

info Holstein

September - October 2021 issue no. 171

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





National Holstein Shows

Presented by Holstein Canada

November 17 – 20, 2021
Saint-Hyacinthe, QC

Editor Linda Ness
CEO Vincent Landry

Board of Directors

President Elyse Gendron, QC
450-265-3147
EGendron@holstein.ca

Vice President Ben Cuthbert, BC
250-246-6517
BCuthbert@holstein.ca

2nd Vice President Doug Peart, ON
905-768-5163
DPeart@holstein.ca

Willem Vanderlinde, AB
403-302-1527
WVanderlinde@holstein.ca

Harold Sweetnam, SK & MB
204-362-8870
HSweetnam@holstein.ca

Brian Slaughter, ON
519-330-6062
BSlaughter@holstein.ca

Dennis Werry, ON
905-213-8228
DWerry@holstein.ca

Nancy Beerwort, ON
613-330-0348
NBeerwort@holstein.ca

Angus MacKinnon, QC
819-570-3891
AMackinnon@holstein.ca

Gilles Côté, QC
418-343-2597
GCote@holstein.ca

Benoît Turmel, QC
418-390-2269
BTurmel@holstein.ca

Karen Versloot, Atlantic
506-363-8902
KVersloot@holstein.ca



Design by Blueprint Agencies Inc.
10 Scott Ave., Paris, ON 519.442.1242

Printed in Canada by BECK'S PRINTING
445 Hardy Rd Unit 5, Brantford, ON



ABOVE: On pages 9-12, read all about Farm Profiles: Farms that have invested in dry cow and transition cow facilities.

ON THE COVER: Innislake Envious Keyless EX-92 is a great-great-granddaughter to one of the first purebred Holsteins at Innislake Dairy Farm, Alberta. She is just finishing her third lactation and already received Superior Lactation awards for her first 2 lactations. Photo taken by Abbey Iversen.

contents

- 4 **President's Message**
- 6 **Genomics at Holstein Canada**
- 8 **Registration using your On-Farm Software**
- 13 **Genetics 101: Breeding for Profitable Longevity**
- 15 **Investing in the new generation - Tips for Farm Succession**
- 16 **DairyTrace: How can Holstein Canada help me**
- 18 **DFC - We cannot eat our way out of climate change**
- 20 **Dear Customer Service - Active Milking Females List**

Yesterday's and Tomorrow's World

Élyse Gendron, Holstein Canada President

WE, AS FARMERS, MUST BE

ADAPTABLE – broken equipment, a sick employee or changing weather, are all part of our daily lives. The work on our farms has probably been less affected by the health crisis than many other sectors; some people dream of going back to the world as it was yesterday, but most agree that we have to move forward and adapt...

Once again, this year, our Annual General Meeting was held virtually, but this time around were better prepared to give you dynamic reports, use a secure voting platform, and see and hear the members who discussed the resolutions and shared their concerns. Thank you to the 160+ people who attended the AGM: members, staff and industry partners! **Going forward, we will look at how using a hybrid format could allow all of our members to participate and to be heard. You can view excerpts of the AGM on our social media channels.**

Some changes were already in the air, but out of convenience or tradition, it was often easier to keep doing what we have always done. The health crisis has left us no choice but to familiarize ourselves with completely different methods and it took us time to adapt, but we can now admit that those methods work! We now need to focus on how to combine the old and the new methods to increase efficiency and ensure respect and fairness for all.

Remote work is a good example. At Holstein Canada, 90% of our staff in the office is now working from home compared to 10% prior to COVID and our customer service is as good as before. In order to remain an attractive employer and to meet the needs of our team, Holstein Canada will continue to have a remote work policy.



Our Board and Committee meetings are currently being held virtually. We really look forward to being able to meet in person again and have time to discuss and socialize, but these new technologies are efficient and save us time as well as money and we are working on an alternative scenario to retain such flexibility...

Other long-planned ideas have taken shape since last spring such as pilot projects to better serve the diverse needs of our clients and to keep our team motivated. Other projects are in the works and we will consult with the affected clients to make the necessary adjustments. Please keep an open mind and see how these trials could be of value to you.

The current favourable conditions bring hope for in-person events such as club activities, shows, and trade shows. Seeing people and cows again is quite exciting, but we must remain cautious and follow safety guidelines, to keep ourselves safe and especially to protect others.

The fall brings exciting challenges for Holstein Canada; joint projects with Lactanet that are progressing, and promising discussions with other dairy

breeds. Our goal is to provide you with useful services and to make processes more efficient. We know that your time is valuable. 🐄

"We need to develop tools and services to generate better revenue for our members. We also need to work with industry partners to keep our industry healthy and strong."

- ÉLYSE GENDRON, NEW PRESIDENT OF HOLSTEIN CANADA



THIS IS THE VISION OF THE NEW PRESIDENT OF HOLSTEIN CANADA, ÉLYSE GENDRON. She discovered her passion for agriculture at an early age on her father's family farm; she then went on to study bio-agronomy at Université Laval. Élyse wants to promote Holstein Association of Canada and its breeders throughout the world. Alongside her partner Jean Bissonnette, Élyse now operates the Val-Bisson Farm located in Saint-Polycarpe in Western Quebec where she has been involved since 1993 and has been the owner since 2001. The farm grows corn, alfalfa and soybeans on 325 acres (132 ha).



Val-Bisson became Master Breeder in 2012 and are currently milking 70 cows housed in a tie-stall barn with a Roboléo milking robot. With 104 kg of quota, in 2020, their official production average was 12,781 kg 3.9%F 3.3%P with a BCA of 285-302-295. The current classification of the herd is 4 ME, 1 EX, 24 VG, 41 GP and 4 G.

With over 1000 daughters classified EX, Val-Bisson Doorman EX ST'16 is the sire who put the Val-Bisson prefix on the international map. His granddam, Val-Bisson Goldwyn Maya VG-88 38*, has also left a considerable mark on the herd. Maya became Cow of the

Year in 2015, had a Superior lactation in her 1st lactation and produced over 64,000 kg of milk over 3 lactations. Several of Maya's daughters make Élyse particularly proud, such as Val-Bisson Shottle Imelda EX-94 10*, dam of Doorman, who won the title of "2017 International Cow" awarded by the Holstein International magazine.

Élyse has been a member of Holstein Canada's Board of Directors since 2010, and has served on several committees over the years such as the Breed Advisory Committee, the Governance Committee, the Finance Committee, and the Data and Technology Committee.

She has enjoyed participating in stimulating meetings with a large network of colleagues and friends in the industry from across the country. In the 10 years she has been involved, she has also witnessed the diversification of dairy farms and that of Holstein Canada members' and clients' needs. She believes the regional and linguistic diversities that characterize Canada have been more widely recognized over the past decade, making the Association much more inclusive. Élyse takes great satisfaction in having contributed to the evolution of our great association, which used to be a bit

rigid and traditional.

Since 2002, our new president has also been part of the Dairy Cattle Committee of the Quebec Reference Center for Agriculture and Agri-food (CRAAQ), a Quebec organization dedicated to the transfer of knowledge for the agricultural and agri-food sector. She has been a member of the CRAAQ Board of Directors since 2008 and is currently its President.



Élyse is looking forward to this new challenge as President of Holstein Canada. She knows that the Association must remain flexible and be able to adapt quickly, while remaining fair to all its members and clients. "We need to be inclusive, but above all, useful to our members." 🐄



Genomics at Holstein Canada

AN UPDATE



Genomic testing has a major role to play in the development of our industry and the national herd. Holstein Canada recognizes that, and through a refined strategy, is increasing its resources to the genomics department. The appointment of Chris Bartels as the new Genomics Services Manager, was a key part of this project. The end goal is to revitalize the genomics program to provide you, our members, with an enhanced, unbiased solution, to boost your genetic gains and increase your profitability. A lot has changed in the industry over the last decade, and as a result, Holstein Canada is transitioning its focus and bringing an industry-leading, modern, and cost-effective solution for genomic evaluations.

What is changing?

The core of our genomics services is being completely revamped. The genomics landscape has changed drastically since the launch of the GenoTest (2009). Research has evolved and the needs of our members continues to change. We are proud to offer a solution to match. Therefore, from the tests available, to the way the producer receives the results, the whole process is going to look a bit different, including easier ways to submit your samples in 2022.

