

Sweden had the earliest import in Scandinavia

We have no proof of the arrival of some Jersey cows to Gotland in 1880 as alleged, so we let the history begin with the importation of 1890. (Source: Mejeribruggets Dronning, 1996)

The Norwegian merchant Nils Georg Sorensen took over Torreby Estate in 1886. Sorensen was a wealthy man, having earned his money from the export of wood products to Spain. He invested in forestry and sawmills in Sweden, in-

cluding a wood processing company in Sävenäs, north of Gothenburg.

In 1887, Sorensen built a new country house at Torreby, very similar to what the architect A.E. Melander had been inspired by in the UK and America. He also built new farm buildings and when the barn was completed in 1890, he sent his farm manager Mr. Thalén, to Jersey Island to buy breeding stock: 25 heifers, 3 cows and one bull.

Another import by Torreby was made in 1894. Perhaps Sorensen had been in-

spired by the American produced high-yielding Jersey animals achieving high selling prices. Planning to produce livestock for sale, he began a 'strong' feeding of the herd expecting to have extraordinary high-yielding cows, to promote the sale of animals.

Sweden imported another group of Jersey animals in 1891 when the Alnarp Academy bought stock, but those animals were destroyed by tuberculosis.

An American Swede exports Jerseys to his native land

The next imports occurred in connection with the 1893 World Exposition in Chicago. The businessman C.O. Swanberg, who lived in the USA, was encouraged to establish complete Jersey herds on his Swedish estates Svartingstorp (1893) and Engelstofta (1898).

The oldest Nordic Jersey herd at Wirum Manor in the County of Kalmar can be traced back to this import. (Source: Wirum Sæteri, 1993)


In 1904, Swanberg wrote to Ph. L.S. Mourant on Jersey Island and reported that *'the average output of his cows – 900 lbs on three farms – was 160 kilograms butter, out of 2,657 kilos milk, containing five per cent of butter-fat'*.

'The Jersey cow,' he said, 'can produce butter much cheaper than our native cows and, we are satisfied, cheaper than any other cow in the world.' (Mourant, 1907)

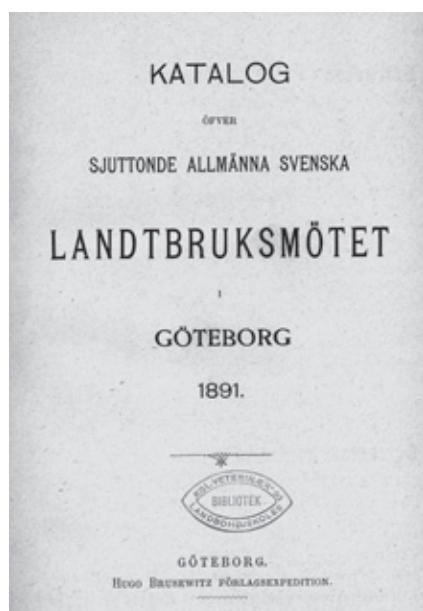
New herds were established after 1900 at Sperlingsholm and Hjuleberg in Halland to which animals in 1908 were added from Jersey Island and Denmark. That same year N. Treschow, the owner of Hjuleberg, joined the Danish Jersey association. We also know that the owner of Torreby (1940) and Swanberg's son-in-law, a Mr. Holmquist, were for many years members of the Danish association.

Few Jersey herds for a long period

In 1945, however, Ivar Johansson concluded that the Jersey breed did not spread significantly outside of these estates. As to the reason why, Johansson points out that the breed had difficulty adapting to the Swedish climate. Then the estate herds disappeared, except that of Wirum Manor. Over the years, this

Country	Sweden	
First importation of purebred Jerseys	1893	
Name of the national Jersey association (in English)	Sveriges Jerseyforening (Swedish Jersey Association)	
Year of formation (possibly end year) of association	1949	
Date of 1 st herd book (1 st edition or earliest)	1955	
Size of Jersey population, latest figures (registered and total)	Registered 1,918 Total app. 2,400	
Jerseys as a % of the national dairy cattle population	0.7%	
Average herd size	64.1 cows. Jerseys in smaller herds	
Average production	N/A	
Average 305-day production	6,755 kg milk 5.76% fat 3.98% protein	
Breeding program with bull testing? And number of bulls tested per annum	Yes, part of Viking Genetics N/A	
General management	Very different: 50% loose housing and 50% tie-stalls. Feeding: grazing during summer and grass silage, hay and concentrate during winter are most common.	
% of organic herds	10%	
Use of sexed semen	10-15%	
Names of the oldest herds	Wirums Säteri since 1893	





Catalogue of the 17th Swedish Agricultural Meeting at Gothenburg in 1891, where 13 Jersey bulls, heifers and one cow were for sale.

estate has sold many high-class animals (on Gotland, for example, they bought several hundred). But in 1952, only 539 Jerseys were found to be milk recorded in Sweden.

