



A Holstein Canada publication providing informative, challenging, and topical news.

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Robotic Revolution for Cottonwood

Brent Oswald is strongly supported by parents in progressive move to voluntary robotic milking.

“Incredible,” states Brent Oswald of his two, new, DeLaval robots. “I never expected that our decision to move in this direction would work this well.”

Brent’s parents, Edwood and Gwen, had reacted positively when their youngest of three sons decided to pursue the concept of voluntary robotic milking (VRM) over three years ago.

While handyman Edwood had been thinking that the simple way to retirement might be to cash in, he couldn’t do it when Brent showed such an interest in agriculture. He would rather have a new combine than a car. The whole farming experience excites Brent—whether it’s cows, planting corn, or

just enjoying the lifestyle with wife Kirsty and first daughter Taylor.

There are two other sons. Dr. Mark Oswald keeps the vet bills in check. Jason works for a Chevrolet/Olds dealership in Winnipeg.

Cottonwood (named after tree in front lawn) roots run deep. Started by Brent’s grandfather, Harry, his 1937 tie-stall barn still stands. Erected parallel is Elwood’s free-stall facility with parlour. Built in 1975, with additions in 1987 and 2003, cows continue to comfortably calve and complete their first five milkings here.

In this useful, open concept, calves are also RFID tagged, when wet, and put into individual pens. At two months, they move into group pens. Males sell into the veal market at two weeks.

Now, impressively erected close to the original, well-maintained facilities is Brent’s

one-year-old, 162 ft. by 125 ft. barn. It contains 120 freestalls on 49½ inch centres.

Exploring and studying the concept for two years involved a tour of Québec farms to ensure this progressive entrepreneur knew exactly what needed to be accomplished. He elaborates, "A lot of effort went into designing and building this barn."

In fact, Edwood had instructed, "I don't care how much money you spend, just use it wisely and get everything you

"I don't care how much money you spend, just use it wisely and get everything you need and want incorporated into one barn, the first time!" *Edwood Oswald*

need and want incorporated into one barn, the first time!"

Brent knows how lucky he is to have parents willing to give him free rein of a large-scale operation in his mid-'20s. His responsibilities have gradually increased over the last ten years. He adds, "We all knew I couldn't be 50 years old and still asking my dad what to do." While talking and kibitzing as a team, it's very obvious that there's a lot of respect on both sides.

Edwood still helps around the farm every day and is the crop specialist; he can build anything. Gwen milks all fresh and a few needy cows in the

second barn's parlour.

The Oswalds have always been early adopters. They had the first silo in the area and free-stall operation in Manitoba. They also put in the first computerized milking and feeding systems in the province propelling them to top spot regarding herd average.

Every inch of the flooring in the new barn is covered with rubber. When conveyors for automated feeding kick in, special fans shut down until after feeding—offered to cows 10 times daily.

Two robots currently handle 112 cows total. Plans include herd growth so that each robot can accommodate 70 cows.

Because a few individuals with close rear teats were sold for milk purposes prior to the conversion, not one cow has been culled since the first milking on October 14, 2009. Moreover, due to the well-designed, free-stall barn, no cows have required fetching to be milked.

Animals have easy access to the milking stalls and their selection gates. Long alleys, steps, and other obstructions have been avoided. The bedding consists of fresh shavings.

The average number of automatic milkings per cow/per day has increased to 2.6; heifers and high producers average about four. Brent admits that the quality of milk has spiked a little, but this is being dealt with as general herd health—particularly teat—has greatly improved. They have never, ever dumped a bulk tank of milk.

Wise beyond his years, Brent figures that savings, because of rolling their own feed and having less employees, amount to about \$8,000 monthly.

Robotic milking has not worked for everyone making the conversion. Most often, the farmer's work changes considerably because the physical work of conventional milking is replaced with management tasks.

For Brent, this is good news. Always a smart, eager student, he'd rather be the coach than the player.

With the new robots, Brent is on-call at all hours. However, he may receive one text message by phone, per week. Ninety percent of the time, he can correct the identified problem over his wireless telephone. He could be in Japan and manage the operation from there.

After two years of study, the Oswalds selected the DeLaval VMS (Voluntary Milking System) for their new free-stall operation. The first milkings by two robots commenced October 14, 2009.



Cottonwood's original tie-stall barn was built in 1937.



Cottonwood's second free-stall barn was constructed in 1975.

Brent had no 4-H experience as the herd was not always purebred; he didn't have a calf to show. After making the connection that buyers want documentation—even for milk cows—they proceeded to upgrade their Holsteins to their highest levels, based on detailed herd records. Now, their

and says he always wants to be able to walk among his cows and know their dams, sires, and who they're bred to. On top of other chores, for about one hour daily, he reviews breeding and feeding schedules by computer. He also studies accumulated and summarized documentation, e.g. milkings, SCC on

Traditional milking comprises nearly 40% of a worker's time on a dairy farm ... and time is money. More than likely, wide-spread, voluntary robotic milking is only a matter of time!

lineup is totally purebred with 30 cows sold annually.

Exhibiting good work habits, Brent still spends much of his day in the barn

every cow in the herd. Establishing new parameters, if desired, Brent utilizes the full extent of the computer.

Studying suggestions from Alta's Advantage Program, Brent ultimately selects sires projecting good feet/legs and rear-teat placement. Balanced components, along with top production, are also sought. He breeds heifers at 14½ months and feeds corn, barley, forages, and supplements—no TMR. To maximize the robots at 70 cows per unit, sexed semen is used to increase the number of female replacements.