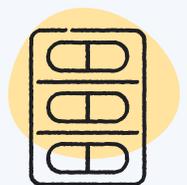
New Panel – more information, similar investment

A renewed partnership with Zoetis – a global leader in cattle genomic technologies – is bringing a high-density panel that will include a full Canadian Genomic enhanced evaluation, along with other recessive gene tests. The table summarizes the tests that are included in the most comprehensive and cost-effective solution available. Compared to our previous offering, it includes more standard gene tests like Holstein Cholesterol Deficiency (HCD), recessive and variant red coat colours, and **four different milk proteins tests – Beta, Kappa, and Alpha Caseins, as well as Beta-lactoglobulin.**



Standalone Test Options

The new approach provides members with advantages to get valuable information from genomic results for higher profitability in their businesses. With that in mind, our new standard, most cost-effective test, includes all of the above listed conditions. The Beta Casein A2 gene test can be ordered as a standalone without the full Canadian genetic evaluation. Polled, Brachyspina and CVM gene tests will be available in addition to the standard offering at a fee.



Easy and simple to submit a sample

The most convenient and reliable way to submit a sample is using the Tag/TSU sets. When ordering your identification tags, add the TSU unit so you can collect the sample at the same time you apply a new ear tag. You can also order TSU units to collect a sample from an animal that has already been tagged; the hair sample is still accepted, although the tissue sample is preferred because it reduces the chances of cross-contamination or insufficient sample.



Tests included in the new Holstein Canada genomic panel



Recessive genes	Milk Proteins and Coat colours
BLAD	Beta Casein (A1/A2)
DUMPS	Beta-lactoglobulin
Citrullinemia	Alpha S-1 Casein
Cholesterol Deficiency (CD)	Variant Red
Chondrodysplasia (Bulldog Syndrome)	Recessive Red
Bovine Spinal Dysmyelination (BSD)	Kappa Casein (A/B/E alleles)

Your animals, your data. You take control!

One of the advantages of genomic testing with Holstein Canada is the flexibility to access your animals' results anytime you like; **our genomic test gives you complete access to and ownership of your data.** Besides the individual reporting, all the genetic data from your herd is available in Compass, allowing you to quickly look and rank genotyped and non-genotyped animals. The genetic information in Compass is constantly updated, so once you test an animal, you always have access to the most current and accurate information as more data from the parents are added.

As a member organization, our priority is to protect your data and your ownership of it. Offering a cutting-edge solution for an affordable price, and giving total control over your herd's data shows our commitment to being a leader in the industry. Not only can you look up your best cow's daughter results at any time, but you have the ability to share the data with advisors. If you provide consent, we can easily



share complete Genetic Mating files with your selected AI representatives without losing ownership of your valuable, raw genotype data. 🐄

Contact a member of our **Field Service team** for help setting up your genetic plan, and use genomic testing to speed up your genetic gains and reach your goals!

To learn more about Compass, access **www.compasscan.ca** to set up your account, or contact **compass@holstein.ca** for help.

EASIER • SIMPLER • FASTER

On-Farm Software Registration Options

Summer and fall are always a very busy time on the farm with the extra field work that needs to get done, so it is not unusual for animal registrations to fall behind. As they say, “you have to make hay while the sun shines” and paperwork is often the last thing on your mind after a long day in the field.

Knowing this, Holstein Canada is always looking for ways to make the registration process easier, simpler and faster. In recent months, staff has been working with our industry partners at Lely, DeLaval and Gea to come up with an easy way to submit registration information to Holstein Canada directly through your on-farm software. The process is simple – upload a report file that gathers all the registration information needed to complete the application for registration from your existing on-farm software. You then email that file to Holstein Canada along with the calf photos, if you choose, and we will process your applications.

Simple “How To” guides are available to help guide you through the process:

Lely T4C

DeLaval Delpro

GEA - DairyPlan C21

Our Customer Service team can provide you with the report files you need for your particular software system. Call today for help getting started 1-855-756-8300 ext 410.

Farms that have invested in dry cow and transition cow facilities

By Morgan Sangster, Field Service Business Partner, Western Canada; Amanda Comfort, Field Representative, Holstein Ontario; Roxane Thériault, Summer Intern, Holstein Québec; Natasha McKillop, Field Service Business Partner, Atlantic.

Ballam Farms

We firmly believe that milk production is heavily driven by good transitions and so we felt that focusing on our transition group would be the most beneficial for our farm, not only economically, but also for cow comfort and for our people.

We had a vision of what we wanted, and we wanted it to be simple. We toured facilities in our area that we knew had good transition set ups which allowed us to see what was working well, and use those ideas to take back home to renovate our farm.

We ended up building a barn with 7-24'x30' packs, 12' scrape alleys, 16' feed alleys, with a 4' wide drover's lane running behind the packs. Each pack has gates that can be set up to create an isolation area, and a locking head gate with a swing gate so we can easily treat animals. The barn is 264'x64' and also houses our young stock.

Now that our transition cows are in a separate facility, we have more space in our milking barn, which not only improved our stocking density and cow comfort, but allowed us to build extra stalls to accommodate growth. We are better positioned to purchase additional quota as it becomes available.

The new barn is very quiet and stress free. The pens were designed to be wide open, with water bowls along both sides so that no boss cows can block access to the bunk or waterers. We have found that this has improved our feed intake as well.

Everything was designed to be easy and efficient: it takes minimal time to bed and feed everyone, and to sterilize the calf pens. The calf kitchen makes it easy to fill and clean bottles.

Now staff have more time available to watch for cow and calf behaviour. Everything is bright and open, so we can see if there are issues and intervene more quickly. It also frees up time to make sure we are keeping good records and leaving information for other staff members.

When we moved our transition cows to the new barn, the effect was immediate. There was no stress behaviour at all. When we came in the next morning, all the cows were either lying on the pack or feeding at the bunk. We have never had a change like that go so smoothly.

Within our first two milk pick-ups, we were up over 800L in production. Over the course of the first year, we also saw steady increases in our average daily production. We have also noticed that our two year olds get off to a better start and their peak milk has improved with some 2 year olds averaging 35L/day with some over 40L/day.

The set up of the barn allows us to easily feed a close-up and a far-off ration; setting the cows up for a better transition. Now, we rarely have to assist with calving, and we have very few issues like retained placentas or ketosis. Calf health has also improved.

Aside from the production and health improvements, we find our herd is much calmer and quieter now. Hoof health as improved as well and we rarely have a lame cow. It has really had a ripple effect into all aspects of the herd.

The barn was designed for one person to look after everything. Everyone loves to work in this barn, and happy staff make for happy cows. When things are easy and pleasurable to do, they'll get done!



East



BALLAM FARMS LTD.
Shubenacadie, NS

PREFIX: BALLAM

PEOPLE INVOLVED: Owners Ralph, Joanne, Joseph and Kris, herdsman Keith Simms, feed person John Miller, milkers Jill Isnor, Kelly Hodgsons, and Michael Reese Ballam and shop manager Shane Hebb

OF COWS MILKED: 230

OF ACRES FARMED: 1200

FACILITY TYPE: Sand deep bedded free-stall with a double 10 herringbone parlour, our transition and young stock facility - pack barn

HERD PRODUCTION AVERAGE (L/COW):
40 KG/DAY 4.00 F% 3.25 P%

WHAT IS YOUR FEEDING SYSTEM? TMR

ARE THERE OTHER BREEDS IN YOUR HERD? Yes, 4 jersey's

HOLSTEIN CANADA SERVICES USED:
Classification, Registration, NLID



Quebec

LA FERME PITTET INC.
Saint-Tite, QC

PREFIX: FRIBOURG

PEOPLE INVOLVED: Alphonse and Jérémie Pittet, Claire Désaulniers

OF COWS MILKED: 280

OF ACRES FARMED: 575 hectares

FACILITY TYPE: Free-stall with 24-stall rotary parlour (milking cows); free stall with individual stalls (dry cows); bed pack (transition cows); individual pen after 7 days in dome (heifers)

HERD PRODUCTION AVERAGE:
11 285 kg/cow, BCA 240-275-250

WHAT IS YOUR FEEDING SYSTEM?

Automated TMR, pit silo (6) for our forages, 2500 big square hay bales (dry cows & heifers)

ARE THERE OTHER BREEDS IN YOUR HERD? No

HOLSTEIN CANADA SERVICES USED:
Registration & classification

La Ferme Pittet Inc.

With the expansion of the farm, we had to build new facilities as our other facilities had become too small or outdated. In 2017, one of our barns collapsed and we had to build a new barn to house these animals so we were able to build a barn according to our plans and our needs.

With our knowledge and experience of dairy production, we knew what we did not want; barns not suited for the needs of the animals.

We then visited other dairy farmers to hear their experiences and to make our final choice, which led us to group housing on deep bedding for heifers and transition cows. Our Lactanet advisor was also a great help in determining how to arrange the space and facilitate the handling of the animals.

This project has been thought out and considered for a long time, and because of that, we would not change a thing. The transition cow barn was built larger than necessary, which allows us to expand the herd. Moreover, we used a common design that allows for as little handling as possible around calving to avoid causing any stress to the animals. The animals calve in groups or are separated by a barrier inside the pen, which, most of the time, allows the cow to calve without any assistance. Moving forward, we would like to change the facilities for the milking cows because we built a barn that didn't consider future expansion.