Nonetheless, on March 18, 1949 with some help from the Danish Jersey association, Sveriges Jerseyförening was established and over the course of the next two years it swelled to 50 members. By 1969, the number of milk-recorded Jersey cows had increased to 5,000.

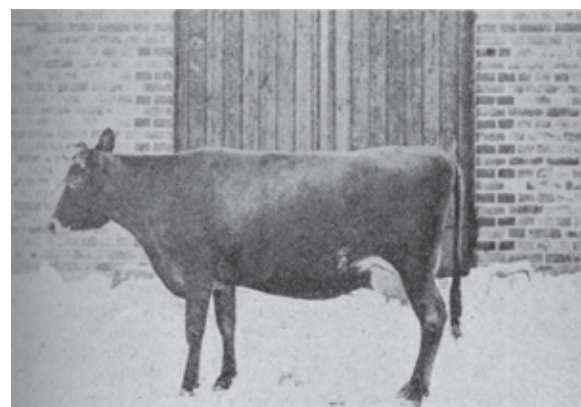
This was helped by a major importation from Denmark in 1965 of 500 pregnant heifers, all of them arrived in the northerly part of Sweden. From this point onwards, the breed had begun its migration from south to north in the country. (Sources: *Sourcesybladet*, 1940, 1951, 1955 and 1969)

Today the country has about half a million dairy cows with just over 1% of them Jerseys. About 200 herds have Jerseys, most of which will include other breeds as well. The national average for Jerseys in 2009 was 6,472 kg milk with 373 kg fat (5.76%) and 255 kg protein (3.94%).

Until the late 1980s, there was a national breeding program running, but too

few bulls and low reliability on the proofs stopped the program. In the early 1990s, milk payment was solely on protein and Jersey numbers decreased.

When entering the EU, butterfat payment was re-introduced and the number of Jerseys started to increase again. Swedish Jersey joined a common breeding program with Danish Jersey in 2003, and the common AI society, Viking Genetics, from 2007. With genomic selection, it has been possible to identify animals for the breeding program and in 2010, the first two bulls in 25 years, were selected for AI. The first one bred by Wirums Säteri, the oldest Jersey herd in Scandinavia.



One of the Jersey cows at Torreby Manor in Sweden, imported from 1890-1894.

Wirum-Manor herd oldest in Scandinavia

The Jersey herd at Wirum Manor located in the northern part of Kalmar in Sweden, is recognized as the oldest existing herd in the Scandinavian countries. In 1893, the Swedish businessman C.O. Swanberg bought 12 bulls and 238 in-calf heifers destined solely for his Svarstingstorp Estate, near Kalmar. Later a number of these animals were moved to Swanberg's other estates: Änglestofta and Wirum.

In 1993 a small booklet on the Wirum Manor and its Jersey herd was published to mark its 100th anniversary. This prompted Bernth Petersson and Johan Olsson to investigate and they found evidence that 'Cow No 241, Sissi' at Wirum herd could be traced back to the original importation taking place in 1893 of 'Cow No 469, Sissi'. She was bred to a bull of the Swedish Mountain breed, which in 1904, gave birth to 'Cow No 86, Sissi'. Her average yield from 1908 to 1914 was 2,509 kg of milk, 4.14% and 104 kg of butterfat.

During the 1900s Wirum had various owners, but despite that, the Jersey herd remained intact. Wirum has been in the same family since 1966. In recent times, Adam Dahlberg took over the farm from his mother, Margaret Nelson. (Source: Wirum, 1993)

Today the Manor has about 250 Jersey

animals of which approximately 100 are milking cows. Wirums Jersey milk, with its high fat and protein content, is ideal for making high-quality ice-cream. In the autumn of 2009 (production was approved by the controlling authority in December 2009) the business began on-farm production, based entirely on their own Jersey milk and cream, and using only natural raw materials. This gives the product a unique flavour and texture and it was launched on the market in spring 2010. The range includes the first of what will be about 20 flavours, such as hazelnut, rum nougat, lemon, punch, liquorice, Tiramisu and coffee. (Website: Wirum Glass)



The owner of Wirum Säteri in 1993, Margareta Nilsson, and her husband in front of the manor.

