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A VALUED SYSTEM

Canadian dairy farmers need only look abroad to better appreciate mechanism that allows them to earn fair return for their labour and enables thriving industry.

Imagine not having a market to sell your milk. Dairy farmers in New York, Pennsylvania and Vermont were facing this grim possibility before Dairy Farmers of America (DFA), a national co-operative, decided to enter into a six-month agreement with the National Farmers Organization (NFO). This means the 180 or so dairy farmers in those regions who are members of NFO have a temporary reprieve from worrying about having a place to sell their milk after Dec. 1.

According to an article by Jacqui Fatka from Feedstuffs, for the last 15 years, NFO had contracted with DFA’s Dairy Marketing Services (DMS) in New England to sell its members’ milk. In late 2016, DMS issued a 12-month notice of termination to NFO in the northeast part of the country. In the article, DMS spokesperson Jennifer Huson explained for the last several years, DMS has been working through unprecedented marketing dynamics in the region.

“As these conditions continue to challenge our milk marketing systems, we have been forced to evaluate our business model and make some difficult decisions, including how we work with co-operatives to market milk on their behalf. In situations where there is no longer processing capacity in the region, we have been forced to work with those co-operatives to terminate contracts,” Huson is quoted in the article.

Another article entitled Northeast struggling for profits in overwhelmed milk market by Charlene M. Shupp Espenshade, said earlier this year Pennsylvania and New York dairy farmers were struggling to find profits while waiting for supply and demand to come back into balance in the northeast dairy market. The article cited statistics from Farm Credit East’s Northeast Dairy Farm Summary, which found the average milk price in the northeast in 2016 was US$16.85 per hundredweight (equivalent to C$49.27 per hectolitre). Ag Choice Farm Credit’s Dairy Industry Outlook report predicted a gross milk price of US$18.50 per hundredweight (C$54.09 per hl) for 2017 and slightly higher wages at US$19 (C$55.55 per hl) for 2018. The article also pointed out many farms are expected to have to borrow money to recapitalize their operations, while debt per cow is likely to increase.

When you think about this situation, and what dairy farmers in Wisconsin and Minnesota faced earlier last year after major processor Grassland Dairy Products Inc. notified them it would stop taking their milk after 30 days, it makes you keenly aware of the benefits and stability the supply management system offers to Canadian dairy farmers and their families, as well as processors. Yes, you’ve heard many times about the value of this system, which offers you fair returns for your labour, and a competitive market in which processors can innovate and thrive, but the message bears repeating over and over again. It wasn’t that long ago, DFO decided to take the lead and implement an ingredients strategy to make skim solids competitive and encourage investment in a modern ingredient infrastructure to process more milk. This bold move later led to industry collaboration to implement a national ingredients strategy, which has so far resulted in investments in Ontario and Manitoba and, hopefully, other provinces. In today’s marketplace, having a flexible and adaptable system is crucial to enable it to operate efficiently in the long term.

Supply management works—for the entire dairy industry and, most importantly, Canadian consumers. Why is that? It offers consumers a variety of dairy products, keeps prices stable, requires no government assistance, builds rural communities and, despite what some critics might say, allows a fair amount of dairy product imports tariff-free. In fact, we know Canada’s border is quite open when, in 2016, Canada imported more than double what other countries, such as the U.S., permit.

Government support for this system is stronger than it’s ever been. Both Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Jeff Leal and Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne have recently stated they will continue to defend Canada’s supply-managed sector (more on these recent statements can be found on pages 28 and 29). When you have that kind of backing, and an industry that is both thriving and growing, you realize there is much for which to be thankful.

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Looking Forward to Opportunities in 2018

The new year is always exciting for me. Just like a fresh snow fall, we can start with a new clean sheet to look over the horizon. There is no doubt 2017 was a big year. We had more than 10 per cent quota increase. We saw changes on the trade front that have left some uncertainty and require ongoing monitoring. We continue to have tremendous growth in demand for products, such as cheese, butter and cream, and are witnessing massive processor investment. We know we will need to continue to respond to market demand and meet requirements by filling our quota.

In 2018, Dairy Farmers of Ontario (DFO) will also be assuming responsibility for developing a promotion program. This is no simple task and one the board identified needs to be done right—not in haste. After significant consultation and deliberation, the board instructed staff to create DFO programs with the goal of attaining measurable, sustainable growth, as well as have greater accountability for the use of producers’ money and, therefore, greater effectiveness.

DFO’s board realized this was a significant decision and it would take time to develop and implement an effective program. To assist, the board established an industry committee to provide advice and guidance on how best to allocate and invest marketing and promotion dollars. The primary principle is all activities should be advanced with a view to “growing the market.” Simply stated, it needs to be transparent and accountable because producers have every right to know their money is being spent wisely. It does not mean we can share business and confidential information, but it does mean programs will be developed with measurable goals and objectives to identify the effectiveness of how promotion dollars are used.

DFO will work with and listen to supply chain and industry stakeholders, including Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC). It’s important we work with all industry partners who are trying to sell and promote dairy. DFO firmly believes together we are stronger and will grow markets. For instance, processors know their products and their customers, so we are driven to work with them in an effort to sell more dairy products. For DFO, we see that as a true win-win scenario.

It will take time since all new approaches and strategies must be developed under this new mandate. However, I can share going forward, staff have been directed to develop DFO programs with the immediate priorities of developing a milk calendar, continuing to promote dairy in schools through the elementary school milk program and dairy education program, and working with our dairy producer committees to continue programs.

Our key objectives include working with the food chain, which means co-ordinating with industry partners in advance. This means working with processors to identify what we can do to support them in the development of programs, rather than design programs for them, continue to promote the importance of dairy and its nutrient, and continue with vital dairy research.

This is a very exciting time for all of us, and we look forward to these new opportunities to continue to grow. The key objective is to use the money as effectively as possible to grow the dairy market in a sustainable way that would translate into increased production at the farm level.

À la Recherche de Nouvelles Possibilités pour 2018

L’arrivée de la nouvelle année est toujours un grand événement pour moi. Comme une couche de neige fraîche immaculée, c’est une page blanche qui s’étend jusqu’à l’horizon. Assurément, 2017 a été une grande année. Nos quotas ont augmenté de plus de 10 %. Les marchés ont connu des changements qui ont apporté une certaine incertitude et qu’il est nécessaire de continuer à surveiller. La demande pour nos produits, comme le fromage, le beurre et la crème, continue sa croissance formidable et engendre des investissements massifs en transformation. Nous savions qu’il nous faudra continuer à réagir à la demande du marché et à respecter les exigences en matière de quotas.

En 2018, les Dairy Farmers of Ontario (DFO) endosseront également la responsabilité de développer un programme de promotion. Il ne s’agit pas d’une tâche facile et fait partie de ces missions que le conseil d’administration doit effectuer correctement, pas dans l’urgence. Après une consultation et une délibération intenses, le conseil d’administration a enjoint au personnel de créer des programmes pour les DFO dont l’objectif est d’atteindre une croissance mesurable et durable, ainsi qu’une meilleure responsabilité en matière d’utilisation de l’argent des producteurs, et par conséquent une meilleure efficacité.

Le conseil d’administration des DFO a réalisé qu’il s’agissait d’une décision importante et que du temps serait nécessaire pour développer et mettre en place un programme efficace. Afin d’offrir un soutien, le conseil d’administration a mis en place un comité de l’industrie prodiguant des conseils et des instructions sur la meilleure manière de répartir et d’investir les fonds destinés au marketing et à la publicité. Le principe directeur est l’idée selon laquelle toutes les activités doivent être menées dans le but de « faire croître le marché ». En termes plus simples, il doit être transparent et responsable, car les producteurs ont pleinement le droit de savoir que leur argent est dépensé sagement. Ceci ne signifie pas que nous pouvons partager des renseignements d’affaires et confidentiels, mais que les programmes seront développés avec des buts et objectifs mesurables afin d’identifier l’efficacité et la manière de dépenser l’argent publicitaire.

Les DFO travailleront avec la chaîne alimentaire et les partenaires de l’industrie, notamment les Producteurs laitiers du Canada (PLC), et tiendront compte de leurs conseils. Il est important que nous travaillons avec tous les partenaires de l’industrie qui cherchent à vendre et à promouvoir les produits laitiers. Les DFO sont fermement convaincus qu’ensemble, nous sommes plus forts et que nous ferons croître les marchés. Par exemple, les transformateurs connaissent leurs produits et leurs clients. Nous sommes donc amenés à travailler avec eux dans un effort pour vendre plus de produits laitiers. Nous voyons ceci comme un véritable scénario gagnant-gagnant pour les DFO.

Ceci prendra du temps, car de nouvelles approches et stratégies doivent être développées en vertu de ce nouveau mandat. Néanmoins, je peux vous indiquer que le personnel a reçu pour instruction de développer des programmes pour les DFO avec une priorité immédiate donnée à la création d’un Calendrier du lait, à la poursuite de la promotion des produits laitiers dans les écoles grâce au programme de lait dans les écoles primaires et au programme d’éducation sur les produits laitiers, ainsi qu’au travail avec nos comités de producteurs laitiers afin de poursuivre les programmes.

Nos objectifs principaux comprennent un travail avec la chaîne alimentaire, ce qui implique de coordonner en avance avec les partenaires de l’industrie. Ceci signifie travailler avec les transformateurs afin d’identifier ce que nous pouvons faire pour les soutenir dans le développement de leurs programmes au lieu de concevoir les programmes à leur place, continuer à promouvoir l’importance des produits laitiers et de leurs nutriments et poursuivre la recherche cruciale sur les produits laitiers.

C’est un moment grandiose pour nous tous et nous avons hâte de voir ces nouvelles possibilités continuer à se développer. L’objectif principal est d’utiliser les fonds aussi efficacement que possible pour faire croître le marché des produits laitiers d’une manière durable, ce qui se traduira en une production accrue pour les fermes.
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Increasing cow throughput with the Double Grabber.
GLOBAL DAIRY MARKET TRENDS
Ontario dairy processors learn about potential export opportunities and how best to market their products

Dairy Farmers of Ontario (DFO) recently completed an in-depth study on market development to review the feasibility of helping new and existing Ontario dairy processors access potential markets and develop new products, as well as DFO research and marketing staff get the latest updates on global innovation and industry trends. The project was partially-funded by Growing Forward 2 (GF2), a federal-provincial-territorial initiative.

Ontario dairy processors looking to expand their businesses on a global scale had the opportunity to attend and exhibit at Gulfood 2017, an annual food and beverage exhibition in the United Arab Emirates, to see how dairy products are marketed around the world and what new trends are emerging in dairy product development. Gulffood is focused on the increasingly important Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, which has become the hotbed of innovation and top consumer trends. MENA region countries are experiencing rapid expansion of their dairy markets. Milk, yogurt, cream, cheese, butter and ice cream constitute the largest part of this region’s diets. The second-largest dairy-importing region in the world, MENA countries rely heavily on dairy imports as raw materials for production.