For us, transition cows and heifers are the most important part of a herd and the hardest part to manage. We need

to prepare them for their next lactation, which requires a lot of energy. This is why we need to give them the best possible chance to start and continue their lactation. The calving preparation stage is tricky with a lot of money at stake. For this reason we were ready to invest more to have good results. We did not want to make any budgetary compromises for this group of animals. We chose to leave the dry cows in stalls to have a larger budget and to allow for a bigger pen for transition cows. As a result of this project, we can keep our older cows longer and the average age of our herd has increased. Comfort is optimal in this barn and with calving time being critical, the new design has helped us reduce the problems related to calving and reduce the risk of mortality around calving.

The transition went well; the animals were already in a free-stall setting before the construction of the new barn and were used to it from birth. It was a little harder for us, the owners, to adapt to the new barn, because we had to get to know how it operated. It took one (1) month for everything to settle down, but we did not lose any productivity in the transition period. We got results quickly as the cows were well prepared for their lactation. Our average production increased in the following months and so did overall health and milk components. The extra comfort allowed the cows to be in good shape to start their lactation and their peak milk production increased. Investing in the pre-lactation and the lactation stage was important and we were happy to see it paid off.

After a few weeks of adaptation, our quality of life increased. The herd and herd management are going well, so it is more pleasant for our family to come and work on the farm. The overall health of the herd has improved; increasing the comfort of our cows allows for fewer problems and the managers have a lower stress level.

Ontowa Farms Inc.

We built our dairy barn in 2010 to update our facilities by transitioning to freestalls from an old tie stall barn. Part of the plan was to build the barn large enough to house all of the dry cows and close up heifers. In hindsight, we should have built the barn larger, as 11 years ago, we did not know how much quota we would have today. We knew that we wanted all of the mature cows and closeup heifers under one roof for efficient management so we made use of many farm tours to come up with the floor plan of our barn.

We had housed dry cows in a pack before the barn was built and had some trouble with mastitis in the fresh cows so we knew we wanted the dry cows to be housed in free stalls.

Our set up has 120 freestalls on rubber mats bedded with sawdust for milking cows which is split in half; one half of the herd is small cows and fresh heifers and the other group contains larger cows.

The Dry cows have 20 freestalls for the far off group which also has access to a pasture paddock during the summer months. There are 10 freestalls for the closeup group as well as a pack that the really close cows and heifers can go on just before calving. The pack area has 5 pens with gates that allow for different pen sizes depending on how many fresh cows and cows calving there are.

There is also a small pen to help with calving if needed. This pack is cleaned out every 2 weeks.

Having cows and heifers on freestalls as much as possible really keeps the SCC low. We maintain a bulk tank SCC around 65 000 which is much easier to maintain than when the dry cows were housed on a bedding pack.

Having the dry cows in the same barn as the milking cows has allowed us to watch them much more closely and efficiently, especially if there is a cow that does not look right or the rumination sensors alert us to a problem. Over the last 2 years, we also have noticed that due to the use of sexed semen and beef semen, the gestation seems to be a bit shorter and calves seem to come out much faster so keeping a closer eye on the springers helps us manage them better.

The cows adapted quite easily to the new facilities with no problems at all. All heifers are in freestalls starting at the age of 6 months, so all the animals are trained before entering the prefresh program and the dry cows do very well on the freestalls staying clean with very little labour. Time is saved when the facilities allow for the ease of caring for the dry cows. This time allows us to end our work day a bit sooner.



Ontario

ONTOWA FARMS INC.
Elmira, Ontario

PREFIX: ONTOWA

PEOPLE INVOLVED: Ralph & Judy Martin, Ryan & Lori Martin, Phil & Katie Martin, and two part-time employees

OF COWS MILKED: 120

OF ACRES FARMED: 280 – corn and alfalfa

FACILITY TYPE: Double 10 parallel parlor in a free stall barn

HERD PRODUCTION AVERAGE:
1.6 kg butterfat per milking 2x/day

WHAT IS YOUR FEEDING SYSTEM? Single mix TMR once a day with a mixer trailer

ARE THERE OTHER BREEDS IN YOUR HERD? One Brown Swiss heifer

HOLSTEIN CANADA SERVICES USED:
Registration and Classification





West

CLOVER PRAIRIE FARMS - BRAYDEN BREDENHOF
Calmar, Alberta

PREFIX: BREDENHOF

PEOPLE INVOLVED: 3 full time, 2 part time

OF YEARS AS MEMBER: 63 years (1958)

OF COWS MILKED: 190

OF ACRES FARMED: 500

FACILITY TYPE: Freestall

HERD PRODUCTION AVERAGE (L/COW): 35-36 L/cow 4.3% BF

WHAT IS YOUR FEEDING SYSTEM? TMR

ARE THERE OTHER BREEDS IN YOUR HERD? Jersey

HOLSTEIN CANADA SERVICES USED: Registration and Classification



Clover Prairie Farms - Brayden Bredenhof

We always try to find bottlenecks that are holding our cows back from achieving their genetic potential and the transition period was just that. Cows were going to a separate location down the road for their far off period and coming back home to calve. They were being housed in an old freestall that didn't promote the cow comfort that they needed. The calving pen back at the main farm was way too small and always overcrowded. Instead of cows relaxing and getting ready for another productive lactation, they were stressed and starting off slow. We knew that if we could turn this around it would make our cows more productive and our farm more profitable.

We went and visited a neighbour's farm that had recently built a new barn. We took advice from our vet who we work really closely with. Our builder had helped design some barns and gave suggestions on what other farmers were doing. The same for our dairy equipment dealer who has seen and done it all when it comes to designing barns. Google was also very helpful in answering our questions and brought us to trusted websites.

Looking back, we should have built bigger: Bigger than you think you need and then build bigger than that. Our target when building was to provide the close-up cows with 120 sq/ft per cow of pack space and 36 inches of feed bunk space. We planned this amount of space for the average number of dry cows we would have in the barn when instead, we should have made it a minimum for the busiest calving month. We would have also liked to do an 'all in all out' approach for the close-up group. Once a week moving all dry cows due to calve in the next 21 to 28 days into a close-up pen and not introducing any new cows until they have all calved. Constantly adding new cows to the social hierarchy

is stressful on the cows as they prepare to calve.

There were other projects we had plans for, but the transition facility had to be dealt with first. It was causing unnecessary stress on the cows, the farmers, and the cheque book. A smooth transition will equal a more productive and profitable cow. That means she will make more milk, breed back quicker and spend less time in the sick pen. What dairy producer doesn't want healthy and happy cows? It took a few days to get them settled in and used to their new surroundings. Cows are very curious and creatures of habit so introducing something new like the flip over gates took them a couple days to understand.

We really started to notice change when the first cows that spent their whole dry period in the new transition facility had calved. What we noticed was that we were getting increased amounts of colostrum at a higher quality and cows were producing more milk early in lactation. It wasn't uncommon anymore for cows to be giving 45 litres at 7 days in milk. While the majority of cows are doing really great, a few too many cows are still getting milk fevers and retained placentas. We are working hard with our vet and nutritionist to fix these issues and are very optimistic that we will find a solution.

The new transition facility has really helped us become more labour efficient by having all the dry cows under one roof and 50 ft from the lactating cow barn. Not having to transport cows between farms has saved us a lot of time and fuel. Also no more holding off drying cows because there is a blizzard in the forecast. Smoother cow transition has made it easier on us from the management standpoint because we have less cows to treat than before and more milk in the tank. It's not hard to get up in the morning to milk happy cows that are producing large volumes of nutritious and delicious milk. 🇨🇦

Breeding for Profitable Longevity

Recently we have been discussing the importance of optimal productive lifespan from an economic point of view and mentioned that the average longevity in Canada (2.4 lactations) is considerably shorter than ideal. At the end of the day, a profitable bottom line is essential for a herd to be in business, so longer-lasting productive cows are key to that profit. With tighter margins, each producer is paying closer attention to details that can increase income and reduce costs. This is where refined genetic improvements can make a difference, and economic indices (such as Pro\$ in Canada and Net Merit (NM\$) in the US) are very straightforward in estimating a female's individual, or a sire/dam progeny's profitability.

Recent updates to the NM\$ formula – Productive Life and Profitability

The beginning of August marked a new round of proofs, which brought relevant changes to the NM\$ calculation. Although it doesn't reflect the economic values for Canada, the modifications to NM\$ align with Holstein Canada's vision. Among them, a higher emphasis on Productive Life (PL) was a relevant change that heavily affects cow profitability and, therefore, the index rankings.

The new economic value of PL takes into account more factors to better reflect the value and profitability of longevity.

