



HOLSTEIN CANADA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

MINUTES OF THE 141st ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE HOLSTEIN ASSOCIATION OF CANADA held in person in Hamilton, Ontario, on Saturday, April 27, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. Eastern Time.

With the members' approval and no objections raised, Ben Cuthbert chaired the meeting and welcomed everyone present.

Present:	Ben Cuthbert	-	President, British Columbia
	Doug Peart	-	3 rd Member to the Executive, Western Ontario
	Angus MacKinnon	-	Vice President and Chair, Quebec
	Willem Vanderlinde	-	Director, Alberta & N.W.T.
	Harold Sweetnam	-	Director, Saskatchewan & Manitoba
	Dennis Werry	-	Director, Northern & Central Ontario
	Nancy Beerwort	-	Director, Eastern Ontario
	Brian Slaughter	-	Director, Western Ontario
	Gilles Côté	-	Director, Quebec
	Sylvie Mahannah	-	Director, Western Quebec
	Karen Versloot	-	Director, New Brunswick/Atlantic Canada
Staff:	Sartaj Sarkaria	-	CEO
	Linda Markle	-	Director, Member & Customer Support
	Kathryn Chapman	-	Controller
	Jodi Zettler	-	Senior Executive Assistant and Secretary to the Board of Directors
	Chris Bartels	-	Director, Innovations & Solutions
	Pascal Lemire	-	Interim Senior Manager, On-Farm Operations
	Judy Morfitt	-	Head of Marketing
Regrets:	Benoît Turmel	-	Director, Quebec
By Invitation:	Sue Robertson	-	Recording Secretary, MinuteTakers Inc.

1. **WELCOME AND NATIONAL ANTHEM**

The President welcomed everyone present and invited anyone able to stand for the singing of the national anthem. Brief housekeeping notes were then provided.

2. **CALL TO ORDER**

Notice of the 141st Annual General Meeting was sent to all registered members. The meeting was officially called to order at 9:01 a.m.

3. **MOMENT OF SILENCE**

The Chair called for a moment of silence in remembrance of the departed friends of the Holstein Canada family and for those who are currently suffering.

4. **INTRODUCTION OF SCRUTINEERS AND PARLIAMENTARIAN**

Pascal Lemire was appointed the meeting's Head Scrutineer, assisted by Chris Bartels, Linda Markle, Judy Morfitt, and Kathryn Chapman. Gerald Schipper was introduced as the Association's Parliamentarian. The head table and Board of Directors were also introduced.

5. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The President requested any additions or amendments to the agenda.

There being none, on Motion by Harold Sweetnam and seconded by Brian Hamming it was:

RESOLVED THAT the Agenda be approved as presented. Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands.

6. **MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Video highlights from the 2023 Annual General Meeting held in Montreal, Quebec, were presented. The Chair then requested a Motion to dispense with the reading of the Minutes from the last Annual General Meeting held on April 15, 2023, and to approve them instead.

On a Motion by Karen Versloot and seconded by Dennis Werry, it was:

RESOLVED THAT the reading of the Minutes from the last Annual General Meeting of Holstein Canada, held on April 15, 2023, be dispensed with, adopted, and verified as presented. Motion carried, as evidenced by a show of hands.

7. **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF PAST BOARD PRESIDENTS AND DIRECTORS**

- (a) Former Board Members – A warm appreciation was extended for the efforts of the previous Holstein Canada Board Presidents and Directors.

8. **PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS**

Ben Cuthbert presented a report on behalf of the Association as detailed in the Annual Report.

9. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER'S REPORT**

Video highlights from Sartaj Sarkaria, CEO, were presented to report on the Association's operations, showcasing key initiatives from 2023, including expense reductions, initiating a significant research project, and preliminary work to redefine the Association's vision. The CEO expressed gratitude to the membership for their support throughout 2023.