As part of the study, DFO’s research and market development manager Dr. Bita Farhang also attended ANUGA, the largest trade fair in the world, in Cologne, Germany, in October 2017 to further explore dairy innovation and market trends. ANUGA attracts more than 7,400 exhibitors from 107 countries over a five-day period.

EXAMINING EXPORT OPPORTUNITIES
There were plenty of opportunities for the processor group and DFO research and marketing staff to meet with potential buyers at each show to discuss the possibility of exporting Ontario dairy products and ingredients to the various regions.

What was clearly evident at both shows is innovation has become the driving force in the dairy sector. Showcasing healthy foods was a prominent theme. Growing consumer health and environmental awareness has also put the spotlight on foods deemed natural and organic, two markets expected to expand in the coming year. Foods labelled as “clean” with no additives or preservatives, with healthier formulations and shorter ingredient lists were on display throughout the shows.

Along with healthy and clean products, there is a push for high-protein foods driven mainly by health-conscious consumers and athletes. Products displayed at Gulfood show there is a growing market for dairy products with high protein content that target more active consumers, particularly women and teens. Exhibitors were also looking to target consumers interested in specific diets, such as gluten- and lactose-free.

Another key trend observed were products promoting various ethical standards. For instance, several dairy products featured grass-fed claims on their labels. And when it came to cultural foods, there was no shortage in variety, including cheeses incorporating ethnic ingredients, Farhang says.

“The connected world has led consumers of all ages to become more knowledgeable of other cultures,” she says. Increased exposure to ethnic foods means consumers have become used to different flavors and taste experiences, which has in turn driven demand for more gourmet foods, including fine cheeses, she adds.

Further trends observed at the tradeshows include the rise of kosher foods and premium food offerings, as well as innovative products, including hard feta cheese, Swiss raclette that can be prepared in the oven or microwave, creative ready-to-go packaging, such as spoon-in-lid dairy product containers, single-serve butter, new cheesecake flavors, and kefir made with stevia.

NEXT STEPS
In addition to information gleaned on export opportunities at Gulfood and ANUGA, DFO research and marketing staff will use their observations from both shows to develop new programs to continue supporting innovation and growth in Canadian dairy product manufacturing. Farhang says, adding DFO research and marketing staff will likely visit ANUGA again to better determine the viability of Ontario dairy processors exhibiting in that show in the future.

While Ontario dairy processors came back from Gulfood with a renewed sense of understanding of how best to position and market Ontario dairy products to Canadian consumers, there still exist potential barriers to market Canadian dairy products to a global audience, such as product perishability, product desirability, establishing distribution channels and pricing, Farhang adds.

“The observations made and lessons learned from attending Gulfood and ANUGA will help DFO develop an export strategy for the future in order to further grow the Canadian dairy market,” she says.

INNOVATIVE flavors are increasingly being incorporated into cheeses to create novel varieties and taste experiences. Some of these flavors are drawn from cultural and ethnic cuisines, which have grown in popularity around the world.
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Ontario is investing up to $24 million in Canada Royal Milk ULC—a subsidiary of Feihe International—to establish the first $225-million baby formula production facility in Kingston, Ont.

“This investment provides a tremendous economic opportunity for Kingston, surrounding rural areas and our farming community,” says Sophie Kiwala, member of provincial parliament for Kingston and the Islands. “With the creation of 277 excellent jobs and many more indirect jobs, this investment will support families and continue to demonstrate why Kingston is the place where history and innovation thrive.”

Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne met with Feihe International representatives in November in Beijing, China, to discuss the company’s plans to build its first infant formula plant outside the country. Feihe International produces, packages and distributes milk powder and related products in China.

The provincial support comes from Ontario’s Jobs and Prosperity Fund, which allows the company to purchase and install innovative, intelligent processing and packaging equipment for the new Kingston facility, helping boost productivity and local production. Once operational in 2020, the plant will require significant volumes of milk, which will support the growth of Ontario’s dairy cow and goat sectors.

“We’re excited to welcome Feihe International to Ontario,” says Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Jeff Leal. “By partnering with food processing companies, such as Feihe International, we are not only supporting growth in Ontario’s agri-food sector but are helping boost our province’s economy.”

With more than 55 years of experience, Feihe International is China’s largest domestic infant formula company and one of the world’s leading experts in infant formula technology, innovation, nutrition, research and development.

“I want to thank Ontario for their support,” says Youbin Leng, chair of Feihe International. “We look forward to this historic project and bringing our experience in infant formula to Canada.”

The Jobs and Prosperity Fund supports food, beverage and bio-product manufacturing projects that help create and retain jobs, increase domestic and export market access and enhance innovation and productivity.

Ontario’s agri-food sector supports more than 800,000 jobs and contributes more than $37 billion toward the province’s gross domestic product.

Ontario Farmers of Ontario (DFO), along with Ontario agriculture organizations, has created a response team to increase awareness and educate farmers about best management practices for spreading manure during winter months.

The Timing Matters Peer Response Team, comprising representatives from participating commodity groups, will be working with farmers who have been observed by Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) field staff to spread manure on frozen or snow-covered ground.

Under the Nutrient Management Act, frozen ground is defined when there is at least a five-centimetre layer of frozen moisture in the top 15 cm of soil. Soil is snow-covered when it has a layer of snow with an average minimum depth of five cm.

OMAFRA field staff will be monitoring winter applications of manure during winter months. If they observe manure spreading at the wrong time, they will record the information and determine if followup with the response team is necessary. If they determine followup is warranted, OMAFRA will contact DFO. A field services representative will help individual farmers develop practical solutions for nutrient use and reduce the environmental impact on local creeks, rivers and lakes.

Some of the risks to winter application are:
- Nutrients are less likely to absorb into frozen soil;
- Nutrients on frozen or snow-covered soil ground will move with surface water, even on fields with a gentle slope;
- Snow melt often occurs with rainfall, resulting in more runoff;
- The greatest risk for nutrient loss is when application occurs within 72 hours of a significant rainfall on frozen or snow-covered ground or snow melt conditions.

Spreading manure on frozen or snow-covered ground is a highly visible practice undertaken by a small number of producers. The practice may impact the environment and create a negative image for agriculture. Negative public reactions could drive regulations or rule changes that affect everyone’s competitiveness.

Look for more information in future DFO communications.
Middlesex County dairy farmer Andrew Campbell has received the Leaders in Innovation Award for his work in helping raise awareness about the journey from farm to table through social media.

“When we think of innovation, we usually think of products or a new technological achievement, but recognizing communication can be innovative is something I am honoured to be included in,” Campbell says about receiving the accolade during the 11th annual Premier’s Awards for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence in December.

Campbell, owner of Fresh Air Media, received the award for this Dinner Starts Here social media campaign, which aimed to help urban consumers learn more about where their food comes from and how it’s produced.

“The idea came late last year as a way to share stuff around our farm,” Campbell says about the project. “But knowing there are lots of different operations around the country, I thought it might be good to highlight them.”

Armed with a smartphone, microphone and drone, Campbell created videos of different farms each week to share on social media, taking his viewers on an interactive journey through barns and fields and showcasing everything from robotic milking machines to greenhouse pepper operations.

The project aimed to spark important conversations using modern technology, allowing urban Ontarians to discuss food production, animal welfare and environmental sustainability.

Campbell says by creating a weekly video of different farms across Canada, he wanted consumers to get a glimpse of farmers’ commitment to producing quality food.

“I hoped consumers would be comforted knowing farmers, no matter where they are or what they’re producing, have the same commitment to the environment, animals and their communities,” Campbell says.

Along with the Leaders in Innovation Award, Campbell has also been a recipient of Farm and Food Care’s Champion Award in 2016, as well as AdFarm’s AgCatalyst Award in 2015. His farm was also inducted into the Purina Leader’s Council in 2016.
DAIRY FARMERS OF ONTARIO POLICY UPDATE:

In December 2017, Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s (DFO) board approved changes to the Every Day Pickup Policy.

Effective March 1, 2018, the timing for getting on and off the Everyday Pickup Program will be limited to twice per month, on the first and 15th day. For example, requests submitted between Sept. 1 and 15 will go on the program Oct. 1. Requests submitted between Sept. 16 and 30 will go on the program Oct. 15.

Application forms to get on and off the program are available through DFO’s field services representatives.

Currently, requests for everyday pickup are submitted on an ad hoc basis forcing transporters to redo their routes as often as five or six times per month. The change to the policy was made to minimize the amount of times transporters have to redo their pickup routes on a monthly basis.

NOTICE: To keep Ontario dairy producers and other industry sectors informed, Dairy Farmers of Ontario publishes changes to its regulations. Complete regulations are available on DFO’s website at www.milk.org.

DFO Regulation 01/18 replaces DFO Regulation 15/17 and was made to adjust the price of Special Milk Classes as a result of a CDC announcement, effective Jan. 1, 2018 as follows:

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DAIRY FARMERS OF ONTARIO

Ralph Dietrich, Chair

Ryan Mills, Secretary

DAIRY FARMERS OF ONTARIO

2018 MILK CALENDAR OFFERS TWIST TO CLASSIC RECIPES

The 2018 milk calendar contains seasonal recipes for the entire year—from winter comfort food and summer barbeques to delicious breakfasts, desserts and everything in between. Recipes, such as oven-roasted cauliflower soup, roasted winter squash lentil and greens salad, and super easy chicken parm, will surprise and delight parents and kids alike.

Visit www.milkcalendar.ca to discover more recipes and helpful monthly demonstration videos. A French copy of the calendar can also be ordered online.

2018 MILK calendars feature 19 new, nutritious, easy-to-make recipes and insightful cooking tips.

Today more than ever, Canadians are looking to nourish themselves and their families with hand-crafted, healthy recipes that make the most of local, seasonal offerings. Dairy Farmers of Canada’s milk calendar is answering this call with its 41st edition, packed with delicious recipes highlighting 100 per cent Canadian dairy, along with food pairings that promise to please the whole family.

Featuring 19 new, nutritious, easy-to-make recipes and insightful cooking tips, the 2018 milk calendar was distributed for free to almost two million homes across Ontario and Atlantic Canada in November.

“We’re so pleased to share new recipes that showcase how easy it is to prepare homemade dishes that include the goodness of Canadian milk,” says Heather Trim, an accomplished food writer and recipe developer who created the mouth-watering, wholesome recipes for the milk calendar. “These recipes truly pack a one-two punch—not only do they champion some of the best foods Canada has to share, they nourish our families from the inside out. Using the calendar is the perfect way to get the whole family excited about cooking, encouraging healthy eating habits while spending quality time together.”
CHANGES TO INCOME SPRINKLING RULES A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

The Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) is pleased to see Finance Canada has considered the feedback contributed by CFA and other farm groups in regard to the Tax Fairness proposals, and has proposed changes that have addressed a number of key concerns Canadian farm businesses have identified.

Since the government announced these proposed rules, CFA has raised concerns with potential consequences to intergenerational farm transfers, and is pleased to see capital gains from qualified farm property would be excluded from Tax on Split Income.

“This announcement provides greater clarity on income sprinkling, and CFA looks forward to continued engagement with Finance Canada and the Canada Revenue Agency to ensure application of the rules is streamlined, clearly communicated and applied in a clear, objective fashion for all businesses,” says CFA president Ron Bonnett.