Historically, it considered that the same amount of profit was generated across all lactations, suggesting that 1st lactation cows were as profitable as later lactation cows. Today, it takes into account other factors such as genetic opportunity cost, maturity cost, and depreciation costs (or replacement cost).

Genetic opportunity x Maturity costs – Fine-tuning longevity

The **Genetic opportunity cost** is the cost associated with keeping a cow longer instead of replacing her with a younger heifer that has higher genetic potential. The breed and each herd improve their genetics year over year, as cows become more productive and healthier, so an older cow is "taking space" of a younger one, with higher genetic merit. This is not as easy to measure at the herd level, but the average breed gain can be used as a benchmark. We have observed an average genetic gain of about \$250/year in Pro\$ during the last 5 years. In practical terms, each year the resulting heifers born should generate around \$165 more profit each lactation.

Maturity cost, however, works the other way around. It is the cost associated with a young cow producing less than a mature one. It is known that first lactation cows produce around 20% less than the fully mature ones (3rd to 4th lactation). The lower production generates a lower return over the feed cost. Therefore, a very young herd is not as desirable as an older herd because, with more mature cows, you could fill the same amount of quota with fewer animals.

Depreciation is not only for machinery and buildings

The **depreciation cost (or replacement cost)** for animals is the trade-off between genetic improvement and longevity. Similar to buying a tractor, a substantial initial investment is needed to raise a heifer, that will eventually calve and start to generate income by producing milk. At some point, you trade the tractor in to invest in a new one; for the cow, there is an extra income for disposal (as long as you sell her), getting replaced by another one. The difference between the raising and selling prices is the depreciation, which is diluted over the lifetime of the cow. For the tractor, if you hear from the dealer that the tractor costs \$5,000 more but will last an extra 3 years, you will certainly like it, as the higher cost is irrelevant for how much more money it is going to bring. For dairy cows, it is similar. However, at some point, it is economically better to have a younger cow with higher genetic merit and a whole milking career ahead - same if every year a new tractor model is launched, that wears its parts at a slower rate. The key is finding the sweet spot of balance between genetic gain and longevity.

Productive Lifetime	Raising cost	Cull cow price	Depreciation/Lactation*
2 LACTATIONS	\$2,800	\$1,300	\$750
	\$3,500	\$1,000	\$1,250
3 LACTATIONS	\$2,800	\$1,300	\$500
	\$3,500	\$1,000	\$833
4 LACTATIONS	\$2,800	\$1,300	\$375
	\$3,500	\$1,000	\$625

*Depreciation/Lactation is the difference between raising cost and cull cow price, divided by the number of lactations, for example $(\$3,500 - \$1,000)/2 = \$1,250$

Using the economic concepts to increase profitability

In a nutshell, high raising cost and low cull cow price requires increased production and longevity, so the depreciation is diluted - or the least amount of money is required to replace that cow every year. The table below illustrates how more longevity and different raising and cull cow prices affect the depreciation. Considering the current high costs of feed and low cull cow (and fresh cow) prices, getting an extra lactation can be a gamechanger.

Another clear conclusion from the table is that more lactations considerably reduces the depreciation cost, especially in current market scenarios. The possible way to offset the high depreciation is by getting very high production right from the 1st lactation. Nonetheless, it is common knowledge that young cows produce less than mature ones (20% less in 1st lactation), so even if you are making large genetic progress, the immature cows are not likely to produce as much, and the return over the investment (breeding and raising costs) is going to be low, if not negative.

Take Home Messages

Dairy farming is like any other business, and profitability is essential for staying in business. The difficulty lies in the fact that a large part of the costs come from feed, which is partially composed of commodities and not under the producers' control. The income is from milk sold, which is also not under one's control. Making sure you get the most income from each dollar invested is the best approach. To achieve that, diluting the raising costs over several lactations seems to be a great path. Make sure you check out the second part of this article in the next Info Holstein edition! 🐄

Call for National Director Nominations

THERE IS AN OPEN CALL for nominations for National Directors in the Electoral Districts listed to the right. Clubs located in these districts will receive official notification of the call in September, and nominations will close **December 8, 2021**. Ballots will be mailed out to all voting members in the districts with more than one candidate by **January 8, 2022** and voting closes on **February 8, 2022**. The criteria for the National Director Eligibility can be found in the Association's By-laws on www.holstein.ca; nomination forms can be obtained from your local Holstein Club, Provincial Branch or by contacting **Jodi Zettler** at jzettler@holstein.ca or **1-855-756-8300 ext. 229** 🐄

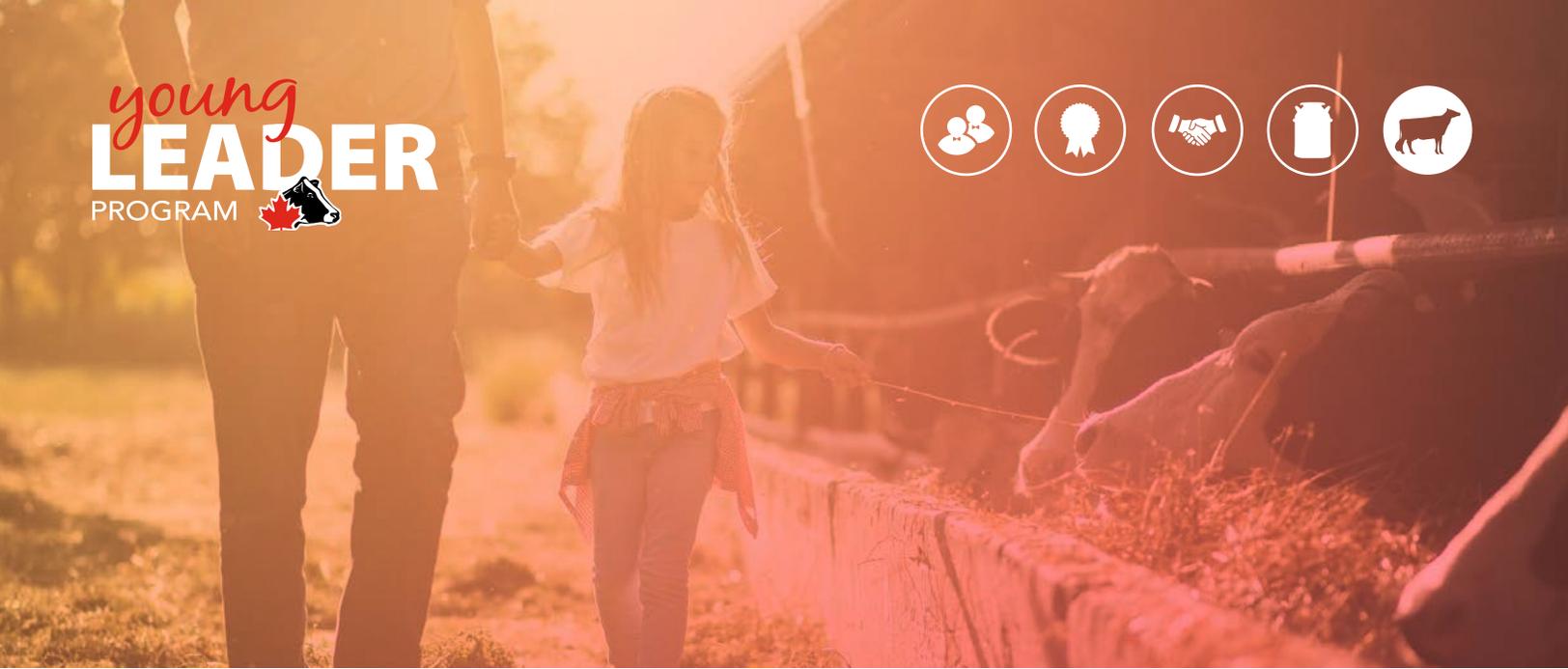
Electoral Districts 2022

Northern / Central Ontario

Quebec at large

Western Quebec

Alberta & NWT



Investing in the next generation: Tips for Farm Succession

THE LARGE MAJORITY OF THE DAIRY FARMS in the country are owned and operated by families, making farm succession very important. However, it is often left behind in the priority list because many families are uncomfortable dealing with the delicate situation it can be. To help make the process smoother, here are some tips, including how to proceed within Holstein Canada.

Seeking professional advice is a good starting point

Planning a succession can be tricky, as it involves family and business decisions with both short and long-term goals. It can be hard even to sit down and start the conversation, so seeking professional help is a healthy starting point. Additionally, someone neutral to the family will be unbiased and fair-minded to help moderate the discussions.

Analyzing possibilities and creating a plan

Considering the complexity of the situation, a detailed evaluation of the different possibilities must be done. Legal and financial aspects, relationships, organizational structure, and objectives have to be on the list for discussion. Each situation is different, and proceeding with a plan that is most fitting for each specific scenario is key. All the parts must be in agreement on what is best for the whole business, so a clear plan can be put in place.