Currently, the herd averages 38 litres per day. This go-getter's goal is 40+, which is quite obtainable with increasing genetics and the new voluntary milking system. Maintaining a healthy herd is also paramount.

Both Edwood and Brent take their cropping

responsibilities very seriously. Working 1,550 acres, the team grows corn, soybeans, barley, canola, oats, winter wheat, and sunflowers. Ninety-five percent of what they produce is merchandized.

Very animated, Brent is not afraid to speak his mind. Championed by his proud parents, he is confident that the right decision has been made regarding the voluntary milking system. He concludes, "Now, Kirsty and I could go out for dinner with my parents. Before VRM, one of us had to be present to milk the cows.

"The robots are fantastic!"

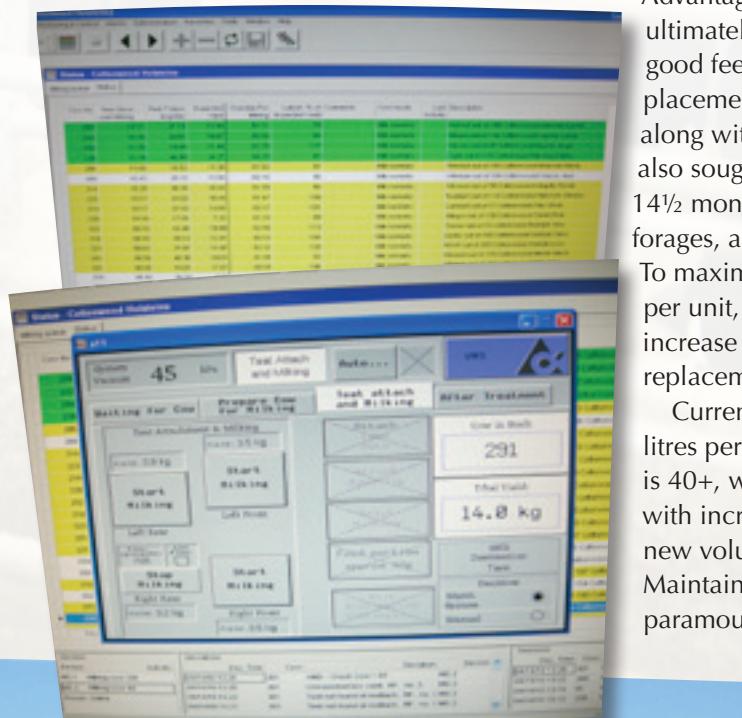
Melissa Nixon, a University of Guelph graduate, conducted a project to estimate the genetic parameters of milking frequency and production traits of cows milked within a VRM.

Melissa visited many farms with robotic milking systems in Ontario and Québec. After strict editing, she analyzed approximately 1,000 first-lactation cows from 14 farms in the two provinces.

The average milking frequency was 2.5 times per day, while the heritability for milking frequency was 0.14. It was concluded that producers with VRM, who want to decrease the number of cows with long, milking intervals (thus requiring more labour for fetching), may select indirectly by choosing sires with high EBVs for milk yield.

A German study also looked at how often cows visited robotic milking stalls and established that the heritability of this trait is 0.18.

It may be feasible to prove sires for their daughters' suitability for robotic milking, and to identify bulls whose daughters are least likely to require fetching.



Computer screens display numerous data for Brent to study on every cow in the herd.



Cottonwood's 2009 free-stall barn is equipped with two robots.

Leadership: Version 2010!

by Holstein Canada President, Germain Lehoux, Saint-Elzéar, QC

Hello everyone.

I am delighted to speak to you again. I must admit that I was missing you. As a friend would say, relationships are like gardens ... you must take care of them!

Firstly, I hope you are having a great summer. Chores must be done, but do not forget your families and children. Without a doubt, they are your most precious assets—take care of them!

May I comment on the wonderful Holstein Convention held in April. Congratulations to Martin Grégoire and his entire team who knew just how to inform us, make us think, and entertain us.

Whether it was the farm visits, the Meeting of the Minds, the evening events or, the Association's Annual Meeting, everything was fantastic.

Mr. Jacques Demers showed us the path, which leads to success. We need to have a goal and be ready to put forth the effort to reach it. We must have a game plan and surround ourselves with the best to fulfill it.

The main elements from the Conference were catalysts for Holstein Canada's new vision.

Finding someone to replace Keith Flaman was no small endeavour. Following an extensive search, Holstein Canada's Board of Directors hired Brian Van Doormaal as its new CEO. This initiated a process to amalgamate two great organizations—Holstein Canada and CDN. Their combined resources (people and money) will demonstrate our leadership in the Canadian dairy industry, as a whole. That is our mission!

Admittedly, there is much work to be done. This amalgamation should be done with respect and a win-win attitude. It must preserve the strengths of both entities. Rest assured that at Holstein Canada, our desire to succeed is only matched by the care that we devote to it. As Keith would say about work to be done: it is best to do it well than to do it quickly!

We look steadfastly to the future with confidence. Surrounded by proficient and dynamic people, your Board is committed to implementing programs and services that exceed your expectations today and, tomorrow!

Traceability, health, and genomics will have a major impact on our farms. Collecting a sample for DNA analysis at the time of tagging is a priority for the dairy industry. Research and awareness of this new technology (done in co-operation with the Canadian Government, AI industry, and Canadian dairy producers) will ensure our position as world leader.

Holstein Canada and its members continue to move forward in their progressive mode.

Until then, goodbye, and enjoy your summer!



