ROOTED IN RED SOIL

***Spud Island Farms and the Sanderson family** of York Point, PE, join the Canadian Simmental Association Hall of Fame*

From a potato-and-Hereford farm founded in 1947 to one of the largest cow-calf finishing operations in Prince Edward Island, the Sanderson family's story is one of steady growth, hard-won resilience and a deep commitment to the Simmental breed. This July, that story earned them a place in the Canadian Simmental Association Hall of Fame.

The Hall of Fame recognizes prominent breeders and leaders who have advanced the Simmental breed in Canada. This year's inductees from the Island fit that description in every sense.

Three Generations on the Island

The Sanderson farm at York Point dates to 1947, when Fulton Sanderson established it with potatoes and Hereford cattle. The real turning point came decades later, when the third generation took the reins: Randy Sanderson, his late wife Debbie, and Randy's brothers. They brought their first Simmentals home in 1987. By 1988 they had registered their first calves under the Spud-Island prefix, and the herd has been building on that foundation ever since.

Today, Spud Island Farms is a thriving, diversified enterprise. It supports approximately 550 head of cattle, including purebred Simmentals, a Simmental-influenced commercial herd and a commercial feedlot, alongside roughly 600 acres of soybeans, corn, grain and hay. At its peak, the herd reached approximately 700 head.

Simmental Genetics at Work

For the Sandersons, Simmental genetics have always had to earn their keep in a practical, large-scale setting. Their operation has consistently shown the value of those genetics in both commercial and purebred programs.

They have also been long-standing champions of data-driven performance and animal care, participating in the Prince Edward Island Certified Beef program, Verified Beef Production Plus (VBP+) and Environmental Farm Planning. Their protocols for humane handling and premium carcass grading showed cattlemen across the region what Simmental genetics deliver on the rail. The industry took notice: the farm was named Producer of the Year by Atlantic Beef Products in 2016 and by the PEI Cattle Producers in 2018.

That practical understanding of herd performance has made the family trusted voices with fellow breeders and commercial cattlemen alike, steadily growing appreciation for Simmental throughout Eastern Canada.

A Presence in the Show Ring

The Sandersons' banners are well travelled. Their cattle have appeared from Old Home Week to Expo Bœuf, the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair and Canadian Western Agribition, collecting multiple Premier Breeder, Premier Exhibitor and Supreme Champion honours along the way.

The Story of Trendsetter 71X

No chapter better captures the family's breeding vision and personal resilience than that of Spud Island Trendsetter 71X and her son, MFS Junior 3A.

In 2011, Debbie required a critical double-lung transplant, and she and Randy relocated to Alberta for 20 months. The herd was downsized, and Trendsetter 71X was sold.

When the couple returned home in 2013, the Sandersons were able to buy back Trendsetter's young bull calf, MFS Junior. The decision paid off in 2014, when he was named Supreme Champion Male over all breeds at Expo Bœuf, Grand Champion Simmental Bull at the Royal Winter Fair, and qualified for the RBC Supreme Challenge at Agribition.

Giving Back

The family's contribution reaches well beyond their own barn. The Sandersons hosted the Maritime Simmental Association farm tour, sponsored Young Canadian Simmental Association (YCSA) events and provided 4-H members with project cattle. Their seedstock has found its way into seven provinces.

The next generation is carrying that tradition forward. Tricia, Jaclyn and Dereck Sanderson have each served on the Maritime YCSA board and on local agricultural boards.

A Fitting Honour

As promoters and champions of the breed, leaders in commercial performance and dedicated supporters of youth and community, the Sanderson family embodies what the Hall of Fame stands for. For decades of steady dedication and a lasting impact on the Simmental breed, Spud Island Farms and the Sanderson family now take their place among its honoured members.



Brent Matheson, CSA Maritime Director, introduced the Sandersons at the July 2026 induction.