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# MONIQUE SIMPSON

HOL-AMER FARMS | AGASSIZ, BC

At Hol-Amer Farms, dairy farming is more than a career — it's a way of life shaped by family, adaptability, and a deep commitment to animal care. For Monique Simpson, that journey began at birth and continues today as she balances modern dairy technology, herd health, and family life with quiet leadership and determination.

Monique was born into a farming family originally based in Abbotsford before relocating to Agassiz in 1993. From an early age, she was involved in farm chores, gradually taking on more responsibility as she grew. During her Grade 12 year, she entered an apprenticeship program that allowed her to work on the farm while completing her hours — a pivotal step that confirmed her passion for agriculture.

After graduating, Monique attended Lakeland College in Vermilion, Alberta, where she completed a Dairy Production program. She returned home to work full time on the farm before taking a six- to seven-year break working in auto insurance. Even then, the farm never truly let go — she continued helping every second weekend. Seven years ago, Monique returned to the farm full time, and six years ago, the operation transitioned into a new robotic milking barn, marking a major evolution for Hol-Amer Farms.

Today, Monique works alongside her dad and her soon-to-be sister-in-law. She and her husband, Richard, have been married for over ten years and are raising two children, Caleb (9) and Hadley (6). Farm life is very much a family affair — Caleb enjoys helping with chores, especially when tractors are involved, while Hadley prefers spending time cuddling the farm cats.

***“Even when I stepped away from the farm for a few years, I was still working every second weekend. The farm was always part of me.”***

Monique often jokes that she titles her role as “labourer,” though it hardly captures the scope of her responsibilities. What began with feeding calves and milking cows has evolved into managing robotic systems, supporting paperwork and record-keeping, assisting with breeding decisions, coordinating with farm supply representatives, and tackling small repairs. Last year, she even had the opportunity to run the tractor with the harvester for corn and grass.

Her day-to-day involvement touches nearly every part of the operation. Monique manages monthly herd health, completes ProAction requirements annually, supports bookkeeping, maintains detailed records for everyone working on the farm, and works closely with WestGen. She regularly attends seminars and stays engaged with new practices and technologies, ensuring the herd continues to thrive.



**“I’m involved in a little bit of everything — herd health, ProAction, record-keeping, and coordinating with WestGen and our vet.”**

While Monique doesn’t seek the spotlight, her leadership is evident in the trust placed in her. She coordinates hoof trimming, prepares and leads monthly herd health reviews with the veterinarian, and works directly with WestGen to select the right bulls for the herd. Her role bridges animal care, communication, and decision-making — all essential to the farm’s success.

***“I usually call myself a labourer, but that never really covers everything I do.”***

Hol-Amer Farms represents a first-generation Canadian dairy for Monique’s father, whose family farmed in Holland before immigrating. That legacy of resilience and adaptability continues today as the family navigates ongoing change in the industry.

A typical day for Monique starts by checking the computer for heats, treatments, mastitis cases, and cows that need to be fetched. From there, no two days are the same — barn chores, herd checks, and, in spring, summer, and fall, field work fill the hours.

She considers herself fortunate to have the flexibility that farm life can offer. Monique is able to send her kids off to school in the mornings, volunteer when needed, and still be home to make dinner or drive them to extracurricular activities. During busy field seasons, when hours become unpredictable, the support of her husband and extended family makes all the difference.

Monique believes women bring unique strengths to farming — particularly strong instincts around animal welfare, detailed record-keeping, and the ability to keep moving forward even when conditions are physically and emotionally demanding. These qualities, she says, are essential to sustaining farms through both good years and hard ones.

***“Farm life can be hard physically and emotionally, but we find a way to keep the momentum going.”***

Looking ahead, Monique is excited to see where Hol-Amer Farms will be in the next few years. With changes on the horizon, she’s focused on adapting thoughtfully and continuing to be an active part of the farm’s success.



**“I’m honoured to be recognized alongside so many women in the dairy industry.”**

Her advice to young women considering a future in dairy farming is simple and powerful: **Be involved.** Learn beyond the day-to-day chores, understand the bigger picture, and take ownership of where you want your future in agriculture to go.

Being recognized during the International Year of the Woman Farmer is something Monique describes as truly humbling. She is honoured to stand alongside so many women in the dairy industry and hopes that this recognition helps pave the way for future generations of women who want to build a life in agriculture.

Through dedication, quiet leadership, and a genuine love for farming, Monique Simpson exemplifies the impact women have on Canadian dairy — today and for generations to come.