Red Herrings

Producers must adopt NLID and ATQ

Canadian dairy producers have been the most progressive of all species regarding national tagging. The first of three pillars toward full traceability is unique **animal ID**. In Canada, it is estimated that 80+% of dairy animals are nationally tagged/identified shortly after birth at the farm. About 20% are not national RFID tagged until they move off-farm for either dairy or beef purposes. However, this meets the current, single-tag standards of beef traceability efforts.

To further strengthen ID efforts, answers to latest questions follow.

I purchased a cow with a yellow CCIA tag and NLID tags (one in each ear). Can I remove the CCIA tag, especially if both are RFID tags in the same ear?

No. Current **Health of Animals** Regulations do not allow for the removal of a nationally-approved tag (dairy or beef).

Both numbers must be included in herd records and cross-referenced.

CCIA yellow beef tags and numbering are not compatible for dairy purposes. Applying NLID or ATQ tags to all dairy animals allows them to move anywhere, at anytime. Dairy producers should rely on dairy tags (black lettering on white)!

I purchased a dairy cow without a national RFID tag. What do I do?

If the animal has been registered, it should already have a security panel tag, Certificate of Registry, and an official, national number. In this case, you would order replacement tags from NLID or ATQ*.

If the animal is not registered, national NLID or ATQ tags must be inserted from the new owner's tag inventory and records updated accordingly.

Can I remove the NLID tags and replace with yellow CCIA tags before selling for beef purposes? I want to prevent someone from registering progeny from her if purchased on the sly from the beef ring for dairy purposes.

No. The fundamental purpose of approved national tags with a lifetime number (Part XV of the H of A Regulations) is to ensure traceability of the animal back to the herd of origin. In fact, it is an offence to tamper or remove these tags—even from cattle destined for beef auction.

If a cull animal is meant for beef and the seller wants to

in Tagging

be completely disassociated with it, the animal should be shipped directly to the abattoir.

Upon sale/consignment, the seller relinquishes all rights and controls over the animal being culled for beef.

While Holstein Canada aids producers in ID efforts, CFIA is responsible for enforcement of animal tagging and tracking regulations.

Do I have to tag a newborn calf if it dies within 24 hours? If yes, can I use a CCIA tag?

Once a calf is born, tagging requirements apply.

If the calf dies at birth or before national tagging, and the carcass is buried on-farm, it does not have to be tagged.

If the carcass is going to be transported or moved off-farm, it must be nationally RFID tagged.

The CCIA single, yellow beef tag minimum is not an option for dairy.

Can I use a yellow CCIA tag/number to register an animal at Holstein Canada?

No. CCIA beef tags (single or a colour set) and numbering are not compatible for dairy purposes, e.g. herd, AI, milk recording.

Yellow, CCIA, individual tags are designed and used by the beef industry for age verification/tag activation. Primarily, they identify animals moving off-farm/ranch.

Because a block of national tag numbers is assigned to each sector (dairy, beef, sheep, bison, etc.), they are not recognized for use within other industries. Moreover, while yellow,



singular, beef tags may meet minimum beef traceability standards, they do not attain the value-added criteria for dairy, other sectors, and certain provinces.

I have a cow with an old bar-coded tag. I want to replace it with an RFID upgrade required for selling or moving off-farm. Should I remove the bar-coded tag?

Official tags, once attached, should not be removed.

Simply obtain a corresponding RFID tag from NLID or ATQ*.

I use RFID tags for herd management, e.g. calf feeders and parlour identification. If I lose the RFID button, can I remove the existing tags and use a new set of tags so I have an immediate solution? I will track the old and new numbers.

In all provinces except Québec, the response is *no*. If a tag is lost, a free replacement tag with the same original, unique, lifetime number should be ordered immediately to ensure uninterrupted animal identification and verification by service staff, e.g.

type classification, milk recording, AI, Canadian Quality Milk.

NLID has an agreement with Allflex to process replacement tag orders within three days. Furthermore, they can be shipped within two to three days by paying a courier fee—\$11 to \$24 depending on location in Canada. There is even overnight service at its toll-free number 1-877-771-6543.

* With ATQ in Québec, producers have a choice. They can purchase an identically-numbered, replacement tag. Alternatively, they can insert a new set and cross-reference both national numbers. This may cause confusion as the number in the animal's ear may differ from the number on the Certificate of Registry and industry databases.

NLID=National Livestock IDentification

ATQ=Agri-Traçabilité Québec inc.

CCIA=Canadian Cattle Identification Agency

CFIA=Canadian Food Inspection Agency



Yellow, CCIA, individual tags are designed and used by the beef industry for age verification/tag activation. Primarily, they identify animals moving off-farm/ranch.



NLID or ATQ security, dairy, tagging systems provide unique, lifetime identification. This facilitates on-farm management; age verification and tag activation; registration and industry services; and off-farm movement.

Dairy Industry Workshop

Speakers provide industry updates as producers desire increased efficiency, instantaneous data, and added profitability.

Holstein Canada's 11th Industry Partner Workshop attracted numerous branch and dairy sector representatives for the latest news on industry developments. They also listened attentively to comments from two producers who do not use all breed improvement tools.

At the constructive conference, Holstein Canada's Alain Lajeunesse reviewed sector achievements. Uptake of NLID and ATQ tags counts 89% of market share. Producers registering over five Holsteins number 72% with all-breeds classification standing at 64% market share. Seventy-four percent of producers engage in milk recording services.

Jack Rodenburg of Dairy Logix Consulting dealt with the concept of *precision dairy management*.