10. **2023 FINANCIAL REPORT**

10.1 **Audit & Finance Report** – Highlights from the Audit and Finance report were presented in video format. Angus MacKinnon moved a Motion to accept the report.

On Motion by Angus MacKinnon and seconded by Harry Van der Linden it was:
RESOLVED that the Audit and Finance Report be accepted as presented.
Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands.

10.2 **Appointment of Auditing Firm** – Angus MacKinnon moved to reappoint KPMG LLP as Auditor for Holstein Canada for the period ending December 31, 2024.

On a Motion by Willem Vanderlinde and seconded by Karen Versloot, it was:
RESOLVED THAT the firm of KPMG LLP is re-appointed as Auditor of the Holstein Canada Association for the fiscal period ending December 31, 2024, to hold office until the close of the next Annual General Meeting. Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands.

10.3 **2024 Budget** – Angus MacKinnon presented the 2024 budget for member information.

(a) *Budget Details* – A member requested that the budget be presented to the membership in future years with a more detailed breakdown of revenues and expenses. Response: This has been noted for consideration at next year's meeting.

11. **CENTURY OF HOLSTEIN AWARDS**

The Chair welcomed Brian Slaughter to present the Century of Holstein Certificates to the Charles O. Peart family from Hagersville, Ontario, and the Raymond E. Anderson family from Waterford, Ontario.

12. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

12.1 **Awards Committee** – Video highlights from Gilles Côté were presented on behalf of the Awards Committee. The report included details on the changes to the awards system set to take effect later in 2024. Holstein Canada will conduct focus groups to discuss these changes. Gilles Côté welcomed any questions; however, none were raised.

13. **DAIRY FARMERS OF CANADA (DFC) MESSAGE**

A brief overview of Dairy Farmers of Canada's role and partnership was provided, and David Wiens, the president of DFC, was introduced and addressed the membership.

14. **MESSAGE FROM THE HONOURABLE ROB BLACK**

A message from the Honourable Rob Black, Senator of Canada, was delivered by Doug Peart.

15. **GREETINGS FROM THE HONOURABLE LAWRENCE MacAULAY**

A video message from Lawrence MacAulay, Canada's Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, was presented.

16. **HOLSTEIN USA MESSAGE**

A brief overview of the relationship and collaboration with Holstein USA was given, and Jonathan Lamb, the president of Holstein USA, was introduced and spoke to the membership.

17. **HOLSTEIN MEXICO MESSAGE**

A brief overview of the close collaboration with Holstein Mexico was provided, and Esteban Posada, President of Holstein Mexico, was introduced and addressed the membership.

18. **JERSEY CANADA MESSAGE**

A brief overview of Jersey Canada's support and collaboration was provided, and Jacob Lucs, the General Manager, was introduced and addressed the membership.

19. **UNVEILING OF 2023 COW OF THE YEAR**

Gilles Côté, Chair of the Awards Committee, was welcomed to the podium to present the 2023 Cow of the Year Award. The 2023 Cow of the Year award went to Mystique Extreme Abricot, and family members joined the stage to accept and celebrate the accolade.

20. **2023 MEMBER RESOLUTIONS**

Brian Slaughter and Angus MacKinnon presented the 2023 Member Resolutions, highlighting the discussion as follows:

20.1 **Web Reports-Classification [ACCEPTED]**

Submitted by NB Branch

WHEREAS many producers are beginning to own multiple breeds;

WHEREAS Holstein Canada is an all-breed service provider, with one of those services being Classification;

WHEREAS being a Classification service provider, Holstein Canada has all breeds Classification data in their database;

On Motion by Matthew Clarke and seconded by Lorraine Allen it was:

RESOLVED that Holstein Canada create a drop bar menu for breed selection on their "TOP CLASSIFYING COWS" web page to display the top classifying cows of other breeds as done now with Holsteins. Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands.

