asked! But honestly, just support each other, know your limitations and remember that farm life is the best life. (And that this, too, shall pass.)

DO YOU HAVE A STRONG NETWORK OF FRIENDS AND FAMILY TO SUPPORT YOU?

Yes! We feel so blessed every day to have such wonderful families that truly support us. 🐾