Canadian herds are becoming larger and are replacing management time as well as labour with sensor-based data, computer-based analysis, and robotic delivery of outcomes.

Precision management tools include cow ID; pedometers; robotic calf feeding; auto-sort systems; hand-held ID and paperless information; camera systems; robotic milking; automated feed preparation and delivery; in-line milk sensors; parlour robotics; and group-calving pens.

Cows are actually managed as individuals rather than as a herd. Sophisticated, but easy-to-use computer systems analyze reams of data accumulated by sensors. These alert farmers as to how each cow is doing and recommend action when an issue arises.

Better information is needed by farmers, not more. Current big ticket

items include 1) robotic milking, 2) automated feeding, and 3) parlour automation.

Andrew Hunt of Shur-Gain discussed *buyer segments*.

Of buyers, 20% fall into the relationship (buddy) category. Thirty-three percent purchase strictly by price and will switch to a new supplier for less money. The business buyer, at 47%, is willing to invest to get a return.

A recent survey of 2,500 producers finds that more farmers are considering a balance of factors as they evaluate a price-value proposition.

A buyer will pay for quality and service, but the offer must closely match the farmer's needs and value must be clearly communicated. The seller must have an understanding of the unique needs of important customers and create exclusive value.

Most importantly, the seller must target what areas cost producers the most money and offer solutions and innovations to conquer problem issues.

Holstein Canada's **Jay Shannon** stated that a new *genomics* testing panel will soon be available. While of lower density, the 3K SNP chip for genomic testing will result in a much broader customer base because of its low cost (~\$45). Animals tested with the 3K chip will have comparable accuracies and reliabilities as those tested under the higher-density 50K SNP chip. By imputation, information gained from the whole reference population and from the 50K tested sire or dam thereby empowers the prediction of the entire 50K from the 3K.

Breeders will acquire much more knowledge on their individual animals—particularly young—with genomics. AI and producers will be able to do a far better job of choosing sires on their young stock

to enhance future generations.

Brian Van Doormaal

of CDN added that the dairy industry is just at the start of the *DNA* era. In coming years, DNA will become a very critical component of the dairy cattle industry—not only for genetic improvement.

Beyond the usual blood, hair, and semen for extracting DNA, ear tissue, nasal swabs, and milk samples could be used. DNA is unique for every animal and present in each cell.

A National Dairy Cattle Genomics Initiative has received total industry support and been submitted by industry partners to the federal government for funding. The basic concept is that DNA samples stored in a national repository could be used to meet many needs.

While genomics is clearly revolutionizing genetic evaluation

The best is yet to come!



Alain Lajeunesse



Ben Sterk and Rob Krijnen



Jack Rodenburg



Jay Shannon



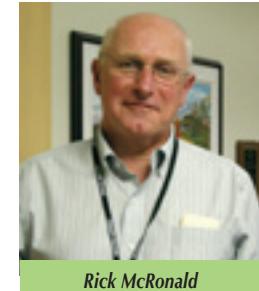
Andrew Hunt



Daniel Lefebvre



George MacNaughton



Rick McDonald

systems and selection strategies, there are many other benefits of this tool. These include traceability; animal health and disease surveillance; and human nutrition and health. State-of-the art research in bovine genetics could also be enhanced.

Dr. Daniel Lefebvre of **Valacta** noted there are three issues that most concern dairy producers. These are herd health, milk quality, and profit.

Valacta has initiated numerous programs to aid producers in reducing production costs for overall profitability. These consist of training courses and trouble-shooting support for producers on issues such as udder health; milk quality; transition cows; Ketosis; Johne's; and Milk Urea Nitrogen.

Producers enrolled on milk recording consistently get more milk and components per cow, and more profit per cow, per year.

George MacNaughton, DFO relayed that the goal of provincial **Johne's** programs is for continuous improvement to farm management and farm systems. Provincial programs complement the national initiative.

To date, in Ontario, about 60% of eligible producers participate in a project to test animals. There is an increased awareness of Johne's among producers and veterinarians.

While a long-term approach, a significant decline in Johne's must be achieved; any link between livestock and human diseases would prove disastrous.

Rick McDonald of the Canadian Livestock Genetics Association observed Canada has a proud history of

superior **animal health**, which allows genetics to be sold to other countries.

Diseases of concern, potentially affecting Canadian exports, include **Bovine Virus Diarrhea**; **Enzootic Bovine Leucosis**; **Bluetongue**; **Infectious Bovine Rhinotracheitis**; **Q-Fever**; and **Foot and Mouth Disease**.

Many initiatives are currently being pursued across Canada, e.g. National Johne's; West Hawk Lake zoning; and animal ID and traceability. However, animal health is not included in Canada's Agriculture Policy—and should be. The cattle industry must partner with government and together formulate a broad, robust policy to ensure the appropriate allotment of resources to achieve optimal health standards.

Producers Trigger Thinking

Two successful Holstein producers, who do not participate in all breed improvement tools, were asked for their perspectives on a number of topics. This information is vital if industry personnel want to serve and satisfy the changing needs of large, dairy operators.

Both *bottom-line* thinkers, the speakers included Ben Sterk (*Sterkholm Farms*), Embro, ON and Rob Krijnen (*Krynenhill Farms*), Thorndale, ON.

Both moving from Holland to Canada as young men, Ben and Rob arrived with only dreams. In fact, Ben had no agricultural background and Rob started with hogs. A steady climb to owning successful dairy farms, they currently milk 300 and 340 cows, respectively. Quota was also purchased slowly over the years.

