WORKING IN DAIRY INDUSTRY IS A PRIVILEGE

Dairy leaders discuss state of the industry at Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s annual general meeting
Protect your cows from mastitis with LactiFence

For more information, please contact your local authorized DeLaval dealer or visit delaval.com

Island Dairy Services Ltd.
Duncan, BC
250-748-2188

J&D Farmers Dairy Service Ltd.
Abbotsford, BC
604-853-2372

J&D Farmers Dairy Service Ltd.
Enderby, BC
1-888-811-0231

Agrai-Dairy Mart
Lacombe, AB
403-786-9999

Agrai-Dairy Mart
Lethbridge, AB
403-327-1414

Agrai-Dairy Mart
Nisku, AB
780-955-3737

Agrai-Dairy Mart
LaSalle, ON
519-638-3535

Tristar Dairy Center Ltd.
Granthal, MB
204-434-6801

SaskView Farm Solutions Ltd.
Saskatoon, SK
306-955-5474

Cal Kwantes
DeLaval Project Consultant
Western Canada
250-503-6002

D A Bieleskie & Son Ltd.
Cobden, ON
613-646-7637

D M D Picard Enter.Inc.
Fournier, ON
613-524-5453

Emo Feed Service Ltd.
Emo, ON
807-482-2017

Norwell Dairy Systems Ltd.
Woodstock, ON
519-456-3535

Norwell Dairy Systems Ltd.
Drayton, ON
519-638-3535/519-456-3535

Norwell Dairy Systems Ltd.
Oakwood, ON
705-953-9985

Norwell Dairy Systems Ltd.
Brinton, ON
613-632-2009

Northshore Tractors
Echo Bay, ON
705-248-2208

Oliver Dairy Supply
Milton, ON
807-935-2098

Jason French
DeLaval Project Consultant
Ontario
226-821-2693

Fundy Agriculture Services Ltd.
Apohaqui, NB
506-432-6944

Eastern Dairy Services Ltd.
Shubenacadie, NS
902-758-3898

Clairmont Farm Services Ltd
Kings County, NS
902-765-3674

Island Dairy Services
Charlottetown, PEI
902-892-2532

Jason Cleveland
DeLaval Project Consultant
Maritimes
902-626-8630

We live milk

www.delaval.com

Protect your cows from mastitis with LactiFence™ barrier dip with patented LactiSyn™ technology unlocks the power of lactic acid. It provides safe, effective protection you can see – for up to 6 hours.
FEATURES

26 DFC ANNOUNCES NEW CEO
Jacques Lefebvre joins Dairy Farmers of Canada as chief executive officer

44 TRACKING PROGRESS
Discussing proAction validation results in Ontario

46 FEEDING LOWER PROTEIN DIETS
The benefits of feeding lower protein diets are worth investigating

4-editor's notes
6 CHAIR’S MESSAGE
8 PROV. PERSPECTIVES
10 GM REPORT
12 DAIRY NEWS
24 CALF CARE
28 FARM SAFETY
36 PROCESSOR PROFILE
38 EDUCATOR SPOTLIGHT
40 INDUSTRY ROUNDUP
42 RESEARCH
48 APPLIED SCIENCE
50 RUMINATIONS
52 MARKETS
54 NEW ‘N’ NOTED
58 BACK FORTY
A BAD RAP

While studies continue to show no association between dairy intake and cardiovascular disease risk, concerns still persist over proposed food guide changes.

We’ve all heard about how fat is making a comeback in people’s diets, particularly milk fat, and dietary fat has been given a bad rap over obesity and heart health concerns.

A new study by the University of Copenhagen in Denmark further proves dairy has indeed been maligned for no good reason. It has found full-fat milk increases levels of high-density lipoprotein (HDL) cholesterol—the good stuff—in a person’s blood. Cholesterol has a bad connotation when it comes to healthy diets, but not all cholesterol is bad. There are two types of cholesterol: HDL, the good cholesterol, which helps remove low-density lipoprotein (LDL) from arteries and delivers it to the liver where it is broken down and passed from the body, and LDL, the often cited bad version, which can cause a buildup of plaque on arterial walls in the heart and brain. But according to the Heart and Stroke Foundation, dietary cholesterol—found in meat, poultry, eggs and regular dairy products—has less impact on blood cholesterol than foods with saturated and trans fat, such as pies, cookies and donuts.