CFA is also pleased to see further clarification and definition on the contributions required for both capital and labour, and looks forward to further dialogue with government officials to ensure the diverse contributions of farm family members are adequately accounted for.

“I believe the progress we’ve seen on this front, since the initial announcement in July, shows collaboration and communication are critical for effective policy-making,” Bonnett says. “We believe these changes are important for shaping Canada’s tax policy to enable the continued success of family farms in Canada, including the next generation of young farmers.”

CFA awaits draft legislation and will fully analyze the proposed changes once a bill is introduced in Parliament. CFA maintains concerns the implementation timelines are very tight and don’t give businesses much time to adapt. Farm leaders look forward to working with Finance Canada to ensure any remaining issues are adequately addressed.

“The Canadian government has set a huge goal of increasing agriculture exports to $75 billion by 2025,” Bonnett says. “We need to ensure we get policies right to meet these ambitious growth targets. By continuing to work together, we can make Canada and Canadian food a true powerhouse in terms of feeding the world’s growing population.”

DAIRY RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM 2018

Canadian dairy producers, stakeholders and professionals working in the dairy sector are invited to the 2018 Dairy Research Symposium: Transferring Results for Action.

The event, which will take place on Feb. 9 at the Fairmont Château Laurier in Ottawa, Ont., will feature new and emerging research results related to production, human nutrition and health, and the tools that have been developed from the projects in the Dairy Research Cluster 2 (2013-2018).

Some of the topics discussed include genetics and genomics, new science for dairy sustainability, and the health benefits of dairy products, such as prevention of Type 2 diabetes, blood glucose control and bone health.

Participants will also be divided into three groups to take part in workshops to address issues, such as the cost of mastitis and emerging strategies for prevention, benchmarking dairy cattle comfort and new practices for better calf care, and lessons learned when it comes to factors affecting health, productivity and welfare in automatic milking systems.
**WINTERKILL FROM MANURE APPLICATION**

By Christine Brown, nutrient management lead for field crops at the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

Manure applied to wheat crops or forage crops can be an excellent option but not in winter on frozen soils.

Manure application in winter should not be part of a manure management plan. Rather, it should be part of a contingency plan because we all know that weather happens. Frequent rain and a late corn harvest are taxing manure storage capacities on many farms. Contingency plans are essential for manure that must be applied in less than ideal conditions. A forage or wheat field can be an ideal site for contingency plan manure application because compaction should not be an issue, and the soil cover would help prevent nutrient runoff and erosion. Forage or wheat fields are ideal for those reasons. However, winterkill becomes a much greater risk especially with application of liquid manure because besides the common risks that include compaction from wheel traffic and crown damage, manure contains salts.

**SALT DAMAGE**

Salinization, the concentration of salt in the root zone, is not an issue in Ontario. Ample precipitation and drainage leaches the salts through the soil profile. However, when the soil is frozen, infiltration can’t occur. Salts in manure can then turn deadly. High sodium also has a negative effect on soil structure, making the soil more susceptible to crusting and further decreasing the capacity for infiltration.

Livestock manure contains many salts, including ammonium, calcium, magnesium, potassium, and sodium. When accrued, they can be significant. Salt content varies from farm to farm based on livestock species, diet formulation and even the salt in the drinking water. Many manure analyses report total salts or electrical conductivity (EC) to reflect the accumulated salts. A typical hog manure (as applied basis) can have about 20 milliS/m (mS/cm) or about 125 pounds of total salts per 1,000 gallons. Dairy manure average is 14 mS/cm or about 90 lbs/1,000 gallons. Sodium and magnesium chloride have a working temperature to about -15°C, potassium chloride to -4°C, while calcium chloride can work to about -23°C.

When manure is applied on frozen or snow-covered soils, the salts melt the snow and ice at soil surface. The layer below may still be frozen, preventing infiltration. The melted, saturated layer is high in salts, toxic to roots, and more prone to erosion and runoff, and more susceptible to frost heaving. All these risks are increased where manure with high EC or total salt contents has been applied.

**CONTINGENCY PLAN OPTIONS**

When contingency plan applications become necessary during the winter season, options include:

- Late summer application to forage crops after the final cut or at the beginning of the critical harvest period;
- Temporary storage at a neighbouring storage that has extra capacity;
- Application to forage fields or cover crops that will be tilled or killed;
- Application to the most level harvested fields, preferably with residue still present, furthest away from surface water where application does not occur through water runs or “flow paths.”

Sampling manure at the time of application should be standard practice. A manure analysis that includes total salts will help determine the level of risk if contingency application in winter is a last resort.
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SOUTHWESTERN ONTARIO DAIRY SYMPOSIUM

Developed for producers, by producers through milk committees across southwestern Ontario

Dairy producers are invited to attend the 35th annual Southwestern Ontario Dairy Symposium, scheduled to take place in Woodstock, Ont., on Feb. 22.

One of the main speakers includes Kathleen Sullivan from Ottawa, Ont., who is a public affairs practitioner with expertise in domestic agriculture and trade policy. Sullivan will explain the origins and impact of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), as well as explore potential outcomes from NAFTA renegotiations.

“I believe it is critical for the agriculture community to participate in the policy discussions that impact their families and their businesses,” Sullivan says. “My goal is to take a lot of discussion about NAFTA and difficult topics and explain them in ways that are concrete and understandable so producers can follow the issues and join the discussions.”

Sullivan has extensive experience speaking at industry conferences and events on complex and topical agriculture and trade policy issues.

Along with Sullivan, this year’s symposium will also include the Speak Your Mind session, as well as Foods from our Farms.

The symposium is a not-for-profit event, developed for producers, by producers through milk committees across southwestern Ontario. Registration is $20 at the door.

For more information, follow @ONDairySymposium on Twitter, search ONDairySymposium on Facebook, or visit www.dairysymposium.com.

CANWEST DHI HERD MANAGEMENT CONFERENCE

Registration is now open for CanWest DHI’s 2018 herd management conference.

The conference will take place on Jan. 16 at the Community Centre in Crysler, Ont., Jan. 17 at the Memorial Hall in Tavistock, Ont., and Jan. 18 at the PMD Arena in Drayton, Ont.

The event will feature keynote speaker Dr. Matt Lucy, professor of animal science at the University of Missouri, who is known for his extensive research and extension work on reproductive physiology of high-producing dairy cows. Lucy will discuss what causes embryonic loss and how to manage it, as well as strategies to improve herd conception rate and pregnancy risk.

Other speakers include Devin Brennan from Ocresco and Associates Inc., who will discuss profitable herd management practices with a focus on financial efficiencies, and Jeff and Dylan Stewardson from Stewardson Dairy in Thedford, Ont., who will discuss protocols and management practices they apply on their dairy farm.

The conference costs $25 per person for those who register by Jan. 9. After that date, registration is $35 per person. The price also includes lunch. To register, call 1-800-549-4373 or email sbond@canwestdhi.com.

For more information, visit www.canwestdhi.com.

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DID YOU KNOW?
Dairy Farmers of Ontario is on social media. Check out its Twitter channels @DairyOntario and @OntarioMilk, as well as its Facebook page at /OntarioDairy and Instagram @dairyfarmersont.
ALBERTA MILK’S NEW EXECUTIVE

Following Alberta Milk’s annual general meeting on Nov. 24, the board chose its new executive for 2017-18. Tom Kootstra will serve as chair, Albert Kamps as first vice-chair, and Stuart Boeve as second vice-chair. The directors include Pieter Iff, Gert Schrijver, Miranda Verhoef, Greg Debbink, Lorrie Jespersen, Gezinus Martens, Martin Van Diemen and Conrad Van Hierden. Leaving the board are Heini Hehil, Klaas Vander Veen and Jim Towle.

FARM MANAGEMENT ENTHUSIASTS GATHERED IN OTTAWA TO SHOWCASE EXCELLENCE

Farm Management Canada (FMC) held its annual national Agricultural Excellence Conference in Ottawa, Ont., in November and welcomed more than 240 farm management enthusiasts from across the country.

The theme, Farming for our future: Canada’s 150th, focused on strategies to help Canada’s farmers continue to thrive for years to come. Industry experts provided unique insights into agricultural trends across Canada and around the world, as well as best management practices farmers can use to confront change with confidence and seize opportunity.

From farmers and ranchers to advisers, consultants, academia, government, private industry and associations, the conference welcomed a diverse group of industry stakeholders who provided incredible energy and engagement.

In addition to hearing from expert speakers on today’s hot topics, the conference provided unique interactive learning sessions, including debate on supply management, a panel discussion on the risks farm families face, the Bridging the Gap forum and Farm Management Resource Showcase.

Next year’s AgEx conference will take place in November 2018 in Winnipeg, Man.
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2017 code of practice reflects high level of welfare provided to cattle on dairy, veal and dairy-beef farms in Canada

The new Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Veal Cattle has something for all cattle producers, whether starting calves for the veal, dairy or dairy-beef market. There is something to be learned for all, regardless if calves stay on the dairy farm for seven days or seven months.

The new code has recommendations that will improve calf welfare on farms across Canada. Canada’s codes of practice are nationally developed guidelines for the care and handling of farm animals. They serve as the foundation for ensuring farm animals are cared for using sound welfare practices that promote animal health and well-being.

Codes are used as educational tools, reference materials for regulations, and the foundation for industry animal care assessment programs. Based on scientific research, much of the valuable veal calf care information can be applied when raising dairy heifers and starting calves for the dairy-beef market. The previous code—Recommended Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Farm Animals – Veal Calves—was released in 1998. Since that time, the Canadian veal industry has been continually updating its practices as new calf and cattle welfare research was released. As such, the new code represents major advancements in care made in the Canadian veal industry in the past 20 years.

Since 2015, the Canadian Veal Association (CVA) has been working with the National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) and a 17-person code committee comprising veal producers, animal welfare and enforcement representatives, researchers, veterinarians and government representatives. Aiding in their work was a four-person scientific committee with research and veterinary expertise in veal cattle behaviour, health and welfare. A comment period was held in the winter of 2016 to allow the public and other stakeholders to provide input on a draft version of the code.

The code committee worked together well throughout the entire process to get consensus on the science-based recommendations made in the code of practice while incorporating a wide variety of perspectives.

While the old code had the word “calves” in the title, you may notice the new code refers to “cattle.” This is because the new code is more encompassing than the previous code since it covers the entire growing period of milk-fed and grain-fed veal from their start at 100 pounds up to finish around 752 lbs., and includes starting calves for the dairy-beef market.

Dairy feeder calves have been included in the veal cattle code of practice until they are moved from young animal housing and management systems (that more closely resemble veal production rather than cow-calf operations covered in the beef cattle code) into housing and management systems intended for growing and finishing.

The dairy cattle code remains the source of information on the care of dairy calves, including bull calves, while on dairy farms. The care bull calves receive on a dairy farm is essential to their future productivity as veal cattle. As such, some parts of the code include recommendations dairy and veal producers should try to achieve. It is essential all dairy, veal and dairy-beef producers work together to ensure the success of cattle, regardless of the production stream they will enter.