Agreeing that the bigger the farm, the easier it is to manage, these entrepreneurs want **time savings, increased efficiency**,

and **instantaneous data**. They both cut costs wherever they can and expect a good return from their setups.

Ben and Rob concur the industry must continually come up with ideas to make large herd operators more profitable. The use of specialists in their areas of expertise works well, e.g. herd health vet and nutritionist.

They put faith in long-term, positive, trusting relationships with reputable service providers.

Both Ben and Rob use AI sires and often choose more expensive bulls. Neither pushes their free-stall cows for production as they feel it causes additional stress and health problems. They use sexed semen on their heifers—for calving ease and to provide herd replacements.

Ben registers all calves to keep track of bloodlines (herd is 90% purebred). He chooses AI bulls that excel in feet/legs (heel depth important) and udders as he wants to maintain a low cull rate and healthy cows. He feels better-type cows provide fewer worries. He desires high fat and protein and uses the Afimilk management system.

Rob is totally dedicated to his computer and stores extensive data on all animals. Always carrying a palm pilot, he can enter any information he wants on the spot. Rob also uses Afimilk and computer feeds calves based on NLID tags.

Ben stressed that every cow has to help fill quota. He has discovered that good, functional-type cows make the grade in his sand barn. Producers must keep their blinders open to new challenges and give their children responsibilities and opportunities to make decisions on their own.

Is smaller better?

3K panel is almost here!

Genomics has brought focus to younger animals in our dairy population and has given power to the breeder. Reliability of young sire and heifer evaluations has nearly doubled compared to the limitation of traditional Parent Average information of the past. With a new, genomic-testing option on the horizon, opportunities for breeders and the industry are numerous.

Genomic testing of females in Canada became openly available late 2008. Testing of males is still limited to authorized AI organizations. The first, official, Canadian genomic breeding values were publicly released by CDN in August 2009. Since its launch, 3,100+ females have been genotyped through Holstein Canada's service.

Although some worried that costs and uncertainty associated with the test would result in hesitation among breeders, uptake and acceptance of the new technology was extremely rapid and more widespread than originally anticipated. Almost overnight it became an expectation that any female to be sold or purchased for potential breeding stock was genetically tested.

Breeders learned that genetic indexes of tested animals were more accurate and reliable than those calculated in a

traditional way and, therefore, carried additional worth.

Research in genomics has mainly focused on enhancing the official genomic evaluation system to increase the accuracy of predicting an animal's genetic merit. It also ensures that appropriate combined breeding values (genomic and traditional) and associated reliabilities were published.

To date, all genotyping for inclusion in official, genomic evaluation in North America has been conducted using the Illumina BovineSNP50™ BeadChip. However, the cost per animal for this test (~\$250) tends to limit its application and use outside keen, breeder herds and AI organizations that market genetics.

More recently, research in Canada and the US has concentrated on the development of a less-dense (# of SNP) and less-expensive testing panel. This decreases overall genotyping costs and increases the possibilities for broader use of the technology.

When a sufficient number of reference animals (historically influential bulls and cows) are genotyped with a high-density panel (50K or larger), candidate animals (younger bulls and heifers) can be genotyped with a lower-density panel. Their missing or untyped SNP are inferred using information gained from the reference population. By doing this, only minimal loss in accuracy of the resulting evaluation is sacrificed.

Illumina, in collaboration with the USDA and breed associations, has

developed a low-density (3,072) SNP chip—the 3K panel. It can be used to infer all missing (~47,000) genotypes on the BovineSNP50™ BeadChip. With sufficient historical genotyping on influential animals using a larger panel, many progeny can be genotyped inexpensively on a small panel with comparable gains in accuracy and reliability. It acts as if they, themselves, were actually tested on the larger panel.

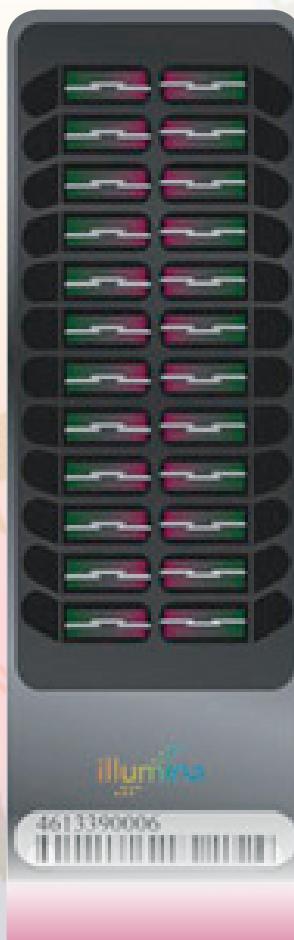
The predominant function of the 3K panel will be to screen whole herds economically for use in mating programs or other genetic selection decision-making.

The 3K panel was also designed to carry approximately 100 SNP that could be used for accurate determination of parentage. Approval from the International Society for Animal Genetics is still required before this form of parentage confirmation can be officially implemented.

It is intended that all genotyped animals obtain an official genetic evaluation in Canada. Research is still ongoing to determine the amount of decrease in reliability when evaluations are calculated using 3K panel genotypes if genotyping conducted on larger panels in the pedigree is limited. If reliabilities are found to be significantly different compared to those that would have been achieved using the 50K panel, some additional criteria for publication and ranking lists may be required.

Holstein Canada expects to start providing testing services using the 3K panel this fall. Although the exact price of the test is not fully established, it is expected to be less than \$50. With increased flexibility in testing (panels and prices), the opportunities for the breeder and the industry will multiply.