Making the plan work

A well-structured plan is the foundation for a healthy succession. The objectives and goals of each member of the family must be

clear and line up with the business' structure and goals. That way, the roles and responsibilities are well established, avoiding conflicts between the parties.

Farm Succession and Holstein Canada – Planning in advance

Regarding the producer account and animal ownership, some of the previous tips are also the rule of thumb here. The central pillar is planning ahead and making sure the interests are aligned. The main recommendation is having a business/farm account, as opposed to an individual (personal) account.

The new owners can be added to the account as Partners by submission of the Signing Authority and/or Partners form, so they can officially take care of all business activities regarding Holstein Canada.

<https://www.holstein.ca/PublicContent/PDFS/SigningAuthEn.pdf>

If the prefix is being maintained, you can avoid extra fees when setting up new accounts and the associated animal transfer fees. It is important to note, however, that if a new prefix will be used, animal ownership must be transferred and fees will apply. Incorporating the new owners into the existing farm account is a considerably simpler process, not requiring any animal transfer submission. All in all, it is about planning, and finding out the best path for a smooth and successful succession! Our Customer Service Team is always available to discuss your options. 🐄



How can Holstein Canada help me with Traceability reporting?

1. Age verification – once calves are identified with approved dairy tags, you need to record and report the birth information /activation of the tag. Under the Traceability module of proAction®, recording is within 7 days and reporting is 45 days. Note: in the province of Quebec the regulation for recording and reporting is 7 days.

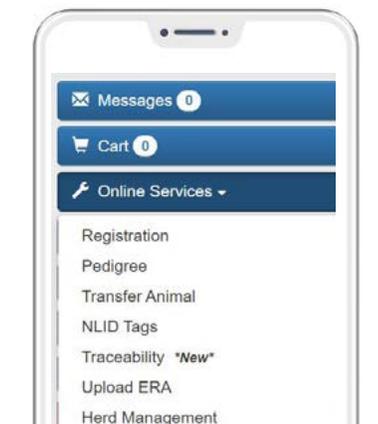
REGISTRATION: As a 3rd party, Holstein Canada can help you out by sending registered animals tag activation events to the tracking database(s) - DairyTrace and Attestra (ATQ). Tag activation information is sent daily from Holstein Canada. If your animal registrations are completed within 45 days of birth, you will meet current traceability requirements

2. Animal movement - On your behalf, Holstein Canada will report the animal movement events to the tracking database for move-in, move-out and tag retirement for animals that have died and been disposed of on farm. In case of a contagious disease outbreak, it is possible, with this information, to identify exactly where the animal has been, which other animals it has been in contact with and where it is now. It is critical information for the

planning and management of emergencies. When a new herd mate arrives or a herd mate returns, it is important to record and report the event to the tracking database for full traceability.

If an animal is leaving your farm for domestic movement, it is the responsibility of the premises of arrival to report the animal has moved-in.

The Traceability module of proAction® does require that you report move-in within 7 days following the arrival of the animal or before the animal leaves the farm, whichever comes first. It is not required to report when an animal has left your farm, unless it is destined for export. However, it is good practice to record when an animal leaves the herd and report move-out events to the tracking database.



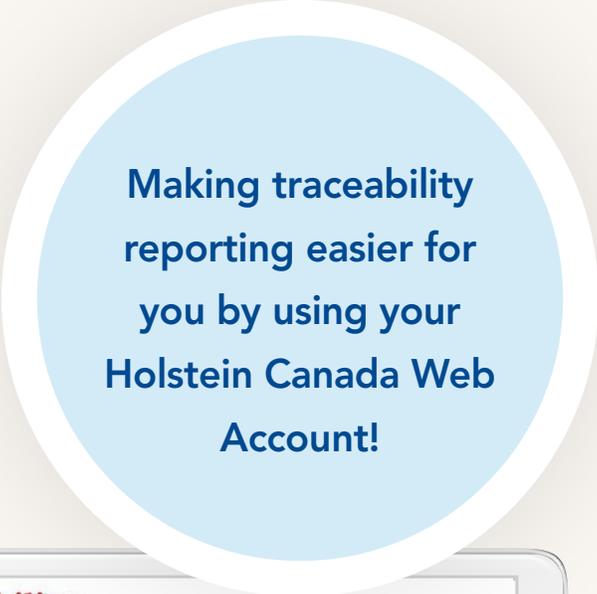
Holstein Canada – Reporting Animal Movements:

TRACEABILITY ONLY - We recognize some animals move from herd to herd without actually changing ownership. By logging in to your Holstein Canada online service account or speaking with our Customer Service staff, you are able to report animal movement events for registered animals without reporting a change of ownership.

TRANSFER OWNERSHIP & TRACEABILITY - As the buyer or seller you can transfer animal ownership and include the additional movement information. Holstein Canada will report the move-in or move-out events to the tracking database on your behalf.

When a dairy animal arrives to or leaves your farm, be prepared to have:

- **ANIMAL'S IDENTIFICATION NUMBER (15 digits in total)**
- **DATE (when animal arrived or left the farm)**
- **PREMISES ID NUMBER (for farm of arrival and farm of departure), for imported / exported events – location of the site the animal was kept at before it was imported or where it was exported to.**
- **VEHICLE LICENSE PLATE NUMBER (single unit or tandem unit used to transport animals arriving or leaving your farm)**



If you have any questions, don't hesitate to reach out to your relevant customer service team:

 Call 1-855-756-8300	 Email customerservice@holstein.ca	 Text/SMS 1-226-401-8305
--	--	--

* 45 days for births/tag activations, 7 days for move-ins and imports, cross references, move-outs for export and on-farm disposal

We cannot eat our way out of climate change, says expert



DR. FRANK MITLOEHNER, a leading professor and air quality specialist, has a real beef with all the finger-pointing around cattle emissions.

“The notion that a change of diet would have a drastic impact on climate is completely overblown, and in my opinion, quite dangerous,” said Dr. Mitloehner.

“It takes our attention from where that 800-pound gorilla sits, and that’s square in the area of fossil fuels.”

The professor of animal science at the University of California, Davis recently spoke to delegates at a virtual edition of the BC Dairy Association’s annual Nutrition Forum on the intersection of food and climate change. He noted that, if a person were to switch from an

omnivore to a vegan diet, studies show they would reduce their carbon footprint by around one tonne per year. But if they take just one trans-Atlantic flight during that time, they will not only cancel this reduction out completely, they will add another tonne of pollution into the air.

Reframing carbon emissions from cattle

Dr. Mitloehner brought up two key problems with the way cattle emissions have been portrayed: one, that the way we measure greenhouse gasses (GHG) is not realistic; and two, that methane should not be treated as having the same impact on climate change as carbon dioxide.

“Every time you’ve ever driven a car, or burned coal or gas,” says Dr. Mitloehner, “you’ve put out CO₂ into the atmosphere and that gas is still there throughout your entire lifetime – and that of your parents, and that of your grandparents, and so on.” Methane, on the other hand, has an atmospheric lifetime of approximately one decade, very different from greenhouse gasses like carbon dioxide that are long-lived, with its half-life of 1,000 years.

When a cow belches out methane, not only is its emission made naturally of carbon from photosynthesis through the plants it consumes, this methane stays in

the atmosphere for just 12 years before turning back into CO₂ that can be used for photosynthesis, and another cow, again. “Without ruminant animals,” Dr. Mitloehner says, “we could not make use of grasses that grow on two-thirds of all agricultural land in the world.” This process is called the biogenic carbon cycle – emissions that come from natural sources.

But is this a good thing, considering the long half-life of carbon dioxide?

