There’s a wealth of information in the registration name of an animal recorded by the American Jersey Cattle Association. More was added during the first week of February.

The AJCA registration name has three parts. The core is the name selected by the First Owner. Typically that includes the breeder’s prefix, the short name of the sire, and finally a unique name that traditionally references the cow family (e.g., the “Belles”) but could be as simple as the tattoo or herd number (e.g., A364).

The other two parts—name suffixes and prefixes—are determined by rules made by the Board of Directors of the American Jersey Cattle Association.

The name suffixes were adopted first. These were P or PP to identify polled animals; followed by ET for animals produced through embryo transfer, with clone and split-embryo animals labeled ETN and ETS; and LL and RVC, labeling declared carriers of the genetic abnormalities Limber Legs and Rectovaginal Constriction, respectively.

Prefixes were introduced in 1975 to track progress towards Herd Register status through Genetic Recovery, a program for identifying Jersey females that had missing or incomplete pedigree records. The prefixes told you what step a female was at. Starting with the Original Animal that had no known, recorded parents (OA prefix), by using a Registered Jersey bull qualified for the OA prefix.

Just as Generation Count makes it simple to assess depth of Jersey pedigree, the JX prefix makes it simple to differentiate a pedigree that includes an animal of another breed from one that has an unknown Jersey. To illustrate, the essential difference between the parents of:

- JARS of Clay Noah 1755 2661 (1)
- JX Jars of Clay Lennox 1211 2671 (1)

is that sire or dam of the second is not Jersey.

Going a step further, study the example at left. 24129 has a Generation Count of 4, meaning her pedigree has at most four unbroken generations of recorded Jersey ancestors. On the maternal side, she descends from unknown Jerseys. Paternally, the JX prefix points you to the non-Jersey ancestor, UR Oomsdale Johnson Son.

Keep in mind that the JX prefix was implemented on February 4, 2017. It takes time for updates to work their way through A.I. and the dairy records system. For current information, refer to USJersey’s web services: infoJersey, Green Book Online and BullsEye.

You might also find a new infoJersey application helpful as you consider future matings. From the Tools menu, select Determine Animal Registry Status. Enter sire and dam ID information, then the sex of the calf to obtain its AJCA registry status (Herd Register or Generation Count) and find out if the JX prefix applies.

There are now just two name prefixes used by AJCA rules: UR for unregistered, and a new one implemented on February 4. That is the JX prefix, for Jersey Cross. When you see the JX prefix in a name, you know that the animal has at least one ancestor of another breed within six (6) generations. After six generations, the JX prefix is dropped. That is the point at which, based on recorded ancestry, the animal should have inherited more than 99% of its genetic make-up through the Jersey breed.

Generation Count suffixes replaced the prefixes of Genetic Recovery and Jersey Expansion in May of 2016. References in ads or documents to animals labeled OA, PR, GR or J1 up through J6 (used towards the end of the program) are obsolete.

There are now just two name prefixes