According to the Copenhagen study, researchers discovered full-fat milk may be better for the heart than skim milk, the Daily Mail reported. The research team gave 18 healthy adult volunteers either 500 millilitres per day of skim milk or whole milk for three weeks, and then repeated the test by switching the milks. The study was randomized to allow some participants to start with skim milk and others with whole milk first. Cholesterol tests were taken to measure how the milk products affected blood lipids, such as LDL and HDL cholesterol. Researchers found full-fat milk promoted the growth of HDL in participants’ blood.

The study was published by the European Journal of Clinical Nutrition, which stated “Dietary guidelines have for decades recommended choosing low-fat dairy products due to the high content of saturated fat in dairy known to increase blood concentration of LDL cholesterol. However, meta-analyses, including observational studies, show no association between overall dairy intake and risk of cardiovascular diseases and even point to an inverse association with Type 2 diabetes.”

Dr. Andrew Samis, assistant professor in the department of surgery at Queen’s University, also believes there is no clear evidence saturated fats and cholesterol lead to cardiovascular disease. Assistant editor Jennifer Nevans wrote about the presentation he recently made at Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s annual general meeting in Toronto, Ont., where he addressed concerns on saturated fat and cardiovascular disease in relation to dairy and revisions to Canada’s Food Guide. Samis says cholesterol has been vilified as far back as 1913, and fat has been demonized since the 1950s, and that society tends to fear fat believing it’s not healthy. However, Samis says contradictory studies on this topic should deter the government from making any recommendations on saturated fat because if they get it wrong, it could do more harm to people’s health. He says total dietary fat represents about one-third of what people eat, and yet society is ignoring the remaining two-thirds of the diet. The concern in the dairy industry is that proposed guidelines in the new food guide will recommend individuals consume foods with more unsaturated fats and less saturated fats, such as meat and dairy. Samis urged dairy industry stakeholders to “raise the alarm” on food guide changes. He says the federal government is about to release a food guide that’s not based on scientific evidence, and not only will this hurt his patients, it will also hurt the dairy industry.

Follow me on Twitter: @Writer_Girl75 Follow DFO: @DairyOntario @OntarioMilk
Comfort and versatility unlike any other

Upgrade your barn with GEA’s Single Beam Freestall Mounting System

With easy installation and flexible designs, GEA’s Single Beam Freestall Mounting System can seamlessly integrate with any new or existing freestall barn. This state-of-the-art mounting system features the patented cushion cross clamp providing extreme durability for reduced freestall maintenance.

Cows enjoy unobstructed lunge space and lay straighter for cleaner stalls and udders. Fully adjustable stall width and neck rail height gives you a customized system to fit your herd.

Conestogo Agri Systems Inc.
Alma, ON  519 638-3022

County Automation
Ameliasburg, ON  613 962-7474

Keith Siemon Farm Systems Ltd.
Walton, ON  519 345-2734

Lamers Silos Ltd.
Ingersoll, ON  519 485-4578

Lawrence’s Dairy Supply Ltd.
Moose Creek, ON  613 538-2559

Mactaquac Farm Equipment Ltd.
Mactaquac, NB  506 363-2340

McCann Farm Automation Ltd.
Seeley’s Bay, ON  613 382-7411

Mclaren Systems.
Cobden, ON  613 646-2062

Performance Dairy Centre Inc.
Embro, ON  519 423-9119

Sheehy Entreprises Ltd.
Shubenacadie, NS  902 758-2002

Silver-Tech Systems Inc.
Dunnville, ON  905 981-2350

Sussex Farm Supplies
Sussex, NB  506 433-1699

Wood’s Dairy Source
Keene, ON  705 295-3247
Let’s not take what we have in Canadian dairy industry for granted

S

ometimes, we take what we have in Canada’s dairy industry for granted. However, when we stop and examine what dairy farmers are facing in other countries, it should make us reflect on how fortunate we are to produce milk in Canada while earning a fair living. When I say fortunate, it is not that we have not earned it, or we do not work long hours with dedication, planning and commitment. What I mean by fortunate is we do not face the same challenges and fears most dairy farmers encounter in other countries.

I was struck by this thought at Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s recent annual general meeting, when Darin Von Ruden, president of the Wisconsin Farmers Union, spoke about the general condition of Wisconsin’s dairy industry. First, it is interesting to note dairy producers in the state produce almost 40 per cent more milk than all of Canada combined. Wisconsin’s dairy industry is big. But for many producers, their industry is not profitable and the future seems bleak.