In order to assist producers with implementing the code, Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) developed a veal cattle animal welfare assessment, which is available by contacting VFO. Dairy farmers who raise or finish veal can use this assessment to ensure animal care is in line with requirements of the new code of practice. Even if bull calves leave your farm shortly after birth, the assessment can be helpful in evaluating calf care on your farm and identifying potential areas for improvement that can enhance calf health, welfare and productivity.

“The CVA is pleased to have a new code that will support the sustainability of the Canadian veal industry and the success of our producers,” states veal producer Bob Wynands, who is also CVA president and chair of the code development committee. “Our industry’s participation in the code development process demonstrates our producers’ continued commitment to animal health and welfare, and dedication to responsible animal husbandry.”

The CVA thanks everyone for their contribution, especially Ron Maynard, a Dairy Farmers of Canada director, for insight and guidance on development of the veal code. There are similarities and differences with calf management between the veal, dairy and dairy-beef sectors. The industries are very closely connected and it is important for veal producers to work together with industry partners in the dairy and beef sectors to ensure the betterment of calf welfare on all farms across Canada.

The Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Veal Cattle is available online at http://www.nfacc.ca/codes-of-practice/veal-cattle. To obtain a hard copy, contact VFO at info@livestockalliance.ca or 519-824-2942.

Calf Care Corner delivers the latest information and ideas to help you improve the way calves are raised on your farm. If you have any comments or questions about Calf Care Corner, send an email to info@calfcare.ca.
The Pacific Agriculture Show, is the largest and most important agriculture exhibition in the province of British Columbia.

As the Milk Producer magazine is distributed across Canada, we will be attending this show in support of the dairy farmers in the western provinces.

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Increase milk volume
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HEALTH, SAFETY AND YOUR FARM

There are many steps involved in developing a complete health and safety program, especially on a farm.

A HEALTH and safety commitment statement should contain certain basic components, such as:
- describe employer, supervisor and employee responsibilities.

Health and safety; what does this mean to you and your farm? Does it involve boring training, such as holding one meeting a year, which is never talked about again? Is it merely a legal obligation? Or, perhaps, it’s about someone telling you how to do your job? For most farm owners and their employees, these thoughts often come to mind when the topic of safety training comes up. But following proper health and safety procedures is what ensures everyone gets home to their families at night. Whether you need to orient new workers, are looking to update your existing farm safety literature, or need to conduct an annual review of your safety protocols, having a concise and all-encompassing health and safety program will allow you to be as precautionous and compliant as possible.

Between 2003 and 2012, 92 per cent of the 773 agriculture-related fatalities in Canada were work-related. From those numbers, 65 were animal-related, of which 29 were due to cattle. Of the total fatalities from 2003 to 2012, almost half were due to three machine-related causes: machine run overs, machine rollovers and being pinned or struck by a machine component.

In 2006, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, R.S.S.O 1990, was applied to the agricultural sector, where previously agriculture was exempt. This inclusion has put the focus on health and safety in agriculture, and has increased employer accountability on the farm.

WHERE AND HOW TO START?
Multiple components make up a complete health and safety program. From policies for reporting accidents, safe operating procedures for any task that may pose a hazard to an employee, to your Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System program, all needs to be reviewed and monitored. The commitment statement should contain certain basic components, such as:
- describe employer, supervisor and employee responsibilities.

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COMMITTING TO HEALTH AND SAFETY
The first section of a Workwell audit is centred on your farm’s health and safety policy, also referred to as a health and safety commitment statement. This document is the foundation of your health and safety program, and what guides the reasons you commit to taking part in the process on a daily, weekly and yearly basis. The commitment statement should contain certain basic components, such as:
- describe employer, supervisor and employee responsibilities.
- messaging that states everyone on the farm—no matter their authority level or years of experience—has the same responsibility to protect and participate in contributing to a healthy and safe working environment.
- the commitment the employer holds to health and safety.

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- the commitment the employer holds to health and safety.

DANIELLE PASZTOR is the dairy safety specialist with People Management Group. For more information, visit www.peoplemanagementgroup.com or follow on Twitter @udderlysafe.

People Management Group Inc.
and safety. This is the part you, as a farm owner, should spend the most time on. Ask yourself what will you pledge as your commitment to ensure the well-being of your team members at all times? Make sure to capture this when drafting the statement. According to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, to be effective, a policy statement must:

1. involve senior management and representatives in the preparation of the policy;
2. be seen as consistent with the workplace’s objectives of operating in an efficient and predictable manner;
3. be relevant and appropriate to the nature, scale and Occupational Health and Safety hazards and risk associated with that workplace’s needs (not adopted from another workplace);
4. be accepted as equal in importance to the workplace’s other policy objectives.

Once complete, post the document in a spot your employees regularly access and see daily, such as the lunch room or by the time clock in the barn. You or your farm manager must date and sign the document annually, and review it with staff in order to remain compliant.

THE STAGE IS SET … NOW WHAT?

You’ve now vowed to keep your team safe. You’ve even gone as far as laminated your commitment statement and hung it on the wall for all to see. Are you safe now? Will this prevent your team members from getting sick or injured on the job? Of course it won’t. But it’s a start; visitors to your operation who see your statement will know you take farm safety seriously and so should they.

The next step is to delve deeper into specific responsibilities of the farm owner, supervisors and employees. Watch for the February Farm Safety article, which will talk about what those legal responsibilities entail, and what each person on your farm needs to do in order to comply with all provincial regulations. Over the course of this year, this Farm Safety section will outline the steps you need to follow to create a health and safety program that complies with all applicable laws and keeps your team happy, healthy and safe.
Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) will welcome dairy producer delegates to Ottawa, Ont., in February for the annual policy conference (APC). Under the theme “Together for a healthy future,” dairy producers will gather to ensure Canada’s dairy industry continues to prosper and grow during these challenging times.

The tremendous pressure producers face on trade and government relations issues, including ongoing North American Free Trade Agreement renegotiations, Trans-Pacific Partnership 11 and the position taken by Health Canada on the Healthy Eating Strategy in relation to dairy products, such as front-of-pack labelling, the revision of Canada’s Food Guide, and marketing to kids, makes it critical dairy producers attend the APC. It is more important than ever for producers and stakeholders to work together to defend and promote the industry.

Beginning with lobby day on Feb. 6, pro-

“...over 10 years for show cows and fresh cows...”
— Ysabel Jacobs

“We have been using Udder Comfort™ over 10 years, for our show cows and fresh cows to bring quality and texture to the udder,” says Ysabel Jacobs. She and brother Yan with parents Jean and Marion run Ferme Jacobs, Cap-Santé, QC with longtime employees. They apply Udder Comfort daily at shows and fresh udders after each milking for the first 3 days after calving. “We believe in this product. It really helps our cows and is definitely worth the investment.”

Udder quality is important at Ferme Jacobs, recognized 3 times as Master Breeder and growing in achievements. They are breeding and exhibiting top Holsteins. This includes competitive young cows excelling as 2- and 3-year-olds at the 2016 Royal Agricultural Winter Fair and 2017 World Dairy Expo. Ferme Jacobs earned Premier Breeder at both.
Producers will meet with members of Parliament and senators to voice their concerns. Following the meetings, more than 500 MPs, industry stakeholders and delegates will gather at the legendary dairy reception to network and enjoy delicious Canadian cheeses and wines at the Fairmont Château Laurier. Over the years, MPs have used this reception to get to know producers from their ridings and regions, as well as better understand how issues faced by the sector on a global and national level affect local communities and producers’ livelihoods. This high-level networking event is not to be missed.

During the APC on Feb. 7 and 8, delegates will be updated on the work DFC is doing on their behalf in regard to national partnerships, policy, international trade, communications, government relations, marketing and nutrition. There will also be a discussion on the policy statement, which gives delegates direct input into the vision for DFC’s future policy-related activities that are vitally important for all producers as they face these challenges together. As in previous years, DFC anticipates a Canadian government representative will address delegates. Due to special circumstances, DFC will also present its 2018 budget.

Rounding out the busy week will be the 2018 Dairy Research Symposium on Feb. 9, which will focus on the theme “Transferring results for action.” This symposium, which takes place every two years, is a must for dairy producers, stakeholders and professionals working in the dairy sector and looking for the latest knowledge on dairy production and human nutrition and health research based on projects funded in the second Dairy Research Cluster.

For more information or to see the full annual policy conference schedule, visit http://dfc-events.ca/.

DFC looks forward to hosting all the delegates in February in Ottawa. It is by working together dairy producers will be successful in ensuring a healthy future for Canada.
Recently, the media has focused on tax proposals the finance minister introduced on July 18, 2017. This article will instead focus on legislative changes to the small business deduction introduced much earlier in the March 22, 2016 federal budget.

The small business deduction is a tax reduction for Canadian Controlled Private Corporations (CCPC) for the first $500,000 of active business income. This income is taxed at a combined federal and provincial rate of 15 per cent (Ontario rates for 2017).

Legislative changes limit access to the small business deduction for certain corporate and partnership structures, such as a corporation that provides goods or services to a partnership or corporation with common ownership. These changes have closed perceived gaps in the rules that allowed for unintended multiplication of the small business deduction.

If a person is a member of a partnership and goods or services are provided through a corporation where you were a shareholder (or related to a shareholder), that designated member will no longer be entitled to access the small business deduction for that income.

Similarly, if you are a shareholder of a corporation that provides goods or services to another corporation that you own an interest or are related to any shareholders, the first corporation is not entitled to use the small business deduction for that income. This income is referred to as “specified corporate income.” There is a relieving provision where the company earning specified corporate income can claim its small business deduction but only to the extent the recipient corporation can allocate a portion of its limit.

There is an exception whereby if the income described above is less than 10 per cent of the total income then access to the limit is unaffected.

Let’s look at a farm example. John and Jim are brothers who each own their own farm corporation (JohnCo and JimCo). JohnCo operates a large dairy farm and grows limited cash crops. JimCo operates a large cash crop operation. Every year, JimCo grows certain crops he sells directly to JohnCo for his feed. In addition, JimCo harvests JohnCo’s crops and charges him custom work fees. The income
JimCo receives from JohnCo is approximately 30 per cent of its total revenue each year. Since Jim and John are brothers, their corporations do not deal at arm’s length. As such, under the new rules, the income earned by JimCo from JohnCo is no longer eligible for the small business deduction. The tax rate difference can be significant—approximately 11 per cent using 2017 corporate tax rates.

The above example illustrates the tax penalty for doing business with family members rather than an unrelated third party. If JimCo had sold crops and harvested fields for an unrelated person, that income would still be taxed at the lower small business rates.

Farmers are encouraged to contact their advisers to discuss how these changes may impact their businesses.
The agreement that means the most to us is the one the least up-to-date,” said Kirsten Hillman, deputy head of mission at the Embassy of Canada to the United States, as she addressed the crowd during her keynote presentation at the annual Premier’s Summit on Agri-Food, which brings together industry leaders from across the province. Discussions took place on trade and collaboration, as well as what’s next in agri-food innovation.