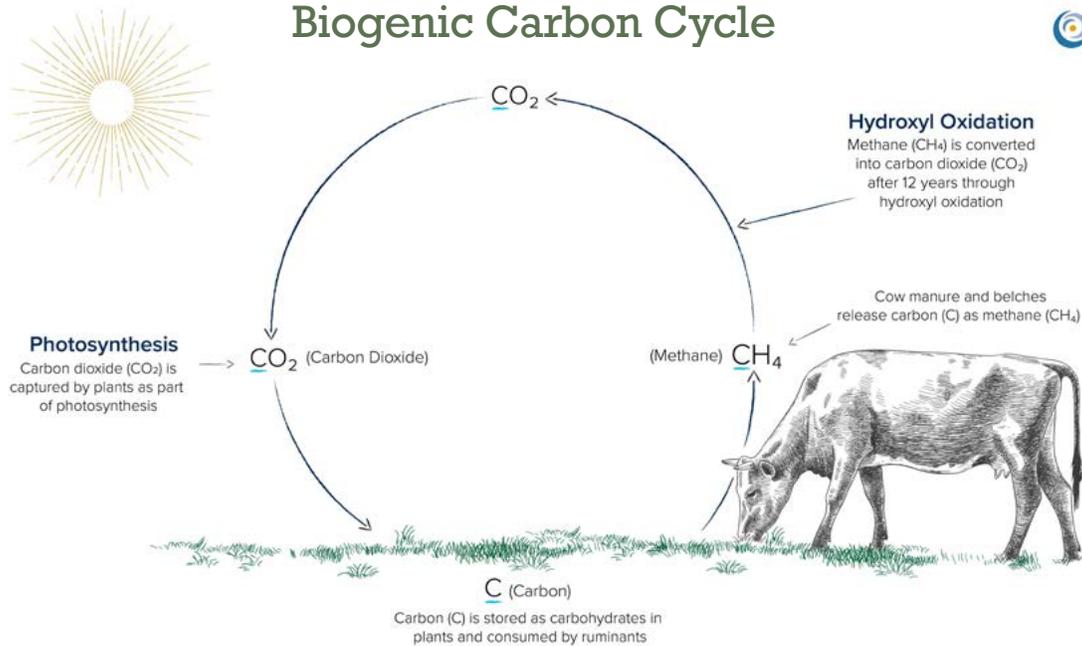
“The question is not [whether this is] a good or bad thing,” Dr. Mitloehner explains. “The question is, is the carbon from our livestock new and additional carbon added to the atmosphere, causing additional warming?”

The answer to that question is no.

Moving beyond carbon neutrality

A working group from Oxford University under Professor Myles Allen supports the idea that we are treating methane the wrong way and has proposed a new unit of measure to look at how short-lived emissions like methane affect the climate. The group claims that the current GHG measurement overestimates livestock-produced methane’s warming effect and ignores methane’s ability to induce cooling when emissions are reduced.

Biogenic Carbon Cycle



“Our goal should be climate neutrality,” Dr. Mitloehner says, “not carbon neutrality.”

Dr. Mitloehner calls the current GHG measuring system ‘the literal apples to oranges comparison,’ where foods are weighed against each other despite having unique nutritional profiles. Beef production may have the highest GHG emission per kilogram at almost 60 times that of vegetables or fruit, but Dr. Mitloehner stresses that this comparison is not realistic.

“A kilogram of beef is a very nutrient-rich food,” he explains. “A kilogram of apples does not contain an equal amount of essential nutrients.”

What’s more, the U.N.’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimates that 70 to 80 percent of the environmental footprint

of livestock occurs in developing or emerging countries. “These are not the numbers that apply to Canada or the United States; these are global averages,” Dr. Mitloehner explains, adding, “I have a real beef with that.”

The future of methane recycling

Agriculture and forestry accounted for 10.5 percent of all emissions in the U.S. in 2018, but they also created a reduction of 11.8 percent. This ability to be destroyed at almost the same rate it is emitted, along with its shorter lifespan, means that methane does not act like carbon dioxide and therefore should not be compared as a its equivalent.

“[These] are the only two sectors in society that have the capacity to actually provide a solution to a very important societal aspect,” says Dr. Mitloehner, “which is improving the climate.”

In California today, methane gas from some dairy cattle herds is being collected in covered lagoons and converted into renewable natural gas,

creating the most “carbon-negative fuel type there is,” says Dr. Mitloehner. These innovative dairy producers have already reduced emissions by 25 percent.

While methane has sometimes been portrayed as ‘the dairy industry’s Achilles heel,’ according to Dr. Mitloehner, simply blaming animal agriculture for methane emissions also downplays the contribution of plant-based foods towards greenhouse gases. For instance, plant agriculture emissions accounted for 0.6 percent of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions in 2017, while animal agriculture emissions actually accounted for less – just 0.5 percent.

Recycling methane from dairy farms into renewable natural gas not only offers farmers an additional source of income, it is helping displace the diesel fuel used in transportation. If this practice continues, within five to 10 years most of the dairy industry in California will be climate neutral, “meaning [the industry] will not affect temperatures on our planet,” Dr. Mitloehner says. “And that is the path I’m on.”



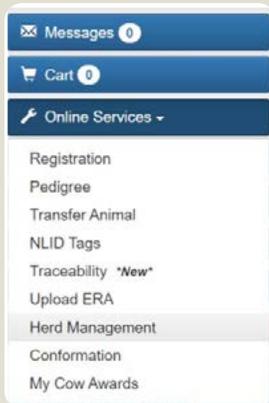
Dear Customer Service Team



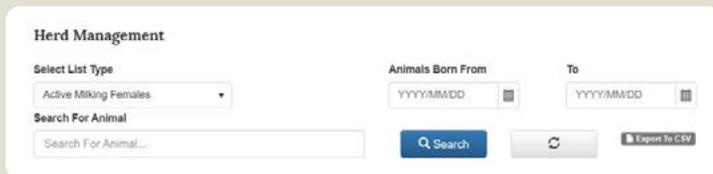
Answering this month's question is **Christopher Grice**. Christopher works with our Bilingual Customer Service Team and has the amazing job of assisting our membership across Canada with registrations and account updates in both official languages. When kids ask me what I do at Holstein Canada, I simply say: "I issue birth certificates for calves." Most reply: "Wow! Cows get birth certificates too!"

1. I just got a call from the classifier to schedule his next visit. How do I get a list of the active females in my herd to prepare for my visit?

For quick access to your list of active milking females, go to your Holstein Canada Web Account. When you log in, you will land on the "My Herdbook" page. Under "Reports", look for the "Active Milking Females" icon. Click on it to automatically download your female inventory (PDF format).



You also have the option to create a more personalized list. To do so, click on Online Services, then on Herd Management. Select the type of list you want between *Active Milking Females*, *Owned by*, *Bred by and Bred & Owned*. You can also select animals born during a certain timeframe. You can then Export to CSV and open in Excel format to modify and/or sort it as you wish.



[How to Video](#)

If you do not have a Web Account, view this short How To video to get started.

2. Why is my list of active females not up to date?

Milk recording allows you to keep an up-to-date inventory. Holstein Canada's Active female list starts at the time of the registration of the animal and the only way to remove a female from this list is through milk recording, or by reporting it directly to Holstein Canada. Your active inventory list will be in your on-farm records/software.

3. How can I update my Holstein Canada list and make sure the classifier has the latest information?

If you no longer do milk recording and still wish to have a list of active females for your classification visit, you can send your herd inventory to the Holstein Canada office through your on-farm software. Many herd management software programs can generate lists which can then be imported into the classification system. Be sure to send your updated inventory to us one (1) week prior the classifier's visit at classification@holstein.ca.

Click on your on-farm software below to help you generate these inventories:

[Lely T4C](#)

[GEA - DairyPlan C21](#)

[DeLaval Delpro](#)

[DairyComp 305](#)

Need help? Call us toll-free at 1-855-756-8300 or email CustomerService@holstein.ca.

TOP SIRES ACCORDING TO AVERAGE FINAL SCORE OF 1ST LACTATION DAUGHTERS

Based on 1st Lactation Classifications Jun. 2021/Jul. 2021

Top 10 Sires for Feet and Legs Score with 100+ Daughters Classified in Two-Month Period

Sire	Daughters Classified	Average Daughter Feet and Legs
SIDEKICK	261	82.04
UNIX	573	81.89
DOC	143	81.83
DOORMAN	251	81.80
SOLOMON	194	81.78
DEMPSEY	125	81.52
APPLE-CRISP	192	81.33
DELTA-LAMBDA	118	81.10
CONTROL	217	80.87
RUMMY	208	80.82

Top 10 Sires for Mammary System with 100+ Daughters Classified in Two-Month Period

Sire	Daughters Classified	Average Daughter Mammary System Score
SIDEKICK	261	83.07
SOLOMON	194	82.84
DELTA-LAMBDA	118	82.70
CHIEF	164	82.56
DOORMAN	251	82.55
UNIX	573	82.40
DOC	143	82.17
APPLE-CRISP	192	82.07
KINGBOY	108	81.95
HIGH OCTANE	184	81.88

Top 10 Sires for Health and Fertility with 100+ Daughters Classified in Two-Month Period (Jun. 2021 - Jul. 2021)

Sire	Daughters Classified	Sire Health & Fertility	Avg. Final Score of Daughters
ARDOR	137	702	80.0
RIGEL	104	562	79.8
SOLOMON	204	553	82.3
LIGHTHOUSE	119	552	80.2
BLOOMFIELD	207	552	79.7
CONTROL	224	542	80.8
ALBUM	351	542	79.5
GALAHAD	177	533	80.6
LINEMAN	195	533	80.3
DELTA-LAMBDA	123	524	82.2
KINGBOY	114	524	81.5

Top 10 Sires for 305d Fat Production with 100+ Daughters Classified in Two-Month Period (Jun. 2021 - Jul. 2021)

Sire	Classified Daughters (100+)	Avg. Final Score	Average 305-Day Fat
FUEL	124	81.3	414.3
MIDNIGHT	106	80.3	413.5
THOREAU	129	80.9	393.7
CARDINALS	139	79.8	390.1
CHIEF	117	82.1	383.3
WICKHAM	101	80.3	381.6
SIDEKICK	173	82.7	375.7
APPLE-CRISP	140	81.9	374.4
ALBUM	193	79.6	373.7
DOORMAN	148	82.3	373.4

Note: Daughters are included in the statistics if they had their last milk test in the last three-month period (May 2021 to Jul. 2021).