Von Ruden told us many farmers are selling milk from the farm below the cost of production. The volatility of the state’s milk prices makes it next to impossible to plan and invest. In fact, I was struck when he described their current conditions as treading water with no end in sight to their gloomy situation. Many Wisconsin and American farmers are not able to afford their monthly bills. In fact, we learned Wisconsin lost a dairy farm per day in 2016.

I had the opportunity to meet with Von Ruden when we were in Montreal at the last North American Free Trade Agreement renegotiations. He was impressed with how well the Canadian supply management system worked, and was even more impressed with the co-operation between Canadian processors, government and farmers, and how we all come together to help grow our industry.

Von Ruden is a champion of the Canadian supply management system and stated without hesitation the real issue in the United States is an oversupply of milk. In fact, Michigan, Wisconsin and New York all have a daily excess of milk equal to what Ontario produces in a day. They simply overproduce and are fighting for the bottom.

It is in this context I feel fortunate to be a dairy producer in Canada. We have reliability, stability, predictability and a fair return for our milk. Canadians value our milk quality and do not have to pay more than most people across the world for such a high-valued commodity. Our processors are profitable and we do not cost the taxpayer any money to support our livelihood. It’s unfortunate U.S. officials do not think about adopting what we have in Canada rather than attacking it.

ÉTRE RECONNAISSANT DE NOTRE SYSTÈME UNIQUE

Ne tenons pas pour acquis ce que nous avons dans l’industrie laitière canadienne.

Mais pour beaucoup de producteurs, cette industrie n’est pas rentable et le futur semble morose.

Von Ruden nous a raconté que beaucoup de fermiers vendaient leur lait sous le coût de production. L’instabilité des prix du lait dans cet État rend presque impossibles la planification et l’investissement. En fait, j’ai été frappé lorsqu’il a décrit leurs conditions actuelles comme celle de faire du surplace sans voir la fin de leur situation maussade. Beaucoup d’agriculteurs du Wisconsin et des États-Unis n’arrivent pas à payer leurs factures mensuelles. En fait, nous avons appris que le Wisconsin avait perdu un ferme laitière par jour en 2016.

J’ai eu la chance de rencontrer Von Ruden quand nous étions à Montréal aux dernières négociations de l’Accord de libre-échange nord-américain. Il était impressionné par le bon fonctionnement du système de gestion de l’approvisionnement canadien, il était encore plus impressionné par la coopération existante entre les usines de transformation canadiennes, le gouvernement et les agriculteurs, et sur notre manière d’entraide pour faire avancer notre industrie.

Von Ruden est l’un des meilleurs en ce qui concerne le système de gestion de l’approvisionnement canadien, et a dévoilé sans hésitation que le réel problème aux États-Unis était le surapprovisionnement de lait. En fait, le Michigan, le Wisconsin et l’État de New York ont tous un excédent quotidien de lait égal à ce que produit l’Ontario en une journée. Ils surproduisent tout simplement, et se battent pour leurs convictions.

C’est dans ce contexte que je me sens chanceux d’être producteur laitier au Canada. Nous avons la fiabilité, la stabilité, la prévisibilité, et nous avons un rendement équitable garanti pour notre lait. Les Canadiens accordent de l’importance à la qualité de notre lait, et nous n’avons pas à payer plus que la plupart des personnes dans le monde pour un tel produit très estimé. Nos usines de transformation sont rentables, et nous ne coûtons rien au contribuable pour subvenir à nos besoins.

Il est regrettable que les fonctionnaires américains ne pensent pas à adopter ce que nous avons au Canada plutôt que de l’attaquer.
Innovation in animal wellbeing means looking to the past to inspire the future. When you need to treat pain and inflammation, injectable Metacam® 20* offers fast, accurate and long-lasting pain relief to help animals reach their full potential.

* Metacam® 20 mg/mL Solution for Injection

Metacam® is a registered trademark of Boehringer Ingelheim, used under license.
© 2017 Boehringer Ingelheim (Canada) Ltd. All Rights Reserved.
PROVINCIAL PERSPECTIVES

By Bruno Letendre

HAVE YOUR SAY

Much like the two years before it, 2017 has been characterized by exceptional market growth and concerns about trade negotiations, particularly regarding the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and North American Free Trade Agreement. This issue remains our number one priority.