Hillman was referring to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the impact a potential new agreement would have on Canada, Mexico and the U.S. The nearly 24-year-old agreement has led to a stable trade environment and created a platform to allow all three countries to make products together, be competitive and market those products to a wide consumer base.

“Trade agreements open up markets in specific ways. They help lower tariffs, enable border movement of goods and create stability. They are also designed to withstand changes in domestic policies and laws, which is a fundamental aspect of any agreement,” she said.

Every minute of every day, more than $2 million worth is traded between Canada and the U.S. When the agreement first went into effect in 1994, there was no Internet or e-commerce. Today, the decades old agreement operates within a very different global marketplace, Hillman pointed out.

“Canada thinks updating the agreement is a good idea. We want to build on a good thing. Doing ‘no harm’ is not enough. We need it to be better and we can do better,” she said, adding not enough progress is being made in the renegotiations.

Hillman added there are three main groups of issues currently being discussed in the renegotiations, but the one causing the most concern is the unconventional proposal the U.S. has put forth, including demanding concessions on supply management. These demands do nothing to ensure stability and trust but instead “move the relationship between the two countries backward,” she said.

“This type of approach can lead to instability and goes against the fundamental objectives of a trade agreement,” she said. “Canada is working hard at trying to meet the U.S. government’s goals, but not on proposals that set us back and are not in Canada’s interests.”

Canadian negotiators are approaching renegotiations using a fact-based method with a goal to modernize the agreement while ensuring there are no negative effects on the Canadian economy, Hillman said.

“We’ve been hearing the U.S. will walk away from the agreement or invoke a clause to find a way to withdraw from it, but that approach is exceedingly counterproductive,” she said. “Common purpose and trust is needed to achieve the best deal … we will not compromise Canada’s interests.”

Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne said she understands many people in the agriculture sector are concerned about the status of Canada’s trade relationship with the U.S., particularly in supply-managed industries.

“We know the supply management system is integral to a strong and competitive agri-food sector. The proposal, as part of the negotiations, to dismantle the system for dairy, chicken, eggs and turkey is unprecedented. That system directly supports hundreds of thousands of jobs on family farms across the province,” she said.

Wynne praised Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Jeff Leal for his work at the last round of renegotiations in Mexico City, and for being a “champion” for agriculture, food and rural Ontario in the face of these challenges. “(Leal has) been meeting with government officials and business leaders to defend your interests, including the supply-managed
Protecting farmers and their families will always be a priority, Wynne said, adding the province’s agri-food sector is internationally recognized as “one of the best in the world. People want to do business with us.” She pointed to Feihe International’s new infant formula plant, slated to open in Kingston in 2020, as a prime example of the agriculture sector adjusting to a changing global landscape.

“We are in a period of incredible change. You see the effects of the global economy every day, whether you’re a farmer whose family has been working the same soil for generations, or you’re new to the industry. You know as our world gets a little smaller, it’s more and more important we build an ag sector that sits at the centre of this change,” she said.

Canada’s trade negotiation team has been working hard to defend Canada’s interests, Hillman said. “I have confidence they can achieve a favourable outcome. It’s important for us to communicate the benefits and risks of trade, to get out there and say this is what the agreement means to us.”

Promoting trade is exactly what Wynne and Leal have been doing since NAFTA renegotiations started. Earlier last year, Leal led a delegation of agricultural representatives to New York, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio and Wisconsin to advocate for supply management.

“Getting to a changing global landscape.

Redding was just as impressed Leal and his delegate team found the time and put in the effort to engage U.S. officials on trade discussions. “It shows Ontario is interested in U.S. trade. In fact, we look at trade with Canada as just as important as Michigan’s trade with surrounding states,” he said.

Hillman said it’s important the U.S. realize NAFTA has resulted in a stable environment that has led to the most successful economic relationship between all three parties, and dismantling the agreement will lead to instability, fewer jobs and reduced competitiveness. For instance, Canada is the number one export partner for the U.S. It buys more from the U.S. than any other country, including Mexico, China, Japan, or the European Union. Add to this the fact more than nine million U.S. jobs rely on trade with Canada, and producers can see why the agreement is so valuable to all three countries, Hillman said.

Last year alone, Ontario recorded almost $29 billion in agri-food trade with the U.S., Wynne pointed out. “I’m talking about the hog that was raised in Ontario, slaughtered in Michigan and served for dinner in Korea. Or the sweet potatoes that were grown in Idaho, fried in Mississauga and sent to grocery stores around the world,” she said.

But trade is not a zero-sum game, she added. Her message on this has been clear throughout NAFTA renegotiations. The benefits of free trade between Canada and the U.S. are real, she said, and the benefits are shared.

“When we can trade freely, we help each other add value to our products,” Wynne said. “Over and over again, free trade means growth in our economy and good jobs for our people. (This) is why Minister Leal and I will continue to make sure the interests of Ontario are promoted in NAFTA renegotiations. And whatever the outcome of the renegotiations, we will work with you and other sectors to make sure Ontario is ready and continues to prosper on the road ahead.”

**W**

ile Canada does a good job of innovating and investing in research, Canadian companies need to do more to collaborate and target international markets, said Tyler Whale, president of Ontario Agri-Food Technologies, which supports and coordinates research, development and commercialization of new agri-food technologies in Ontario.

A panel of agri-food experts came together to discuss innovation and how companies can work together and leverage their talent and ideas to grow Ontario’s ag sector. Whale said Canada’s agri-food sector is poised for growth, and should focus its efforts on encouraging more startup businesses, generating more innovation, and enabling pioneers who are ready to adopt those new ideas.

University of Guelph (U of G) president Franco Vaccarino, who moderated the panel, also believes Ontario companies, including forward-thinking universities such as U of G, are “uniquely positioned to help strengthen our province’s already prosperous agri-food sector and further cement the province’s role as a global leader in this area.”

“The University of Guelph is at the centre of an agri-food research and innovation hub in southern Ontario,” he said, adding U of G’s 20-year partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs is a good example of a successful research and development partnership in agri-food.

Before innovation can take hold, determining what consumers want and need is necessary to ensure new products coming to market succeed for the long-term, said Claudio Gemmiti, chief innovation officer at Club Coffee LP. He has more than 30 years of experience in the consumer packaged goods industry. He helped Club Coffee become an innovation leader, particularly in the single-segment coffee category. Gemmiti said the recent surge in interest in Greek yogurt is a prime example of a market fulfilling a consumer need.

“People wanted protein but not a lot of fat so they turned to Greek yogurt, which has helped transform the yogurt market. Greek yogurt went from having 10 per cent market share to 90 per cent in just a few years,” he said.

This is what innovation does best—helps companies adapt to changing food and technology trends, Gemmiti said. Remove regulatory barriers to innovation and Canada’s agri-food sector will only get better and stronger, he added. ☛

**SHARON LAIDLAW** is editor of Milk Producer.
I began my career as a dairy educator in 1998 after dairy producer committee members saw me do a school tour at my family’s dairy farm and were impressed with my presentation skills and passion for farming. Twenty years later and I haven’t looked back. In fact, it has been a very rewarding job over the years.

Being a dairy educator fulfills two of my interests: agriculture and education. I like sharing farming stories with students and teachers, and talking about the care, compassion and love dairy farmers have for the land and their animals. When I first started, I did about 60 presentations per year. Now, I do 250. The program has grown in many ways since I started, particularly when it comes to using technology, such as incorporating smartboards. When our family built a new barn in 2016, which is outfitted with the latest milking technology and a camera, we decided we wanted to educate the public by showcasing our new facility. Today, I often show live video footage of the barn in the classroom. Teachers and students are amazed and intrigued by the complexity of today’s dairy farming practices.

Talking about technology, my most valued go-to resource is www.education.milk.org. This resource allows us to download new interactive activities. The dairy educator Facebook page is also a great place to share ideas and ask my colleagues questions. My other go-to resources are my milking machine and mascot named Mootilda. I’ve found kids love hands-on interactive activities, such as making ice cream, butter and cheese. Teachers are eager to sign up because they appreciate the program’s value since it is curriculum-linked.

What I have observed over the years is being organized and flexible is important when presenting to a varied group, as is being able to assess a situation quickly and adapt to a changing environment. Whether it is a technological issue, student behaviour, scheduling changes or whatever a teacher or student might surprise you with, it is essential to always respond in a positive way. Without a doubt, the skills most important to be an effective educator are having a passion for kids and the dairy industry, being organized and a willingness to learn new activities.

When I’m out in the community, I most look forward to answering questions regarding farming and milk. Attending events is a great way to promote the industry and have a positive impact on future generations. I attend and participate in many events, one of which is Agstravaganza for Grade 5 students, organized by the Haldimand Agricultural Awareness Committee. This one-day fair covers many areas of farming and food production. About 500 to 600 students and teachers attend each year. For many of the students, it is their first time getting up close to a cow being milked or meeting a farmer.

If you are going to be passionate about something, be passionate about learning.” Those are the words I live by daily. While dairy farming is my main passion, being involved in dairy education has been a rewarding experience. As a dairy farmer, I am always learning how to improve cow comfort on our farm, how to breed for and grow better heifers, how to feed cows for more production, and how to optimize efficiency. My farming background, knowledge of modern farm practices and agricultural degree helps me better connect with students when explaining to them what dairy farmers do on a daily basis and why our industry is important to society.

I became an educator because I believe many people don’t appreciate where their food comes from and how it’s grown and processed. I am always open to having conversations with others about dairy farming and agriculture in general. Working as an educator allows me to be an advocate, while remaining on the farm.

Teachers appreciate the fact I make local connections to the processing side of our industry, including talking about our local processors, such as Kraft-Heinz, Parmalat and la Fromagerie St-Albert Co-op Inc. I also talk about transportation of commodities along the nearby St. Lawrence Seaway. Teachers say they like how I get students to think about how food is produced with my inquiry-based teaching style. This is how I often get students to share their food experiences and cultures with me. I’ve had teachers tell me their students were still talking about my presentation days after I’d left.

I’ve noticed students are better able to connect with me when I add pictures of my everyday life on the farm to my smartboard presentations. Students from kindergarten through Grade 8 love seeing what our farm looks like and how our machinery works. They gain a better understanding of all the little tasks involved, which contributes to the big picture of food production.

My favourite story to recall is when I was presenting dairy farming to a Grade 5 class. I had put up a picture of myself driving a combine, harvesting soybeans. While I was explaining how a combine works, a boy asked “Shouldn’t your boyfriend be driving that instead of you?” Needless to say, it was a great opportunity to talk about how girls can pursue a job in any line of work and be successful at it. I also used this question to emphasize the importance of teamwork on the farm, especially during harvest. This is a great example of why educators need a lot of patience and the ability to change topics on a whim. Sometimes, talking about one topic may lead into another area.

My farm experience allows me to provide students with a firsthand perspective of a dairy farmer’s life. I consider it a good day when students learn about the industry in an effective way, but an even better day when students teach me something new.
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Researchers are starting to gather results at the new Livestock Research and Innovation Centre (LRIC) dairy facility in Elora, Ont., where advanced technology is helping University of Guelph scientists investigate animal health issues, such as nutrition, genomics, calf behaviour, welfare and overall cow health.