20.2 **Web Reports-GPA for Holstein Male [ACCEPTED]**

Submitted by PEI Branch

WHEREAS Holstein Canada requires a genomic evaluation on a male animal in order to have it registered with Holstein Canada;

WHEREAS when you check with Holstein Canada's animal inquiry page, only the Parent Average LPI is recorded;

WHEREAS many breeders use a non-AI registered bull in their breeding program;

On Motion by Wayne Dickieson and seconded by James Cranston it was:

RESOLVED that Holstein Canada report the Genomic Parent Average (GPA) on the animal inquiry page for all male animals registered with Holstein Canada. Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands.

20.3 **Awards – Master Breeder [DEFEATED]**

Submitted by NB Branch

WHEREAS the Holstein Canada Master Breeder program is to recognize the top breeders of the Holstein Canada membership;

WHEREAS now there are categories dividing the recipients of the Master Breeders awarded into registration categories;

On Motion by Matthew Clarke and seconded by Wayne Dickieson it was:

RESOLVED that Holstein Canada dissolve the Master Breeder categories and recognize the breeders with the highest points per registration for the Master Breeder award. Motion defeated.

20.4 **Awards – Longtime Production Award [ACCEPTED]**

Submitted by Holstein Quebec

WHEREAS we wish to continually improve the lifespan of our Holstein cows;

WHEREAS this measure would contribute to the promotion and enhancement of sustainability;

WHEREAS it is in the interest of our industry to improve its carbon footprint, and our association can contribute in its own way;

On Motion by Julie Duchesne and seconded by Pascal Martin it was:

RESOLVED to ask Holstein Canada to recognize cows that have produced more than 120,000 kg of milk in their lifetime and to do so for each additional 10,000 kg (120,000 kg, 130,000 kg, 140,000 kg, etc.). Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands.

20.5 **Services – Transfer of Ownership [ACCEPTED]**

Submitted by Holstein Quebec

WHEREAS many animals are classified without being transferred to new owners in Holstein Canada records;

WHEREAS many producers are raising fewer heifers and, as a result, purchasing more and more animals;

WHEREAS without duly completed transfers of ownership, awards will not be attributed to the right people, creating confusion and increasing the workload when issuing these awards;

WHEREAS the traceability of these animals is deficient at Holstein Canada;

WHEREAS Holstein Canada already has field personnel available to assist producers with this task;

WHEREAS the Holstein Association of Canada Bylaw 11.18 "Transfer of Ownership - Duty of Seller" and 11.19 "Correction of Records" have already defined the duties of sellers and the duties of the Association's Board of Directors with respect to this problem;

On Motion by Pascal Martin and seconded by Louis St-Aubin it was:

RESOLVED to request Holstein Canada to require Classifiers to offer the transfer of ownership service during Classification visits and to require Classifiers to confirm ownership of Excellent cows. Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands.

20.6 **Service Fees – Reclassification for 1st Lactation Cows [DEFEATED]**

Submitted by Holstein Quebec

WHEREAS first calvers calve at a younger age and these animals continue to grow and improve throughout lactation;

WHEREAS classification rounds are more frequent and allow classifiers to observe the improvement of first-calf cows as their lactation progresses;

WHEREAS breeders who contribute to classification are paying, and the data obtained is used by the industry as a whole;

WHEREAS Holstein Canada's membership and service fees have increased in recent years;

On Motion by Louis St-Aubin and seconded by Benoît Lafond it was:

RESOLVED to request Holstein Canada that breeders pay for only one classification per first calver and that no additional fees be charged if the score goes up during the same lactation. Motion defeated.

20.7 **Shows – Bred and Owned Intermediate Championship [ACCEPTED]**

Submitted by Holstein Quebec

WHEREAS judging days at the provincial and national levels are very long;

WHEREAS young cows are likely to accumulate a lot of milk in their udders;

WHEREAS animal welfare is important;

WHEREAS the level of competition is very different between a young cow and an adult cow;

On Motion by Pascal Martin and seconded by Benoît Lafond it was:

RESOLVED to request the Quebec Spring Show, the Dairy Supreme and Holstein Canada to hold a Bred and Owned Championship for young cows just before the Intermediate Championship at provincial and national level shows. Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands.