For further information, please contact Holstein Canada and ask for *genomic testing*.



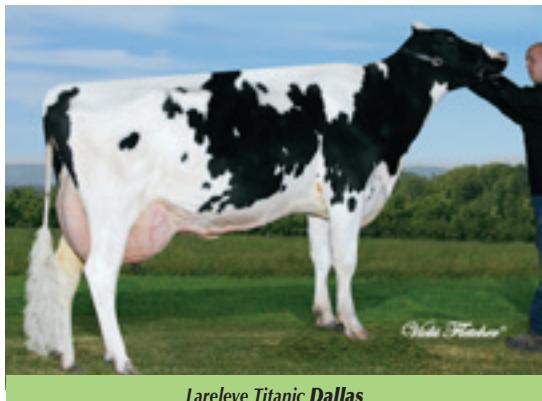
The 3K panel will use similar technology to the BovineSNP50™ BeadChip.

4 Super ... Super3s

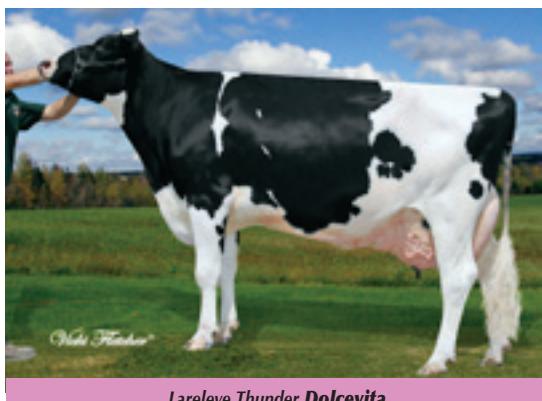
For the first time ever, four consecutive generations of one cow family have received Super3 designations in Canada.

Latest Master Breeders Justin and Ben Nieuwenhof of Nieuwenhof and Associe Inc., Dundee, QC, bred and own these top achievers.

All bearing names starting with the letter **D**, they can be traced back eight generations to Stanedyke Debbie (GP-80-5yr.); she contributed well over 60% of shield points. This family distinguishes itself as high producers with lactation persistency.



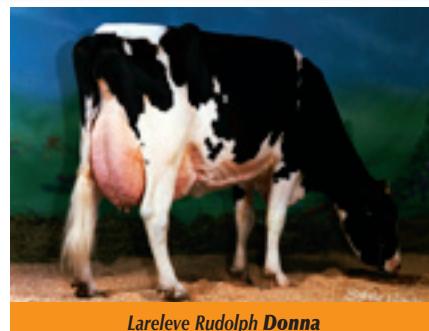
Lareleve Titanic Dallas



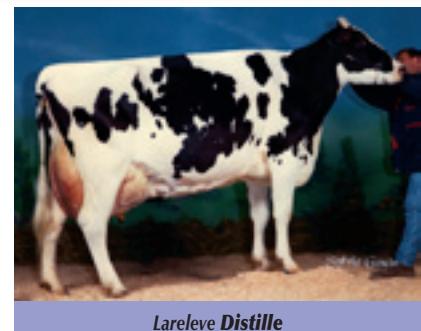
Lareleve Thunder Dolcevita

The **Superior Production** award recognizes high production in a single lactation. An animal must complete a lactation record with a composite BCA (fat and protein) of 160 points above the national breed average for that year (580 for 2010) and a composite deviation within herd (fat and protein) that is +30 points above the herd average.

	Lareleve Titanic Dallas	Lareleve Thunder Dolcevita	Lareleve Rudolph Donna	Lareleve Distille (Mark CJ Gilbrook Grand ET)
Awards	1 Super3 3 Superior Lacts. 3*	1 Super3 3 Superior Lacts. 3*	1 Super3 3 Superior Lacts. 4*	1 Super3 4 Superior Lacts. 6*
Production	3 lact. 51,396 kg M 1,795 kg 3.5% F 1,581 kg 3.1% P	4 lact. 69,178 kg M 2,790 kg 4.0% F 2,488 kg 3.6% P	3 lact. 74,798 kg M 3,092 kg 4.1% F 2,642 kg 3.5% P	4 lact. 77,228 kg M 3,357 kg 4.3% F 2,643 kg 3.4% P
Classification	VG-86-3yr	VG-86-2yr	VG-86-6yr	VG-88-4yr
Birth	Sept. 5, 2004	Oct. 10, 2002	Sept. 9, 1997	Sept. 3, 1995
Daughters	1 dau. ME 15,561 kg M	6 daus. 100% GP and better ME 15,720 kg M	8 daus. 75% GP and better ME 15,244 kg M	12 daus. 75% GP and better (1 EX) ME 14,662 kg M



Lareleve Rudolph Donna



Lareleve Distille

The **Super3** award recognizes high production over at least three consecutive lactations. The animal must complete three consecutive lactations meeting Superior Production requirements.

Youth Show CD Here

Requests for the new **Leading to Win** booklet in both English and French are brisk with staff filling thousands of orders. Feedback from across the country on updated procedures in the showmanship booklet has been very positive. Guidelines are in effect for this show season.

Video footage for the DVD was shot at the same time as photos, making it a perfect match to the text in the manual.

The Association is offering a package deal to showmanship competitors, 4-H leaders, and judges. For \$15 plus tax, you will receive *both* the relevant **Preparing to Lead** and new **Leading to Win** on one DVD, in both English and French.

Order your DVD from Nicole Faubert 1-519-756-8300 or nfaubert@holstein.ca.