Professors David Kelton and Derek Haley from the department of population medicine have utilized LRIC’s facilities since its doors opened in May 2015.

“LRIC offers top-of-the-line, high-end technology that helps us do innovative work no one has done before,” Haley says.

The centre offers an enclosed, easily controlled facility with technology that would be expensive to obtain with single project funding alone and difficult to conduct on most commercial farms.

Cows at LRIC are trained on an automated milking system. Kelton augments this system with additional technology that measures daily somatic cell counts (SCC), an identifier of udder infection in cows.

This is giving Kelton more detailed data on the rise and fall of SCCs on a daily basis. From this, he and others can better identify typical patterns for SCCs and which of these patterns producers should watch for and react to.

As well, researchers can easily obtain milk culture samples to identify if SCC patterns are indicative of true infections or false alarms by directly testing for bacteria that cause udder infection. The daily SCC results can be combined with other measures at the quarter level, such as electrical conductivity, to even better define the mastitis status of cow.

“LRIC allows us to evaluate methods, technologies and products the industry is using, and get that knowledge into the hands of dairy producers and veterinarians,” Kelton says.

For his part, Haley is focused on calves and their ability to use automated feeding systems. Calves’ growth rate and health depends on their
ability to use automated feeders, ultimately affecting productivity for producers.

How calves responded to their initial training session mitigated the effects of different stall wall designs, suggesting differences in the personality or demeanor of animals was very important. Haley has hinted at the possibility that just like with human learning styles, different ways of training calves may help maximize the efficiency of transitioning calves onto automated feeders.

Researchers compared ages at which calves are first introduced to the feeder (five days or within 24 hours of birth) to see if there were differences in how quickly they learned. Such observations were possible because of the technology available at LRIC and the ease of changing structures at the facility.

“There’s a lot more work to be done in this area and many questions of interest,” Haley says. “It’s so easy to repeat the study design and manipulate different variables at this facility, which saves us time and expenses.”

Haley and Kelton share the same sentiments about the well-being of the cows housed at LRIC.

“The facility hugely benefits the animals—it has a lot of natural light and air movement,” Haley says. “When the curtains are open, it feels extremely comfortable in terms of air quality and the gentle breeze flowing through. The cows might find it hard to distinguish between the indoors and outdoors in that respect.”

“With this facility, we can provide the most comfortable and clean environment for the cows without subjecting them to extreme weather conditions,” Kelton adds. “We can also provide enrichment in the form of grooming brushes. The technology at LRIC allows us to perform quality research while continuously improving the lives of cows.”

Researchers will continue to strive for a better understanding of dairy technology and optimal methods to use them.

This research was conducted in partnership with the Livestock Research Innovation Corporation and the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Dairy Farmers of Ontario provided funding.
As of Sept. 1, 2017, proAction’s animal care and livestock traceability requirements became mandatory. One of the requirements is to complete a formal third-party assessment of the milking herd for animal-based measures prior to validation. Holstein Canada is conducting the first round of assessments.

The animal-based measures being assessed are body condition score, hock, knee and neck injuries, and lameness. After the assessment, the following records are generated:

- Cattle assessment summary sheet – for each measure, this record indicates the number of cows scored as “acceptable,” “requires corrective action,” and “monitor” (the monitor category applies to gait scoring only), along with the percentage of acceptable cows;
- Cattle assessment detailed record – this record shows the scores given to each cow assessed;
- Cattle assessment peer report – this record shows how your individual acceptable scores compare to national scores. This comparison determines if a corrective action plan (CAP) will also be required for the validation.

After the assessment is completed, the documents listed above are available to producers on their account at www.canadianqualitymilk.org. Producers can log in and obtain the records to ensure they are available prior to their proAction validation.

CATTLE ASSESSMENT PEER REPORTS

Sample peer reports are shown in Example 1 and 2. The green, yellow and red zones were established based on the acceptable scores obtained by a significant number of herds across Canada, as follows:

- Green zone – represents the top 25 per cent of scores;
- Yellow zone – represents the middle 50 per cent of scores;
- Red zone – represents the bottom 25 per cent of scores.

These zones are fixed for the first round. This means the acceptable scores obtained by all Canadian producers on their first assessment will be compared with the same zones.

In Example 1, the herd’s knee and neck injury and lameness scores fall in the green zone. Therefore, this producer is not required to take further action for these two measures. The BCS and hock injury scores fall in the yellow zone. Therefore, having a CAP to improve BCS and hock injuries is recommended but not required for the validation.

In Example 2, the herd’s BCS, hock injury and knee injury scores fall in the green zone. However, lameness falls in the yellow zone, and the neck injury score falls in the red zone. The producer is required to document and implement a CAP to improve neck injuries while a CAP to improve lameness is recommended. At the time of valida-
tion, the validator will request to see the written CAP and will interview the producer regarding its implementation.

The validator will assign a major non-compliance if the cattle assessment records are not available, or if a written CAP for measures in the red zone is not in place.

**DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE CAPs**

Producers are encouraged to work with their veterinarian or other herd advisers to develop an effective CAP. The goal is to implement a meaningful plan that will improve measure(s) in the red zone by the next assessment.

Reviewing the factsheets available on Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s (DFO) website is a good starting point. They can be found under Farmers, proAction, Reference Materials, Cattle Assessments.

**SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT ROUNDS OF CATTLE ASSESSMENTS**

Dairy Farmers of Canada’s animal care technical committee will meet in the coming months to review cattle assessment statistics and trends across Canada, with the objective of recommending targets for animal-based measures to be applied for the second and subsequent rounds. These targets will likely be static or set, as opposed to based on percentiles. Improvement criteria will also be established. These new targets and criteria will be the result of careful consideration of the reality on the farm, scientific research and consumer and processor expectations in regard to animal care. Ontario producers interested in providing input are encouraged to contact their DFO field services representative or head office staff.

Information on this topic will be published in future *Milk Producer* articles when it becomes available. Once finalized, these requirements will be included in the updated proAction Reference Manual, which is scheduled for publication in late 2018.

Maria Leal is Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s assurance programs and field services manager.
A research project completed under the organic science cluster and financed in part by Dairy Farmers of Canada found switchgrass is a promising alternative to wheat straw as bedding material for dairy cows. Researchers found cows preferred switchgrass over straw, and observed no negative effects on cow comfort, cleanliness and teat end contamination. Switchgrass may also be a more economically advantageous choice for some dairy farmers.

The research team, led by Dr. Renée Bergeron from the University of Guelph (U of G), along with collaborators from U of G, including Dr. Trevor DeVries, as well as Dr. Doris Pellerin, Dr. Anne Vanasse and Anick Raby from Université Laval, and Dr. Elsa Vasseur, Dr. Philippe Séguin and Tania Wolfe from McGill University, investigated the use of switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*) as an alternative bedding source for dairy cows. They looked at cow preference, lying behaviour, stall and cow cleanliness, and potential bacterial contamination of teat ends. They also analyzed the economic impact of its use and the best harvesting practices for performance and quality when used as bedding.

In a first experiment, nine cows were housed individually in pens with three stalls with different lying surfaces. They were submitted to a preference test for three bedding types: deep-bedded chopped switchgrass, wheat straw on a rubber mat, and switchgrass-lime mattress, which is a mixture of chopped switchgrass, water and carbonic magnesium lime. Farms using organic bedding commonly add lime to reduce bacterial growth. The cows had been previously exposed to stalls with sawdust-covered mattresses. Lying times were recorded and the cows filmed.

In a second experiment, 24 cows in freestall housing were offered the same three bedding treatments. Researchers tested the effects of the three bedding types on lying behaviour, cow cleanliness and teat end bacterial contamination. Stall use was recorded and samples were taken of teat ends and tested for bacteria.

Researchers found cows preferred switch-
grass bedding compared with other bedding when given equal access and choice. They also found switchgrass and switchgrass-lime deep-bedded options were equivalent in terms of lying behaviour and cow cleanliness, but the higher moisture content and teat end coliform counts on the switchgrass-lime surface make it a less favourable option. They noted a longer-term study would be required to confirm the latter finding.

When compared with wheat-straw for lying time, cleanliness, injury, somatic cell count and teat end bacteria, both wheat-straw and switchgrass were equivalent in terms of comfort and cleanliness.

Harvest and Use of Switchgrass

The research team also investigated the economic impact of using switchgrass as alternative bedding and identified harvesting practices to optimize its performance and conservation.

Switchgrass was grown, harvested and dried on two sites in Quebec: Université Laval and McGill University. Field experiments showed yields are much higher when switchgrass is harvested in the fall compared with the spring. However, spring harvest resulted in lower moisture content. Harvesting before or after the first frost in the fall does not seem to affect winter survival or regrowth in the spring, and drying efficiency is higher when switchgrass is harvested before frost compared with after the fall frost. However, the final moisture content of switchgrass remains higher before frost than after frost.

To assess the economic impact of using switchgrass as bedding, researchers surveyed 10 Quebec dairy farms in five regions of the province. For most, it was an economically advantageous choice. Farmers reported yields and persistence as advantages, while citing other benefits, such as requiring smaller storage space.

**Takeaway Messages:**

1. Switchgrass is a promising alternative to wheat straw as bedding material for dairy cows, both as a deep-litter option or used on top of a mattress or mat;

2. There were no negative effects on cow comfort, cow cleanliness or teat end contamination, and switchgrass had better absorbency than straw;

3. Switchgrass may be an economically advantageous choice for bedding on dairy farms.

Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum* L.) is a high-yielding, long-term perennial grass grown on marginal land (Sanderson et al., 2006). It is well adapted for growth under temperate climate, disease and pest resistant, requires low fertilizer applications, and is relatively inexpensive to grow and harvest (Frigon et al. 2012).

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Reproduction is the number one reason cows are culled from the herd. According to CanWest DHI’s Ontario progress report, producers reported 30 per cent of cows leaving the herd were due to reproductive issues. Reproduction efficiency is an important aspect of any dairy herd. A loss of reproductive success for a dairy cow can increase costs and decrease the herd’s productivity and profitability.

Transitioning from the dry period to early lactation is a time in which a cow needs a large amount of nutrients to support milk production and maintain body condition and metabolic needs. About 40 to 70 per cent of dairy cows will be susceptible to both metabolic and infectious diseases through the transition period and subsequent months. This increase in inflammatory diseases through a critical part of lactation can impact a herd’s reproductive efficiency. Riberio et al., 2016 investigated the impact of inflammatory disease on reproductive success in dairy cattle and its contribution to early embryonic loss.

Reproductive success can be measured by several calculations and rates. Riberio et al., 2016 define reproductive efficiency as the number of pregnancies per number of cows presented for breeding. The number of breedings per cow will be affected by the ability to detect heats, and a farm’s reproductive management strategies. There has been an increase in the number of cows presented for breeding with adoption of heat detection technologies and use of synchronization programs. However, a gap still exists in the number of successful pregnancies for those breedings. Early pregnancy loss or early embryonic mortality can contribute to a farm’s low pregnancy rates. Predisposing factors include:

- inflammatory disease before breeding;
- anovulation before synchronization of the estrus cycle;
- low body condition score (BCS) at time of breeding.

