

Milking Shorthorn Herd Book Levels...History and Current System

If you have ever become engaged in a conversation with someone interested or new to the breed in regards to the AMSS registration system you will have seen eyes glaze over. Along with the Illawarra registration system I would rank ours as one of the most complex in the world. Currently we have a number of different monikers for distinguishing Milking Shorthorn cattle.

To begin with there are the 36000 animals. Most people think of these as Genetic Expansion animals that are at least 50% Herd Book Milking Shorthorn. If they are Genetic Expansion animals they can be either a cow or a bull and be any color. But we also have a 36000 Genetic Recovery. These can only be cows and must be red, white or roan. These females are sired by full herd bulls out of a grade phenotypic Milking Shorthorn cow (she is red, white or roan and otherwise looks like a Milking Shorthorn) OR out of full herd books cows by grade phenotypic Milking Shorthorn bull. The big difference, besides the color requirement, between a 36000 Genetic Recovery female and a 36000 Genetic Expansion female is the 36000 GR females offspring, when sired by a full herd book bull, are full herd book.

Next we have 37000 animals. These are cows that are at least 75% AMSS herd book but do not meet color requirements OR bulls that are 75% AMSS Herd book that either do or don't meet color requirements. 37000 females are never eligible to be shown, 37000 males can be shown if they meet color requirements.

We also have EXP suffix females. These are also cows that are at least 75% AMSS herd book and are eligible to be shown. This is followed by full herd book animals. We also have the successful and growing Native program. An "N" as a suffix indicates an animal that is 100% Coates Shorthorn.

There are a number of other types of animals in our system that you may not be aware of. The first of these are the Appendix Registered (AR). These are animals that are double registered from the American Shorthorn Association and that do not qualify for Native or full herd book status. Their offspring, when sired by a full herd book bull or out of full herd book cow become an "S". This is for "Supplemental Shorthorn". Another cross to a full herd book gives a full herd book.

We also have the Genetic Identity program. These are animals that less than 50% Herd Book Milking Shorthorn. Currently registered with a 36500 number these animals are treated as having no Milking Shorthorn blood for purpose of registration. This means that when bred to a full herd book animal there offspring qualify for a 36000 Genetic Expansion number. The number of animals in this category is showing strong growth.

The new database expands on the current system. While admittedly daunting at first, we feel that as breeders grow accustomed to the new prefixes that you will be able to understand the AMSS registration policy in a much clearer fashion. We also believe that the new prefixes will allow you, as the new animals are registered, to understand just how your animals trace.

The reason for the change is that the new system has a number system based on the Animal Identification Number (AIN). We no longer will be able to use distinctions in registration number to tell the herd book status of an animal. We also will be able to use other breeds numbers accurately as we go forward. The other thing to remember that the new system is also being constructed with all the edits required for registration. This means that you do not have to remember what herd book status the animal you are registering will require.

And now, for new Milking Shorthorn Speak (though some remain the same). In the new system there are 16 herd book types. What follows are the types with the prefix or suffix and a brief description. The color column has either an 1 which signifies animals that are red, white or roan or a 2 for non-Milking Shorthorn colors. A simple and accurate tool to use as you learn the system is that if the animal has a prefix they are not eligible to be shown as an American Milking Shorthorn. If they have a suffix or no suffix they are eligible to be shown as an American Milking Shorthorn.

Herd Book Type	Prefix	Suffix	Color	Notes
1		N	1	Native
2			1	Full Herd Book
3		EXP	1	Previous EXP females PLUS 37000 bulls that meet color
4	GE3		2	Full herd book value animals that do not meet color
5	GE2		2	Former 37000 females and 37000 males that do meet color.
6	GE		All Colors	Former 36000 Genetic Expansion
7	SRB		1	Swedish Reds, formerly under 36000 Genetic Expansion
8	GR		1	Former 36000 Genetic Recovery Females
9	GI4		2	This is new, Genetic identity 4. These are animals that descend from

				Genetic Identity animals. For breeding value they are the same as GE3.
10	GI3		2	Breeding value same as GE2 or current 37000
11	GI2		2	Breeding Value same as GE
12	GI		All Colors	Animals with Milking Shorthorn genetics but less than 50% herd book.
13		S	1	Shorthorn Supplemental
14	AR		1	Appendix Registered
15	OA		1	Original Grade Milking Shorthorn Animal
16				Other breeds

Another item that is important to remember with the new system is that while it may look strange for now, the breeding value has not changed. For instance if you breed a Holstein cow to a full herd book bull you will get a prefix GE, or a 36000 Genetic Expansion in the old system. If you breed the GE animal to a full herd book animal and get a either a heifer or a bull that meets color they will be an EXP. That part is a bit different as previously bulls would have been 37000. These animals bred to a full herd book animal will get you a full herd book calf.

If the GE animal, when bred to a full herd book animal, produces a calf that does not have Milking Shorthorn colors that calf will be a GE2. This is the same as the current 37000 female. A GE2 animal that produces a calf that does not meet color requirements is a GE3. Any future generations that do not meet color and have as the other parent a full herd book will remain a GE3. Once a calf is born that meets color that animal is full herd book.

We will have more articles on the new system as we go forward. Again remember that you actually do not need to know the rules to register a calf, the system is built to do that for you. What you will need to think of is your breeding decisions to produce that calf.