You can easily order online at:

[>>www.holstein.ca](http://www.holstein.ca)

[>>Products](#)

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How Do Your Herd Trends Compare?

A valuable measuring stick to assess herd progress

It is quite amazing when charting the improvement achieved in the Holstein breed regarding younger calving ages, increased production, lower SCS, functional conformation, and quality of udders.

Successful farms are making progress in most key areas, but often want to know how they compare to others. Are they taking advantage of all tools available for improvement?

Benchmarking is a valuable exercise whereby herd owners can assess the progress being made in their herds compared to that achieved by other herds. In analyzing herd trends for

performance and genetics versus comparative stats for other herds, they can confirm areas of great improvement and areas where there could be untapped opportunities.

A tremendous new service, **Herd-Trend Reports**, is available at **no charge** on Holstein Canada's website. It is an added-value service to farms that register and classify. The service has received much positive feedback and provided added reasons for members to sign up for a web account with Holstein Canada. All client reports are private since they can only be accessed by signing in with an Account ID and password.

This powerful, 19-page report package tracks herd trends for many different statistics, including animal registration information, production, conformation, genomics/genetics, as well as animal awards and master breeder point results. The **blue** line on each graph represents the individual herd trend and the **red** line shows the trend for all herds in the population. **Black dotted** lines reflect the 90th percentile (top 10%) and the 10th percentile (top 90%). The reports are updated for all herds three-times annually, following each genetic-evaluation release.

Animal Registration Information

Registration trends provide valuable insight into herd inbreeding trends, ET registrations, gestation lengths, calf sizes, frequency of twins, and use of recessive-carrier sires. Another report shows the top 10 sires used in the herd by year, compared to the top 10 sires used in the whole population in those same years.

Conformation and Production

There are graphs which depict the trend of herd averages for milk,

fat, and protein over the past ten years, compared to population trends. In addition, there are graphs illustrating herd trends over the past 10 years for overall conformation and for the scorecard sections **mammary system**, **feet/legs**, dairy strength, and rump. Since higher-classification scores have been shown to lead to increased-production levels, another report shows this relationship in the herd in comparison to the population.

Genetics and Genomics

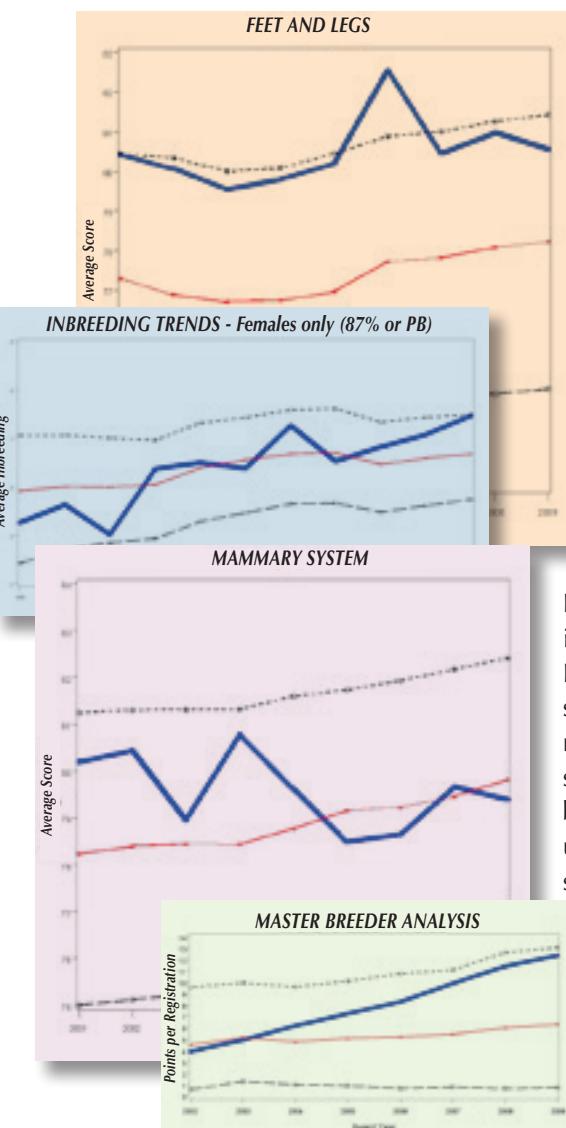
The package includes genetic trends for the herd and the population for production traits (milk, fat, and protein), SCS, overall conformation, and the four-scorecard sections. Another report lists a selection of the top cows and heifers in the herd. While the selection is primarily based on genetic or genomic values, some added emphasis is placed on overall conformation (animal or dam) and the cow family.

Awards

There are statistics that show the proportion of active, milking cows receiving awards, thereby being an indicative comparison of longevity, superior production, and the development of cow families within herd.

Also, a popular report plots the herd trend for **Master Breeder** points over time. Since points are only achieved by cows meeting thresholds for both production and conformation, this report is a useful tool for most herds in tracking their overall improvement.

If you're a member without web access, just inform the classifier that you would like to receive your individual, **Herd-Trend Report** package. Complimentary reports will be included with the mailing of the classification invoice.



Brachyspina Syndrome: An Emerging Concern



Bovine **brachyspina** (**BY**) syndrome, first observed in the Netherlands in 2007, is a newly-reported malformation in the Holstein breed.

Recently, a case was observed in an Ontario herd. Affected calves are typically stillborn with a lower-than-average birth weight after a slightly-prolonged gestation. Physically, calves can be distinguished by having significantly-shorter spines and long,

slender limbs. In some cases, multiple defects of several internal organs were observed.