In the paper by Riberio et al., 2016, researchers set out to learn the five main areas inflammation impacts dairy cattle reproduction. This article focuses on examining three of those areas: 1) the effects of inflammatory disease before breeding, low BCS at the time of breeding, and anovulation at the beginning of a synchronization program on reproductive efficiency; 2) determining whether the type of inflammatory disease, either non-uterine or uterine, impacts reproduction efficiency; 3) determining whether the timing of the occurrence of disease impacts breeding success.

**WHAT IS INFLAMMATION?**

Inflammation is a normal process in the body that protects an animal or person from a foreign invader, such as a virus, bacteria or parasite. An inflammatory response clears away pathogens and prevents invaders from spreading further. A robust immune response is beneficial to any animal because it ensures its survival against disease and is an important contributor to homeostasis. Inflammation occurs very rapidly, resulting in many immune cells jumping into action to contain the foreign invader, which promotes healing by releasing immune mediators that orchestrate an immune response. However, there are circumstances where inflammation may go on for longer periods of time and affect the body on a systemic level. In this situation, inflammation could impact cow performance and reproductive capacity.

**WHAT IS THE IMPACT OF DISEASE ON PREGNANCY RATE?**

Researchers from the study evaluated 2,160 cows to determine the impact of disease, anovulation and low BCS on pregnancy. Pregnancies per breedings for all the cows as determined by ultrasound were 45.7 per cent on day 32 and 40.1 per cent on day 65 after breeding. In addition, 10.5 per cent of cows were determined to be pregnant on day 32 and no longer pregnant on day 65. In this group of cows experiencing early pregnancy loss, 42.1 per cent had clinical disease before breeding, 22.2 per cent were anovular and 52.9 per cent had low BCS at time of breeding. If a cow was diagnosed with clinical disease, she was more likely to be anovular or have low BCS at breeding. Also, cows diagnosed with clinical disease before breeding had reduced reproductive efficiency. Cows that were anovular and had low BCS at time of breeding also had reduced pregnancy rates, independent of disease. Overall, the occurrence of disease, anovulation and low BCS at breeding will decrease reproductive efficiency.

**DOES TYPE OF DISEASE AND TIMING MATTER?**

In this part of the study, 5,085 cows were evaluated in 2012 for incidences of retained placenta, metritis, mastitis, digestive problems, pneumonia and lameness. About 40 per cent of cows had at least one incident of clinical disease after calving. A majority of clinical disease, 78 per cent, occurred within the first three weeks of calving. Uterine diseases, which include retained placenta and metritis, affected 22 per cent of the cows in this study, while non-uterine diseases, which include mastitis, digestive problems, pneumonia and lameness, affected 23 per cent of cows. Uterine and non-uterine diseases decreased pregnancy per breeding by seven per cent at day 45 of gestation and number of calvings per breeding by 10 per cent. Both uterine and non-uterine diseases greatly
increased the risk of pregnancy loss in cows. The research shows even though uterine disease occurs weeks before breeding, it can decrease reproductive performance. On the contrary, non-uterine disease had the most impact on pregnancy rate when it occurred during follicle development and early conception.

The next factor researchers wanted to determine was whether disease occurrence decreases a cow’s ability to produce viable oocytes and embryos or the uterine environment is unfavourable to support a pregnancy. To investigate this, Riberio et al., 2016 performed embryo transfer on select cows that were either diagnosed with clinical disease or had no clinical disease. The effects of disease on pregnancy loss were the same regardless if the cows were bred by artificial insemination or embryo transfer. This suggests the environment of the uterus is not suitable to maintain a pregnancy.

**MINIMIZING LOSS**

There is a carryover effect of disease soon after postpartum on reproductive success in dairy cattle. Reproduction is one of the top reasons for cows leaving the herd. Any herd dealing with reproductive issues shows it is a complicated multi-factorial issue that can have many reasons as to the cause of reproductive loss. There is still much work to be done in this area of study to figure out ways to overcome these effects. However, there are a few strategies that can be used now on farms to minimize loss. Keeping records on disease occurrences can help distinguish where producers can improve uterine and non-uterine disease prevention strategies in their herds. Tracking body condition score through early lactation can also help increase reproductive efficiency by helping producers identify cows that will have a low body condition score before breeding and remediate the issue.
The Canadian Dairy Commission (CDC) announced in December it will not change support prices for butter in 2018, which means the price for this item will remain at $8.0062 per kilogram. The CDC also announced the margin processors received for butter the commission purchased under the Domestic Seasonality Program, as well as the carrying charges the CDC collected to pay for storing normal butter stocks, will remain unchanged.

“Despite a small reduction in the cost of producing milk in Canada, we feel for the sake of the industry’s stability, it is best to leave the support price for butter where it currently stands,” says Alistair Johnston, CDC chair.

The support price is the price at which the CDC purchases and sells butter within the framework of its various programs. Provincial milk marketing boards and agencies use support prices as a reference to determine the price processors pay for the portion of the milk used to make butter, cheese, yogurt, ice cream, etc.

Besides the CDC butter support price, there are three other elements that can influence milk component pricing in Canada, says Patrice Dubé, Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s economics director. The first one is the national milk pricing formula agreed to by processors and producers and which will be in effect until February 2023. For February 2018, the formula indicates a small decrease of 0.35 per cent that will be applied on milk classes 1 to 4 inclusively. The formula is based on 50 per cent of the consumer price index (CPI) and 50 per cent on producer cash costs. Another element that can influence milk pricing is any ad hoc and/or permanent adjustments resulting from industry decisions. Finally, milk component pricing can also be adjusted if it is determined exceptional circumstances exist. These exceptional circumstances are aimed at protecting producer revenues, such as the financial impact of an animal disease outbreak that is not captured by final cost of production data.

As a result of all the above elements, the impact of the February 2018 price adjustments on the producer blend price is theoretically expected to decrease by eight cents per hectolitre, Dubé says. However, a number of other elements can also influence the producer blend price, such as the

### P5 Utilization by Class*

For October 2017 (kg of butterfat/kg of solids non-fat)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>But. %</th>
<th>SNF %</th>
<th>Revenue %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td>Homo, 2%, 1%, skim, chocolate milk, flavoured milks, buttermilk</td>
<td>11.33%</td>
<td></td>
<td>*27.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1b</td>
<td>Fluid creams</td>
<td>2.45%</td>
<td>11.98%</td>
<td>*6.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a</td>
<td>Yogurt, yogurt beverages, Kefir and Lassi</td>
<td>3.27%</td>
<td>6.46%</td>
<td>*5.91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2b</td>
<td>Ice cream, sour cream, frozen yogurt</td>
<td>4.46%</td>
<td></td>
<td>*2.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a</td>
<td>Fresh cheese, specialty cheese</td>
<td>6.40%</td>
<td>6.42%</td>
<td>*6.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b</td>
<td>Cheddar cheese</td>
<td>3.67%</td>
<td>13.20%</td>
<td>*15.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3c1</td>
<td>Asiago, Munster Canadian style (muenster), Feta, Gouda, Havarti, Parmesan, Swiss</td>
<td>3.97%</td>
<td></td>
<td>*4.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3c2</td>
<td>All types of mozzarella except those declared in class 3d, Brick, Colby, Farmer, Jack, Monterey Jack</td>
<td>6.70%</td>
<td>7.11%</td>
<td>*7.69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3d</td>
<td>Mozzarella used strictly on fresh pizzas by establishments registered with the CDC</td>
<td>4.30%</td>
<td>4.68%</td>
<td>*3.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Butter and powders</td>
<td>2.21%</td>
<td>20.91%</td>
<td>*10.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5a</td>
<td>Condensed and evaporated milk for retail sale</td>
<td>2.80%</td>
<td></td>
<td>*1.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5b</td>
<td>Inventory, animal feed</td>
<td>2.67%</td>
<td></td>
<td>*1.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5c</td>
<td>Domestic surplus</td>
<td>0.83%</td>
<td>4.12%</td>
<td>*0.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5d/4m</td>
<td>Cheese for further processing</td>
<td>1.03%</td>
<td>0.23%</td>
<td>*0.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5d</td>
<td>Non-cheese products for further processing</td>
<td>0.05%</td>
<td>-0.32%</td>
<td>-0.06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4m</td>
<td>Planned exports (Class 4m is grouped with 5d)</td>
<td>1.04%</td>
<td>25.13%</td>
<td>*4.31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Depletion of butter stocks indicates domestic demand is now being filled with domestic butterfat

---

**MARKETS**

**BUTTER SUPPORT PRICE** **UNCHANGED**

Depletion of butter stocks indicates domestic demand is now being filled with domestic butterfat

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**P5 UTILIZATION BY CLASS**

For October 2017 (kg of butterfat/kg of solids non-fat)
structure of sales between milk classes, as well as butterfat and solids-non-fat world prices.

BUTTER STOCKS DECREASE
Butter stock levels have decreased by almost 2,400 tonnes from October to November, going from 27,002 to 24,628 tonnes, Dubé says. Such a decrease is normal during the fall period when demand for dairy products is normally higher than milk production, which means butter stocks need to be used to fill this demand.

Despite this month-to-month downward adjustment, butter stock levels are still higher than they were at this time last year, Dubé says. “As long as butter stocks remain above 20,000 tonnes after December, we are in a better position than previous years to meet the target level of 35,000 tonnes by July,” he says, adding butter stocks usually drop in the fall by roughly 2,000 to 2,500 tonnes per month.

Along with continuing strong demand and stable production levels, the depletion of butter stocks indicates domestic demand is now being filled with domestic butterfat, which has resulted in the CDC stopping its importation of additional butter beyond international commitments. The relatively high world butter price level and greater availability of butter manufactured domestically are two major contributing factors that have enabled the industry to increasingly rely on domestic production to supply the butterfat market, Dubé says.

P5 AND WESTERN MILK POOL BLEND PRICES*
The graph below shows the 12-month blend price for the P5 provinces and Western Milk Pool (WMP).

*There is a three-month lag reporting these figures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROVINCE</th>
<th>PRICE/kg</th>
<th>AMOUNT WANTED/kg</th>
<th>AMOUNT FOR SALE/kg</th>
<th>AMOUNT PURCHASED/kg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>$39,000</td>
<td>98.00</td>
<td>138.46</td>
<td>98.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>$35,925</td>
<td>152.20</td>
<td>289.55</td>
<td>132.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>$29,000</td>
<td>34.75</td>
<td>89.83</td>
<td>34.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>$25,000</td>
<td>360.00</td>
<td>266.76</td>
<td>105.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>$24,000</td>
<td>9,903.82</td>
<td>750.70</td>
<td>750.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quebec</td>
<td>$24,000</td>
<td>5,004.70</td>
<td>1,819.60</td>
<td>1,819.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>$24,000</td>
<td>362.01</td>
<td>203.78</td>
<td>203.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>$21,400</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>54.50</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>$17,097</td>
<td>40.00</td>
<td>112.50</td>
<td>9.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Newfoundland does not operate a monthly quota exchange. Quota is traded between producers.