Canada has refused any discussion based on United States demands so far. Quebec and Ontario’s governments are very firm in their support for supply management. We are pleased with this support. Although we are not at the table in these negotiations, our job is to maintain the support of governments, our partners and the population. We have done good work in this regard and will continue.

With our partners in the supply management movement (formerly G05), we took advantage of the Montreal round of negotiations in late January to once again prove the importance of maintaining supply management. All farmers also have a role to play in their environment—with their partners—to maintain support for our agricultural policy. If necessary, we won’t hesitate to mobilize producers.

As you read these lines, sector meetings of regional boards will be in progress. Quebec farmers, delegates and members of the board have a say in the decisions and solutions guiding our actions and improving our marketing conditions.

At the end of November, delegates from every region of Quebec met to discuss challenges facing dairy producers. For two days, they were called on to analyze the current business context, exchange ideas and think about a possible review of the quota policy. As asked by the resolution of our annual general meeting in April 2017, delegates assessed options for modifying our policy on partial mergers, management of non-deferrable quota, and transfer of non-family farms. In-depth discussions were conducted with the goal of continuing to satisfy the interests of all dairy farmers, but also meeting the aspirations of a significant minority who are seeking to develop their businesses more rapidly.

Current discussions are part of a rigorous democratic process that includes in-depth analysis, assessment by a study committee, and consultations with farmers and industry stakeholders.

We are now at the stage of hearing from grass-roots farmers. The sector tours and regional meetings will allow Quebec producers to remain informed on the current situation, supported by concrete data, and see how we can improve the quota policy to support development of farm businesses and ensure dairy markets are profitably supplied. Once again, we invite Quebec producers to participate in large numbers in these consultations.

As the new year begins, trade negotiation issues are causing uncertainty. We are very disappointed Canada is accepting the 11-country TPP agreement announced on Jan. 23. This agreement maintains the Canadian market access concessions made when the U.S. was a member of the group. The federal government must make no further concessions in future negotiations, and we expect measures to mitigate the impact of the TPP concessions for all farmers.

We have many reasons to be proud of our achievements, and confident about the future of our sector. The issue of trade negotiations is causing uncertainty, but we have succeeded in building strong support, with the help of our organizations and the commitment and solidarity of Quebec and Canadian farmers. I am sure by remaining strong and united, we will take on these challenges.

BRUNO LETENDRE, chair
Les Producteurs de lait du Québec, Jan. 30, 2018

LA PAROLE EST À VOUS

L’année 2017, tout comme les deux années précédentes, aura été marquée par la croissance exceptionnelle de notre marché et les inquiétudes liées aux négociations commerciales, particulièrement celles du Partenariat transpacifique (PTP) et de l’Accord de libre-échange nord-américain (ALENA). Ce dernier enjeu demeure notre priorité numéro un.


Avec nos partenaires du Mouvement pour la gestion de l’offre (anciennement G05), nous avons profité de la ronde de négociations de Montréal à la fin janvier pour démontrer, une fois de plus, l’importance du maintien de la gestion de l’offre. Chaque producteur a aussi un rôle à jouer dans son environnement, avec ses partenaires, pour conserver le soutien à l’égard de notre politique agricole. Et si nécessaire, nous n’hésiterons pas à vous mobiliser.

Au moment où vous lirez ces lignes, les réunions de secteurs de vos conseils régionaux des Producteurs de lait du Québec seront en cours. Chacun d’entre nous, des producteurs aux membres du conseil d’administration en passant par les délégués, a son mot à dire sur les décisions à prendre et les solutions à envisager pour orienter notre action et améliorer nos conditions de mise en marché.

À la fin de novembre dernier, les délégués des producteurs laitiers de toutes les régions du Québec se sont réunis afin de discuter des enjeux qui touchent la production laitière. Durant deux jours, ils ont été appelés à analyser le contexte d’affaires actuel, à échanger et à réfléchir sur une éventuelle mise à jour de la politique de quota. Conformément à ce que demandait la résolution de notre assemblée générale annuelle en avril 2017, il s’est évalués des options d’ajustement de notre politique sur ce qui touche les fusions partielles, la gestion du quota non reportable et le transfert de fermes non appartenées. Les discussions n’ont pas été menées avec l’objectif de continuer à satisfaire l’intérêt de l’ensemble des producteurs laitiers, mais également de répondre aux aspirations d’une minorité significative qui cherche à développer plus rapidement leurs entreprises.