20.8 **Shows – Dress Code [DEFEATED]**

Submitted by Holstein Quebec

WHEREAS it is important to present a positive image of breeding and breeders to consumers;

WHEREAS judging days are long;

WHEREAS the very nature of this activity makes it difficult for presenters to keep their pants clean all day;

WHEREAS it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain white clothing;

WHEREAS it is the role of Holstein Canada to define these standards;

WHEREAS we want to constantly innovate;

On Motion by Pascal Martin and seconded by Louis St-Aubin it was:

RESOLVED to request Holstein Canada to allow the use of black pants during judging, if the show organizers so choose. Motion defeated.

20.9 **Website Link – Holstein Canada to Lactanet Summary Page [ACCEPTED]**
Submitted by Holstein Quebec

WHEREAS the *CDN website is an indispensable tool for many breeders in Canada;

WHEREAS this site presents the required information in a clear and concise manner;

WHEREAS Holstein Canada has changed the destination of the *CDN link to the Lactanet genetic evaluation summary page;

WHEREAS breeders should have the choice of quickly accessing either site by clicking on the link of their choice;

WHEREAS speed and convenience of access are important to breeders;

On Motion by Benoît Lafond and seconded by Julie Duchesne it was:

RESOLVED to request from Holstein Canada and Lactanet that the link between the Holstein Canada site and the *CDN genetic evaluation summary page be restored and that modifications be made to the Lactanet portal to improve ease of use, simplicity, and clarity. Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands.

At this point in the meeting, a lunch break was taken.

20.10 **Data Exchange – Tag Activation/Birth Reporting to Attestra [ACCEPTED]**
Submitted by Holstein Quebec

WHEREAS Holstein breeders must apply to Holstein Canada for Registration as soon as possible after the birth of a calf;

WHEREAS elsewhere in the country, Holstein Canada is responsible for the distribution of tags and related declarations and obligations;

WHEREAS when registering a calf with Holstein Canada, information provided by producers is sufficient to simultaneously complete the birth declaration with Attestra;

WHEREAS it is in everyone's best interest to avoid duplication and reduce the burden of forms to be filled out by agricultural producers;

On Motion by Julie Duchesne and seconded by Louis St-Aubin it was:

RESOLVED to request Holstein Canada and Attestra to work together so that the mandatory birth declaration to Attestra is done automatically when a calf is registered with Holstein Canada. Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands.

20.11 **Progress Report – On the Crampy Project [ACCEPTED]**

Submitted by Holstein Quebec

WHEREAS we are observing many symptoms of crampiness in cows bred from good Holstein sires;

WHEREAS the financial losses caused by the premature culling of these cows are considerable;

WHEREAS cows affected to a lesser degree have reduced production, which has a negative impact on their well-being and the profitability of our businesses;

WHEREAS breeding costs are constantly increasing;

WHEREAS this syndrome has been known for over 60 years (*Canadian Journal of Comparative Medicine*, June 1956, "Une affection spasmodique des bovins," by J.-G. Lafortune);

WHEREAS inbreeding is on the rise and a genetic cause is conceivable;

WHEREAS breeders have voluntarily contributed to the study;

WHEREAS Lactanet should have completed the data collection phase begun in 2021 aimed at understanding the prevalence of this syndrome and developing new tools and strategies to reduce the expression of this syndrome that is too costly for breeders;

On Motion by Julie Duchesne and seconded by Pascal Martin it was:

RESOLVED to ask Lactanet, Holstein Canada and the Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) to publish a progress report. Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands.

