

Azores transplants take root in California

By **JULIA HOLLISTER**
For the Capital Press

The path Marlene Silveira and her family took to fulfill their dream of owning a dairy in California was a long one.

"I was born into the dairy business," she said. "My family still has dairies in the Azores Islands (off the coast of Portugal), where I was born. As far back as I can go, my family has always milked cows."

In 1999, she married Victor, whose parents also came from the Azores and had started a California dairy in 1987.

At first, Marlene and Victor leased a dairy farm. Then in 2001, another dream came true — the couple bought a dairy between Sacramento and Redding, Calif.

"In 2006 we reached a new chapter for Silveira Farms and became an organic dairy," she said. "We wanted to get the cows on pasture and off of concrete. We went back to the way our family dairies in the Azores."

The dairy milks around 600 cows. Most are Hol-

steins but there are a few Jerseys and cross-breeds.

A couple of years ago they also decided to plant trees and now have almond and walnut orchards.

The Silveiras sell their milk to Organic West, a milk broker that sells it to processors.

"I always say that you are born into the dairy business or you marry into it," she said. "It is truly a 7/24-hour job and most people do not want this lifestyle. But most dairymen will tell you that this is the most rewarding job and we would not trade it for the world. I personally cannot imagine not milking cows."

Although it is an ideal life for her family, she acknowledges there are bumps in the road.

"There are many challenges for a dairy farmer in California," she said. "The milk price the California dairy farmer receives is about 10 percent lower than the rest of the nation. The reason is that California is not in the federal order."

She hopes that will change next year, when farmers will vote on a federal order.

"The operating costs — land, labor, electricity, feed costs and fuel in California are also high," she said. "These are some of the reasons many dairies are going out of business or moving out of state."

She also thought about moving.

"There was a time we also considered moving out of California for these reasons, but we love California," he said. "This is where family lives and where we want to raise our two kids."

Silveira is a member of the California Milk Advisory Board.



Courtesy of Marlene Silveira

The Silveira family — Marlene, Victor and children Lillyanna and Joseph — brought many of their dairy practices from the Azores to their dairy farm. Buck, the dog, helps out, too.

RAKE IN THE CA\$H

UP TO \$2,000 OFF SELECT MODELS

Download our ForageXpert app today to find the perfect tool to optimize your harvest!

Purchase a select new Kuhn rotary rake, then cut the price further with a Rake in the Cash coupon.

Visit our website or your local dealer for details and to receive your coupon.

Offer ends June 15, 2016 KuhnNorthAmerica.com

Pioneer Equipment Palmer, AK Valley Truck & Tractor Chico, CA Colusa, CA Dixon, CA Marble Mountain Machinery Fort Jones, CA Fernbridge Tractor Fortuna, CA	Gonzales Equipment Gonzales, CA Torrence's Farm Implements Heber, CA Quality Machinery Center Hanford, CA Madera, CA Tulare, CA Belkorp Ag Merced, CA Modesto, CA Santa Rosa, CA Stockton, CA	Papé Machinery Fall River Mills, CA Aurora, OR Central Point, OR Cornelius, OR Gresham, OR Harrisburg, OR Madras, OR McMinnville, OR Merrill, OR Roseburg, OR Salem, OR Tangent, OR	Boyd's Implement Tillamook, OR Central Machinery Sales Hermiston, OR Moses Lake, WA Pasco, WA Sunnyside, WA Farmers Equipment Burlington, WA Lynden, WA	Washington Tractor Chehalis, WA Sumner, WA Ellensburg, WA Quincy, WA Yakima, WA Watkins Tractor & Supply Kelso, WA	CH Ag American Falls, ID Burley, ID Twin Falls, ID Campbell Tractor Fruitland, ID Glenns Ferry, ID Homedale, ID Nampa, ID Wendell, ID
---	---	--	---	---	--

Visit your local Kuhn Dealer today!

Your Farm & Land Specialist

(507) Acres: (30) acres water rights, fenced & crossfenced Richardson Gap Road, Lebanon, OR. **\$1,978,000**

(72) Acre Hazelnut Site: Buildable site with well & septic, shop, views. Aumsville, OR. **\$765,000**

(49) Acre Vineyard Site: South Salem Hills, Willamette Valley AVA, **\$808,500**

Large Cache Valley Dairy: (1,440+/-) milking capacity, double (20) parlor, Hyrum, UT. Bob Marabella, Utah Broker, All American Real Estate, 435-730-6015..... **\$1,600,000**

Turnkey "Organic Valley" Dairy, Chehalis, WA. Approved for 250 cows, 2 homes. - Curt Christopherson, Sea-Port Realty, Washington Broker 253-640-2121



Bill Hekman
Oregon Broker - Sundance Realty
503-580-8664
wehjr2@gmail.com



D16-4/#7

D16-1/#4N