U.S. CLASS PRICES
The November 2017 Class III Price, US$16.88 per hundredweight, is equivalent to C$49.00 per hectolitre. This equivalent is based on the exchange rate of US$1 = C$1.27881 the exchange rate when the USDA announced the Class III Price.

The Class III Price is in $ US per hundredweight at 3.5 per cent butterfat. One hundredweight equals 0.44 hectolitres. Canadian Class 5a and Class 5b prices track U.S. prices set by the U.S Department of Agriculture.

Source: USDA

A total 3,572 producers sold milk to DFO in November compared with 3,674 a year earlier.
Richardson International Ltd. is adding another crop inputs location to its growing network of retail crop inputs centres across the Prairies. The company has announced it has acquired Bestland Air Ltd., an independent crop inputs retailer located near Starbuck, Man.

“This business is an excellent addition to our Richardson Pioneer network since it will be an extension of our full-service Richardson Pioneer Ag Business Centre in Starbuck,” says Tom Hamilton, vice-president of agribusiness operations. “It will provide us with additional capacity and enhance our ability to continue providing local producers with leading seed, fertilizer and crop inputs technologies.”

Richardson is focused on building its crop inputs network across Western Canada through both acquisitions and new builds. The company acquired 10 retail crop inputs locations from CHS Canada in October, and purchased two independent, full-service retail crop inputs centres in Vermilion and Forestburg, Alta., last summer. Richardson is also expanding its network by building new crop inputs facilities in strategic locations across the Prairies. Two new crop inputs centres opened in Elrose, Sask., last summer and in Pasqua, Sask., in November. A third new crops inputs facility is currently under construction in Wakaw, Sask., and will be open for business in 2018.

Richardson Pioneer is a division of Richardson International Limited, Canada’s leading agribusiness. A global leader in agriculture and food processing, Richardson is a worldwide handler and merchandiser of Canadian-grown grains and oilseeds and a vertically-integrated processor and manufacturer of oats and canola-based products.

CanWest DHI has announced its Mobile DHI app is a regional recipient of the 2017 Premier’s Award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence.

Mobile DHI is an app providing dairy producers access to their herd data directly from the DHI cloud. It was developed in response to growing demand for access to information on the farm via mobile devices. The app includes a herd dashboard with 25 key performance indicators, customizable cow lists and direct links to the Canadian Dairy Network and Holstein Canada. More enhancements are on the way.

“We’ve received a lot of positive feedback from our customers, and demand for the app continues to grow,” says Richard Cantin, manager of marketing and product development at CanWest DHI. “Producers can access valuable herd information they need to make management decisions on the go.”

Cantin says Mobile DHI has been a great addition to CanWest DHI’s services and they’re happy to have it recognized by this program and included among other outstanding recipients.

The Premier’s Award celebrates innovation in Ontario’s agri-food industry and recognizes organizations and individuals who add value and support growth in the industry through their leading edge products and services.

CanWest DHI is a non-profit milk recording organization providing profitable herd management solutions to dairy producers across Ontario and Western Canada.
WESTERN CANADIAN DAIRY SEMINAR

The Western Canadian Dairy Seminar (WCDS) will take place at the Sheraton Hotel in Red Deer, Alta., from March 6 to 9 with the theme of Achieving Dairy Excellence.

The program kicks off on March 6 with a choice of either a tour of three local progressive and innovative dairy farms or a workshop on milk quality and the drive for consistent delivery of top-quality milk. A wide range of topics will be covered during the main sessions, including farm management, nutrition, replacements, advances in genetics and reproduction, and cow health, as well as broad issues the industry faces today.

The speakers include:
- Harry Anderson from the University of Toronto, who will be discussing what the revamp of Canada’s Food Guide means for dairy;
- Tine van Werven from Utrecht University, who will be exploring how to manage cows with less antibiotics and sharing new developments in mastitis research;
- Brian Van Doormaal from the Canadian Dairy Network, who will be discussing farm management decisions in the era of genomics;
- Bob Milligan from Dairy Strategies LLC, who will be sharing his knowledge of hiring and retaining an excellent workforce.

WCDS will have something for everyone, including producers, nutritionists, veterinarians and services providers.

For more information or to register for the event, visit www.wcds.ca.
FMC AGRICULTURAL SOLUTIONS INCREASES ITS COMMITMENT TO ADDRESS CANADIAN AGRICULTURE CHALLENGES

FMC Agricultural Solutions has acquired select DuPont Crop Protection assets, making it well-positioned to provide customers with innovative crop protection solutions across all major Canadian crops.

FMC now offers a complementary crop protection portfolio, deeper pipeline, greater regional reach, and a full-discovery research and development engine. Post acquisition, FMC is now a tier-one agricultural technology supplier in Canada and the fifth-largest crop protection company globally.

“Combining the substantial resources and talent from DuPont with our own will enable FMC to provide new solutions that serve customers’ needs better, deliver greater value, and accelerate the pace at which we bring products to market,” says David Strilchuk, country manager at FMC Canada. “We are very excited about the range of new possibilities the acquisition will bring to Canadian growers and the industry as a whole.”

The assets acquired from DuPont include proven broadleaf cereal herbicides, formulated with proprietary Solumax soluble granules technology, offering the convenience and benefits of a dry herbicide that works like a liquid. These new products are highly complementary to FMC’s existing and unique pre-emergent product lineup, which includes Authority, Command and Focus.

The acquisition of industry-leading insecticides, such as Coragen, adds another level of high performance solutions to FMC’s existing broad-spectrum insecticide lineup. Other assets include PrecisionPac application innovation, an exclusive and proprietary custom herbicide blending system, as well as a research farm and manufacturing site in Canada.

Overall, the new FMC Agricultural Solutions is in a strong position to offer Canadian growers a broader range of competitive products today, and a deep and vibrant research pipeline that is expected to yield even more high-performing crop protection solutions in the future.

LAKELAND COLLEGE EARNS SEVENTH MILK QUALITY AWARD

Students taking the lead in dairy production earned Lakeland College’s dairy unit its seventh Milk Quality Award, presented by Alberta Milk.

“Receiving the Milk Quality Award highlights the passion and determination the dairy unit and farm staff possess,” says Michael Ijff, production manager for the dairy unit of the student-managed farm, powered by New Holland. “It also emphasizes the care we have for our herd and effort we put forth in maintaining the facility.”

Lakeland is one of 117 producers to receive this award in the 2016-17 fiscal year.

Ensuring students and staff understand operating procedures with an emphasis on cow comfort and animal care, as well as operational production practices, has always been at the top of the dairy unit’s priorities. Since moving into the new dairy learning centre, the dairy unit’s general manager, Lukas Reutter, anticipates the bar will be set even higher.

“It has surprised us how quickly animal health and production has increased in such a short period,” he says.

For information, visit www.lakelandcollege.ca.

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2018 AFAC AWARDS OF DISTINCTION

The Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC) Awards of Distinction were initiated in 2001 to recognize individuals or groups who have made exceptional contributions in the field of livestock welfare. These individuals or organizations work hard to advance the mandate of AFAC and the welfare of livestock in Alberta. They apply new, innovative ideas and management practices to improve and ensure high standards of animal well-being. They understand the public's need for assurance farm animals are raised humanely, and they can be held up as examples of those who are making a difference.

AWARD CATEGORIES

- **The Award of Distinction for Communication** - This award honours those who take an active role in effectively telling the story about livestock issues, and informing the public and agri-food industry about farm animal care in a factual and honest way that is credible and builds trust;
- **The Award of Distinction for Industry Leadership** - This award honours those who integrate animal welfare into their core business strategy, striving to achieve more than expected regarding animal welfare and setting a higher standard;
- **The Award of Distinction for Innovation** - This award honours those who have developed a new process, product, or source of knowledge that has made a significant impact on improving the welfare of livestock and the industry.

Producers are invited to submit nominations by visiting www.afac.ab.ca. For questions, email Kristen Hall at kristen@afac.ab.ca. Nomination deadline is Feb. 15.
DIGGING JAZZ

Taking outdoor concerts to the next level with a cow audience

Whether you milk Holsteins, Jerseys, Ayrshires or Shorthorns, dairy farmers all across the globe will always have one thing in common. They work hard to provide the best care for their cattle, putting animal welfare as one of their top priorities. But one Florida dairy farmer has found a unique way to make sure his cows remain comfortable.

As a jazz musician, Ed Henderson often marries his two passions together. The result is a memorable outdoor concert that’s not only pleasing to the ears but also the eyes. This is because on his farm, the audience is a herd of cows, and it doesn’t take much to keep their attention—just a trombone bellowing out jazz music.

It started out as just a simple practice session in his backyard, but as he started playing his brass instrument, he couldn’t help but notice his cows making their way from across the field to watch the free show. Because his animals loved it so much, the dairy farmer and his 17-piece jazz band recently put on a full jam session for the herd, and sure enough, the instruments piqued the interest of some curious cows who once again gathered around the crew.

But not only did Henderson’s gig attract the attention of his bovines, CNN’s Great Big Story was so intrigued with what the farmer was doing that the series’ producers visited his Florida dairy farm to witness it in person.

Henderson proves cows—at least his cows—clearly love jazz music. It’s an idea dairy farmers could consider if they’re looking for a unique way to up their game when it comes to cow comfort on their farms. But if you’re not musically inclined to serenade your herd yourself, you could always put together a playlist for them.

According to a study from the University of Leicester School of Psychology, cows enjoy slow jams and easy listening music. Researchers tested out the theory at a large dairy farm and found playing slow music actually relaxed the cows, encouraging them to produce more milk.

Based on this research, Modern Farmer did all the grunt work and put together a playlist dairy farmers could use for their own herds. In case you’re curious, the songs include “Everybody hurts” by REM, “What a difference a day makes” by Aretha Franklin, “Bridge over troubled water” by Simon & Garfunkel, “Moon river” by Danny Williams, “Orinoco flow” by Celtic Woman, and “Perfect day” by Lou Reed.

You can check out the Great Big Story clip by visiting https://www.greatbigstory.com/stories/cows-dig-jazz-music.
A simply superior parallel stall that goes beyond rugged to set the industry standard.

This legendary parallel stall offers best-in-class cow comfort and cow flow.

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- **Cow comfort** – Stalls enhanced with shoulder bumpers for her well-being
- **Saves time** – Easier and quicker parlor cleanup with no sequence gates to work around
The story about Richmond-FD EL Bombero is truly quite amazing as he continues to get better and better across the board every round. This Numero Uno son improved for GLPI, Pro$, Milk, Fat, Protein, Conformation, Herd Life and NRR. **Bombero is becoming a superstar before our very eyes!**

Glen Islay Bombero Bambino VG-86-2YR-CAN, Carldot Bombero Flurry VG-86-2YR-CAN

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- **Milk**: 1641 kg
- **Fat**: +80
- **Protein**: +50
- **Conformation**: +10
- **Herd Life**: 109
- **Semen Fertility**: 62

GEBV 17°DEC

Photos: Patty Jones