Although the specific gene causing the malformation has not been identified, research indicates that it is a recessively-inherited defect, similar to **Complex Vertebral Malformation (CVM)**. As with CVM, the defect only occurs when both parents are carriers of the detrimental allele.

Veterinarians are strongly encouraged to report individual cases of calves exhibiting these physical symptoms. Evaluation of breeding data can be performed as many more carrier sires are identified and reported through genetic testing by AI organizations around the world.

Please notify Holstein Canada if this hereditary condition is viewed. A simple-to-complete, electronic form is available at www.holstein.ca for reporting cases of abnormality.

Classification Schedule

mid-round

ON – Grenville, Lanark, Grey, Bruce, Huron

Qc – Bellechasse

Qc – L'Assomption, Montcalm, Maskinonge, Saint-Maurice,

Qc – Montmagny, L'Islet

AB –

Early

August

Mid

Late

Qc – Champlain, Laviolette, Portneuf

MB –

ON – Halton, York, Peel, Simcoe, Dufferin, Ontario

Qc – Lac Saint-Jean, Roberval, Lapointe, Dubuc, Charlevoix, Chicoutimi

Early

September

ON – Northumberland, Victoria

ON – Middlesex, Lambton, Elgin, Essex & Kent

Qc – Vaudreuil, Soulanges, Huntingdon, Châteauguay, Beauharnois

Qc – Kamouraska

PE, NB, NS, NL

ON – Durham, Peterborough, Hastings, Prince Edward, Waterloo

Qc – Laprairie, Napierville, Saint-Jean, Iberville, Shefford

Qc – Rivière du Loup, Témiscouata SK

Mid

October

ON – Lennox & Addington, Frontenac

Qc – Richmond, Mississauga

Qc – Rimouski, Matapedia, Matane, Bonaventure, Arthabaska, Mégantic, Wolfe

ON – Wellington

ON – Oxford

Qc – Brome, Sherbrooke, Compton, Stanstead

ON – Northern Ontario

ON – Perth

Qc – Lotbinière, Yamaska, Nicolet

ON – Dundas, Stormont

Qc – Frontenac, Beauce

Late

Top Sires According to Average Final Score of 1st Lactation Daughters

Based on 1st Lactation Classifications from May/June 2010

Top 10 Sires with 80+ Daughters Classified in Two-Month Period				Top 10 Sires with 20-80 Daughters Classified in Two-Month Period			
Sire	Daughters Classified▲	Avg. Daus. Score	Avg. Dam Score	Sire	Daughters Classified▲	Avg. Daus. Score	Avg. Dam Score
Goldwyn	578	81.7	81.5	Damion	55	82.4	82.2
Carisma	104	81.5	81.6	Shottle	64	82.3	81.3
Talent	274	80.9	80.6	Allen	27	82.0	82.0
Mr Burns	162	80.8	81.0	Lheros	79	81.4	81.3
Fortune	185	80.8	81.3	Stormatic	53	81.3	81.2
Spirite	251	80.7	80.7	Champion	20	81.3	81.5
Final Cut	252	80.6	80.5	Sovereign	27	81.1	80.2
Blitz	96	80.5	80.6	Pagewire	43	80.8	80.7
Re Design	95	80.1	80.0	Gillette	20	80.7	78.7
Dolman	771	80.0	80.3	Windbrook *ys			
				Decker	44	80.6	80.8

*ys - young sire — Note: ▲ Daughters are included in the statistics only if both the daughter and her dam calved for the first time before 30 months and were both first classified within the first six months of lactation. Sires listed must have ≥ 50% of daughters that improve in score over the dam.

Managing Change for Industry Efficiency

by Brian Van Doormaal, Holstein Canada Chief Executive Officer and CDN General Manager



Change is the law of life and those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future.

John F. Kennedy

Recently your Board of Directors and the Board of Canadian Dairy Network (CDN) agreed to look to the future and take control of some changes to make the Canadian dairy cattle improvement industry even stronger than it is. The end result of this process has been my recent appointment as the Chief Executive Officer of Holstein Canada, while remaining General Manager of CDN.

What a pleasure and challenge this dual role will be!

Being born and raised on a Holstein farm, I spent several years in 4-H and also worked as a relief milker in the Ottawa area. My parents immigrated from Holland and created an environment for working as a family team. We were taught the value of strong work ethics, honesty, fairness, and respect. We were encouraged to pursue a solid education in our chosen field of interest.

For me, this was agriculture.

Subsequently, I received a degree in animal science followed by a Masters in dairy cattle genetics. I have been blessed with the opportunity to work in this great industry of ours for the past 24 years, starting with nine years in the AI sector. During this tenure, I became bilingual.

As General Manager of CDN, since its creation 15 years ago, I have been privileged to work with many great people in the Canadian industry. This includes many producers who have served on the boards of various organizations involved with dairy cattle improvement.

The foresight of Holstein Canada and CDN directors has been extremely well received by industry partner organizations and producers across the country. The strategic direction they have taken will surely yield benefits at the farm level.

Given the rapid move toward the use of genomics, and DNA in general, the current role and activities of Holstein Canada will undoubtedly evolve. Bringing this Association and CDN closer together will lead to greater efficiencies along the way.

Together, we can look to the future and manage change for the mutual benefit of all!



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Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

Holstein Canada
P.O. Box 610, Brantford, ON N3T 5R4

Published six times annually
Subscription: \$18 outside Canada
Editor: Jane Whaley

Publications Mail
Agreement 40008691