Top 10 Sires for Rump Score with 100+ Daughters Classified in Two-Month Period

Sire	Daughters Classified	Average Daughter Rump Score
SIDEKICK	261	83.50
CHIEF	164	83.45
APPLE-CRISP	192	83.10
IMPRESSION	525	83.04
DELTA-LAMBDA	118	83.00
KINGPIN	139	82.78
CONTROL	217	82.75
UNIX	573	82.70
LIGHTHOUSE	112	82.55
SOLOMON	194	82.50

Top 10 Sires for Dairy Strength Score with 100+ Daughters Classified in Two-Month Period

Sire	Daughters Classified	Average Daughter Dairy Strength Score
DOORMAN	251	83.51
SIDEKICK	261	83.33
DEMPSEY	125	83.32
DELTA-LAMBDA	118	83.29
FUEL	220	83.23
DOC	143	82.99
MOGUL	117	82.97
CHIEF	164	82.96
KINGBOY	108	82.96
ALCOVE	117	82.91

CLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE

MID-ROUND **MR**

SEPTEMBER

QC **MR** Riviere-du-Loup, Temiscouata

QC **MR** Standstead

AB

QC **MR** Matapedia, Bonaventure, Rimouski, Matane

ON Timiskaming, Cochrane, Nippising, Algoma, Thunder Bay, Dundas, Stormont

QC **MR** Nicolet, Yamaska

QC **MR** Frontenac

BC **MR**

OCTOBER

ON Haldimand, Norfolk

QC **MR** Lotbiniere, Drummond

QC Beauce

ON Glengarry, Prescott, Russell, Carleton

MB

This schedule is subject to change within a 1-2 week period.

For the full Field Service schedule, see the Field Services section under Services on our website, holstein.ca.

EARLY

MID

LATE

EARLY

MID

SASKATCHEWAN



APRIL 20 - 23, 2022



We're back, and we haven't missed a beat.
Stay tuned!



info Holstein 

Independent expression by contributors is welcomed, but is not necessarily that of the Association. Reproduction and use is encouraged for research, education, personal, and other non-commercial use, provided that the author and source are clearly identified.

Editor: Linda Ness
lness@holstein.ca

Publications Mail
Agreement 40008691

Published six times annually
Subscription: \$18 outside Canada

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

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

Tel: 519-756-8300 Fax: 519-756-3502

Toll Free: 1-855-756-8300

www.holstein.ca

DFC IN ACTION >

SEPTEMBER - OCTOBER 2021



Highlights of the 2021 DFC Annual General Meeting

On July 13th and 14th, 2021, more than 325 dairy farmers from across Canada gathered for the Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) virtual Annual General Meeting (AGM) to discuss some of the challenges facing the sector and to identify future opportunities under the theme of Cultivating Sustainability in Dairy Excellence.

Pierre Lampron re-elected as President of the Board of Dairy Farmers of Canada

Dairy farmers have re-elected Pierre Lampron to a third term as President of Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) at the organization's annual general meeting held on July 13th and 14th, 2021. Lampron is a sixth-generation dairy farmer and a unifying voice of dairy farmers across Canada.

"I would like to thank dairy farmers for putting their trust in me once again," said Pierre Lampron, President, Dairy Farmers of Canada. "It has been an honour and a privilege to serve as president of DFC's board for the last four years, and I look forward to continuing this important work on behalf of dairy farmers in my final term."

Lampron was first elected to the board of directors of the Producteurs de lait du Québec in 2000 and was initially appointed to DFC's board in 2007. As a leader, Lampron believes that by working together, dairy farmers can be more successful in reaching their goals and advancing their cause.

"I want to recognize my colleague Bonnie Den Haan for her campaign," added Lampron. "All those who commit to representing the interests of our dairy farmers at the regional, provincial or national levels deserve our gratitude."

Lampron will be surrounded on DFC's board by an impressive, knowledgeable and experienced group of dairy sector leaders.

Message from the President

President Pierre Lampron opened DFC's 2021 AGM with a message of gratitude, thanking dairy farmers for their hard work during the pandemic.

"With your help, we have carried out a range of awareness and education activities," Lampron said. "We held the government to account on compensation for CETA and CPTPP, and we defended private bills related to trade deals and trespassing on farms."

Lampron also noted the challenges dairy faces in reaching Canadian consumers, people with whom the dairy industry once had a privileged relationship.

"Many of their decisions are based on their value system, and as such, they want to know that dairy farmers share a common interest in protecting the planet for future generations. The good news is, we have a good story to tell, and we are doing that now, thanks to our Blue Cow campaigns, which inform the public about issues such as agricultural practices or the commitments of the proAction module."

Lampron noted how, in the last year and a half, DFC turned challenges into opportunities, including promoting dairy products for home cooking when restaurants were closed and leveraging the "Buy Canadian" sentiment during COVID-19 and CUSMA. The Blue Cow is now featured on the packaging of more than 8,600 products, including with major restaurant chains like Tim Hortons and Pizza Pizza.

While acknowledging that dairy farmers would have preferred no concessions under CETA and CPTPP, Lampron noted compensation formalized by the government last November to be delivered over an shortened time-frame of three years instead of eight gives farmers a measure of predictability. He promised to continue holding "feet to the fire" to ensure there are no further concessions in future trade agreements.

Lampron concluded with an overview of how DFC has an "integrated, organization-wide partnership strategy," focusing on our collective commitment to sustainability. To this end, he announced the investment of \$100,000 to plant 25,000 trees as part of Tree Canada's National Greening Program. A press release was released the same day and can be found at dairyfarmers.ca.

"There is much to celebrate over the past year," Lampron said. "As your President, my hat goes off to all of you for your resilience as our communities across the country dealt with the pandemic."



DFC by-law updates

During the AGM proceedings, certain revisions to DFC by-laws were approved by the General Council that related to three categories: revising the structure of committees to make them consistent with best practices; addressing other minor modernization changes, for example, to allow for virtual meetings; and general maintenance of the by-laws.

Dairy Farmers of Canada's 2021-2022 Board of Directors

DFC wishes to thank outgoing Board Members Bart Rijke (Ontario) and Ed Friesen (Lactanet) and welcome new members Mark Hamel (Ontario) and Korb Whale (Lactanet).

- President: **Pierre Lampron**
- British Columbia: **Dave Taylor**
- Alberta: **Gert Schrijver**
- Saskatchewan: **Blaine McLeod**
- Manitoba & Vice-President: **David Wiens**
- Ontario: **Albert Fledderus, Bonnie den Haan** and **Mark Hamel**
- Quebec: **Marcel Blais, Daniel Gobeil** and **Peter Strebel**
- New Brunswick: **Denis Cyr**
- Nova Scotia: **Gerrit Damsteegt**
- Prince Edward Island: **Gordon MacBeath**
- Newfoundland and Labrador: **Lucas Strong**
- Lactanet: **Korb Whale**

Recovery outlook is bright, says top economist

Pedro Antunes, chief economist for the Conference Board of Canada, was confident in his presentation on Canada's post-pandemic recovery outlook. "Most forecasts for the world economy are considering a recovery in 2021 and 2022 – so major growth ahead, very quickly," Antunes said.

Part of the growth in Canada will occur as a result of the \$1.9 trillion U.S. relief plan directed primarily at American households. "When American households spend, they drive global economy, they drive global trade, and they'll drive the supply chain across Canada," said Antunes. "Supply chain management is doing extremely well through this crisis."

However, though Canadian households saved a lot of money by staying home – approximately \$200 billion – and are itching to spend it, Antunes cautioned that we should not expect the path to COVID recovery to be entirely smooth. "There will be structural changes going forward, including the adoption of technology in terms of remote healthcare, remote work and remote education," he said.

Overall, Antunes predicts a solid rebound for the Canadian economy, driven by vaccines and stimulus measures at the federal and provincial levels.

"There's perhaps a silver lining," concludes Antunes, "which is a stronger productivity performance going forward, more adoption of technology, and a more productive economy that will help lift our economic performance, our GDP and our income, despite [our] challenges."