20.12 **Client Records – Update of Owners and Contact Information [ACCEPTED]**

Submitted by Holstein Quebec

WHEREAS the list of breeders eligible for the "Veteran Member" award sent to club secretaries for validation often contains erroneous information;

WHEREAS there are often deceased persons on this list, which can cause embarrassment to the person who must contact the member to validate the information;

WHEREAS the procedure for removing a former owner requires precise information concerning the date of withdrawal and the reason, which is not always easy to obtain, as producers are often difficult to reach;

WHEREAS Holstein Canada currently has the necessary staff to update this information with breeders;

On Motion by Benoît Lafond and seconded by Louis St-Aubin it was:

RESOLVED to request from Holstein Canada that each year an update of owners and contacts be made during the classifiers' regular visits and that this information be shared with club secretaries. Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands.

20.13 **Genotyping – International Recognition [ACCEPTED]**

Submitted by Holstein Quebec

WHEREAS requests for basic genomic tests now include parentage verification;
WHEREAS SNP parentage tests are available, reliable and inexpensive;
WHEREAS microsatellite parentage verification tests are expensive and have longer turnaround times;

On Motion by Louis St-Aubin and seconded by Julie Duchesne it was:

RESOLVED that Holstein Canada be requested to lobby the appropriate authorities to have SNP parentage verification tests recognized as an official international standard so that breeders do not have to pay twice for the same service. Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands.

21. **2023 EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS**

Sylvie Mahannah announced the six recipients of the education scholarships.

22. **MEMBERS' INPUT SESSION**

The Chair opened the floor for questions or input from members. Brian Slaughter facilitated the session.

- (a) AI in Classification – A member requested more details on the planned use of AI in classification. **Response:** The Association is in the early stages of comprehending what the future of classification might entail and is conducting research on utilizing camera technology on farms for this purpose.
- (b) ConneXXion Podcasts – A member inquired whether the ConneXXion podcasts would resume. **Response:** This is under consideration for 2024.
- (c) Acknowledgements – Several members acknowledged and thanked Holstein Canada and the organizing committee for a successful convention.
- (d) Financial Report – A member expressed concern about the Association's financial situation. **Response:** The Board of Directors has been addressing this challenge, and due to some changes in 2023, the financial situation has improved. Further adjustments in 2024 will restore the Association's financial health to a positive status. **Comment:** A member requested that the presentation of the financial statements be done live next year instead of through a video. **Response:** Noted.

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- (e) Director Representation at Club/Branch Events – A member highlighted the importance of Directors attending club events, shows, and annual meetings for effective communication and personal interactions with members. **Response:** The Board has decided to restrict travel and expenses this year, hoping to revise this in the future. Members are encouraged to notify Holstein Canada about meetings and events.
 - (f) Young Leaders - A member emphasized the importance of involving young leaders from across the country in the Young Leaders Advisory Committee and having them participate in setting the direction for this group.
 - (g) Translation – A member emphasized the necessity of having all Association documentation and presentations available in both official languages.
 - (h) Classification – A member inquired when classification will return to a regular schedule. **Response:** 2023 was a challenging year with unexpected staff absences. Holstein Canada has begun hiring to expand the team and catch up. The regionalization of the system will be introduced in 2024. **Comment:** A member asked about the status of the pilot project in British Columbia. **Response:** The project is no longer in the pilot phase. Visits are ongoing at the large farms every two months.

23. **2025 CONVENTION IN NOVA SCOTIA**

On behalf of the Organizing Committee, members are invited to the 2025 Convention in Nova Scotia, which will be held from April 2 to 6, 2025.

24. **CLOSING REMARKS**

Angus MacKinnon thanked the organizing committee, sponsors, and members for actively participating during the meeting and convention.

Ben Cuthbert was acknowledged as a Director and President of the Association on behalf of the Board of Directors.

25. **ADJOURNMENT**

No further business was brought before the meeting, so the Chair requested a Motion to conclude the meeting.

On a Motion by Dennis Werry it was:

RESOLVED THAT the 141st Annual General Meeting of the Holstein Association of Canada be concluded. Motion carried.