Fireside Chat with DFC's Executive Team

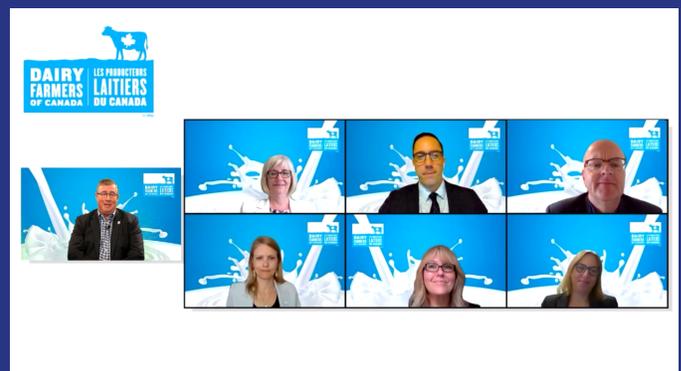
An executive roundtable hosted by DFC CEO Jacques Lefebvre answered questions from dairy farmers, opening lines of communication to address real concerns. The questions covered many topics, including proAction®, DFC's strategy for marketing to millennials, palm fat supplements and more.

Pamela Nalewajek vice-president of marketing, addressed how DFC is leveraging proAction with consumers and our Blue Cow logo program.

"We're linking the pillars of proAction with direct messaging and communication with our target's values," Nalewajek said. Nalewajek then related these pillars to the tone and content of how DFC is marketing to Millennials. "Our young dairy members [are] perceived as relatable and authentic to young consumers because they share the same concerns about high standards, sustainability and animal care."

Bobby Matheson vice-president of advocacy, updated attendees on the status of DFC's Expert Working Group on Feed Supplementation in Dairy and the recent effects that media coverage on palm fat supplementation has had on our industry.

"Trust in dairy farmers has been maintained, as well as our butter sales," said Matheson. The working group is reviewing existing literature, and additional analysis is being done on milk and butter. A final report is expected in early fall 2021.



With a federal election looming, Chief Operating Officer Paula Dunlop tackled a question related to compensation for CUSMA.

"All parties with seats in the House of Commons have publicly supported full and fair compensation to dairy farmers," Dunlop said. "It's really important that we continue engaging in discussions with government, but also remind them, especially in the context of a possible election, of [their] commitment to dairy producers. The executive team thanks dairy farmers for their engaging questions, and for joining DFC to learn more about the issues affecting the direction and future of the dairy industry."



Innovative business models putting biodigesters within reach for the average farmer



Biomethanization: the Warwick example

“About three or four years ago, agricultural biomethanization was identified as one of the most interesting projects,” says Josée Chicoine, director of agrifood development at Coop Carbone, a non-profit solidarity cooperative with a mission to act on climate change through collaboration. “It is one of the easiest and quickest [ways] to reduce greenhouse gases from dairy production.”

Biodigesters can be compared to the stomach of a human, or cow, whereby food or food waste is digested by bacteria, and then gets converted into biogas. “This biogas is made up of about 60 to 65 per cent methane,” Chicoine says. The gas is then purified to upwards of 99 per cent methane, “which is the standard for inputs into the Énergir gas network – the main gas distributor in Quebec.”

Coop Carbone helped create the Agri-Énergie Coop which is located 10 kilometers from a natural gas line in the most significant dairy region of Quebec, halfway between Montreal and Quebec City. By creating a central system made up of 12 agricultural producers and one cheese producer, the Agri-Énergie Warwick cooperative became owner of Coop Carbone’s biomethanization complex. The goal of the project was to put producers at its heart. “So, we identified and approached producers in the area and convinced them of its merits,” says Chicoine. “In other words, we take their manure, and then the output is returned to them.”

Some farmers Coop Carbone approached were already interested in biomethanization but were unable to implement it on their farms, due to the low price of hydro electricity energy in Canada and the significant investment costs related to this kind of project.

From manure to electricity

“I’ve always liked the concept of being able to produce power with a waste product on farm,” says Korb Whale, dairy producer at Clovermead Farms in Alma, Ontario. Whale invested more than \$2 million for the initial capital on his anaerobic biodigester after the Canadian government announced its Green Energy Act in 2000. “Unfortunately, we’re not near a natural gas line that would allow us to produce renewable natural gas,” says Whale, “[but] we were lucky enough to get a contract [to sell energy back to the grid].”

Whale’s digester takes in about 8,000 tons a year of food waste from local producers and processors, in addition to about 10 tonnes of his own cows’ manure. What’s more, Clovermead is able to charge these companies a fee to off-load their food waste at his farm while at the same time lowering his own carbon footprint.

“We’re reducing our greenhouse gas waste by almost 95 per cent,” says Whale.

Canada’s electricity is fairly green already, but we need to make the rest of our energy sources more sustainable, says Chicoine. “I think there’s room for new models, new concepts, so that other sources of energy are green as well.”

Farmers often talk about the three pillars of sustainability – economics, environment and community – but Whale would like to add a fourth pillar. “I think that’s family,” Whale says. “Most of our farms are multi-generational, and I am making decisions today that won’t necessarily pay off in my lifetime, but hopefully the next generation will be able to profit and carry that on for many generations to come.”



“I think that’s one of the exciting things about anaerobic digestion in general, the circular nature of that economy. We’re producing food that we send to the cities of the processors to make food for people, the waste from that food comes back to our digester, creates electricity, creates heat, creates fertilizer and it creates bedding so that loop gets completed. It’s a nice feeling as a farmer that makes us feel good so we can produce food.”



Innovation, sustainability and diversification key to dairy's future: CEO Annette Verschuren

Sustainability was the theme throughout the 2021 Dairy Farmers of Canada Annual General Meeting. CEO Jacques Lefebvre sat down with Annette Verschuren, Chair and CEO of NRStor Inc., for a 'fireside chat' on how innovation and diversification will drive farming trends related to environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

"Sustainability and innovation are real themes in my life," Verschuren told Lefebvre.

Verschuren is former president and co-owner of Michaels Canada, former president of The Home Depot Canada and Asia, and is currently CEO of NRStor Inc. a leader in energy storage development. Among other organizations, she sits on the board of Saputo Inc. and is chair of Sustainable Development Technology Canada. Verschuren's wealth of expertise across many fields has made her one of the most accomplished businesswomen in Canada.

Verschuren brought more first-hand knowledge to dairy. Growing up on the family farm in Cape Breton, she saw how her father worked to increase productivity to reduce costs. "Understanding the benefits of the land really has influenced my life."

Urging dairy farmers to focus on innovation to meet the trends of sustainability and revenue diversification, Verschuren sees a lot of opportunity. "What's really cool about Canadian farmers is they are some of the most innovative farmers in the world."

Verschuren told Lefebvre how she thinks Canadian dairy farmers could take advantage of new opportunities. "Canada is a leader in cleantech she said. "We have 10 of the top 100 companies in the world." Verschuren sees a lot of promise in turning "what we see as waste into energy and new products."

Verschuren anticipates a future where rural landowners work together to expand renewable energy. "Clusters of farms building microgrids, with solar or wind with battery technology to serve a group," she said.

Diversification through innovation

The broader trend of diversifying will become necessary for dairy farms in the future, said Verschuren. "I would be really constantly looking at different revenue streams... ways to make your product more attractive to the marketplace," she said. A2 is an example of a milk product that is also very attractive."

Like all industries, Verschuren says that dairy's success will be in its ability to respond to changes, listen to what the customer is saying, and creatively diversify the business. "What I've seen in the last 25 years in terms of change happening, it's happening faster. It's the digitalization of the world," she said.

The biggest barrier is financial, and Verschuren offered some advice to DFC. "I hope Dairy Farmers of Canada finds ways to collaborate to test some of this innovation on a collective basis," she said. "There are risks associated with a new technology... and until the markets developed, you can't get those costs down easily."

Verschuren is very optimistic about the future of dairy farming. "If I were a young woman, I would be so excited about the opportunity I see in farming because I think there's so much growth and opportunity in innovation."

Dairy producers ready to embrace farmer-led change

The AGM closed with an interactive strategic planning session led by DFC CEO Jacques Lefebvre, where dairy farmers offered their input on a variety of issues. Dairy farmers recognized the need to do more to improve sustainability and communicated an openness to diversifying revenue streams as a part of that effort.

The respondents were especially united on their desire for advancements to happen on their terms: 75 per cent agreed that they need to educate people about their current and planned future efforts to avoid having regulations imposed on them by the government. This result echoed the comments from early career farmers shared earlier, who noted that farmers are best-equipped to guide meaningful change in their practices themselves.

The session is an important part of DFC's annual strategic planning process, as it gives dairy farmers an opportunity to provide feedback directly to the organization and their peers. As such, DFC will incorporate the insights gleaned from the session into its future planning.

DairyExpress+

Get updates from Dairy Farmers of Canada on current affairs, frequently asked questions and more, all at your fingertips! Download the **DairyExpress+** app today on iOS or Android!