La réflexion actuelle arrive au terme d’un processus démocratique et rigoureux qui compte plusieurs étapes, dont des analyses poussées, une évaluation en comité d’étude et des consultations, menées auprès des producteurs et des intervenants de notre secteur. Je vous invite à consulter les détails à la page 8 du présent numéro.

Nous sommes maintenant rendus à entendre les producteurs de la base. Les tournées de secteur et les assemblées régionales vous permettront de vous renseigner sur la situation actuelle, données concrètes à l’appui, et de voir de quelle façon nous pouvons faire évoluer la politique de quota afin d’encadrer le développement de nos entreprises tout en nous assurant de combler nos marchés de manière rentable. Encore une fois, je vous invite à participer en grand nombre à ces consultations.

Ce début d’année, l’enjeu des négociations commerciales ajoute de l’incertitude. Nous avons été très déçus que le Canada accepte l’accord du PTP à 11 pays, annoncé le 23 janvier, en maintenant les concessions à notre marché faites lorsque les États-Unis en faisaient partie. Le gouvernement ne doit plus faire aucune concession dans les futures négociations et nous nous attendons à des mesures d’atténuation d’impact des concessions du PTP pour tous les producteurs.

Nous avons beaucoup de raisons d’être fiers de nos réalisations et d’être confiants dans l’avenir de notre secteur. Mais nous avons réussi avec nos organisations, avec l’engagement et la solidarité des producteurs québécois et canadiens à nous bâtir de solides appuis. Je suis sûr qu’en demeurant forts et unis, nous allons relever ces défis.
Cooling the World’s Milk

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL MUELLER MILK COOLING SPECIALIST

BUCHANAN & HALL
Stratford, ON
519-271-4793

DAIRY LANE SYSTEMS
Komoka, ON
519-666-1404

DUNDAS AGRI SYSTEMS
Brinston, ON
613-652-4844

LAWRENCE’S DAIRY SUPPLY
Moose Creek, ON
613-538-2559

MCCANN FARM AUTOMATION
Seeleys Bay
613-382-7411

NORWELL DAIRY SYSTEMS
Drayton, Woodstock,
Lindsay, Brinston
519-638-3535

OPTIMUM AGRI
Belle Vallee, ON
705-622-2480

PERFORMANCE DAIRY CENTRE
Embro, ON
519-423-9119

WOOD’S DAIRY SOURCE
Keene, ON
705-295-3247

DFE.PAULMUELLER.COM
Dairy Farmers of Ontario (DFO) is grateful for the continued support received from Canadian politicians on the trade front. When looking at the contribution and strength of the Canadian dairy system, DFO believes the support is warranted. This is especially true when the alternative, as seen in other countries, such as the United States, the European Union and Australia, shows struggling dairy industries, bankruptcies and weakened rural economies. Recent data show U.S. dairy farmer incomes have been steadily declining. As well, U.S. dairy farmers rely on significant government support just to help them meet their cost of production, and yet many are still not able to do so despite the assistance.

In October 2015, dairy farmers across the country worked with the Canadian government during the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations where 3.25 per cent market access was given to the 11 other TPP member countries, including Mexico and the U.S. With the new TPP-11, or what’s now known as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), the same 3.25 per cent access was given without the U.S. being involved, which will now be filled by Australia and New Zealand alone. Given natural trade flows and geography, it was anticipated the vast majority of this market access would have been taken up by the U.S.

The conclusion of the CPTPP presents another challenge for the industry amidst ongoing North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) renegotiations. The U.S. has stated it wants to dismantle the Canadian dairy system and gain full access to the Canadian dairy market through NAFTA. The economic problem the American dairy industry is currently experiencing is not due to Canada’s supply management system, but its chronic oversupply and overproduction. In a single day, U.S. dairy farms in Wisconsin, New York and Michigan dump as much milk as what’s produced in Ontario over the same time period. Gaining access to Canada’s market will do nothing for the U.S. dairy industry’s lack of market control and overproduction.

In February, DFO’s board and senior staff met with federal politicians and decision-makers in Ottawa for our annual Lobby Day. One of the important issues we talked about was making sure government representatives understand supply management’s significant contributions to Canada’s economy and agri-food sector. We stated if the U.S. wants access to Canadian dairy, TPP is the vehicle to gain that access and not NAFTA. Everyone in the dairy industry has an obligation to ensure the public and government has a better understanding of how the Canadian dairy system operates so we can debunk myths and misunderstandings about our sector. Government officials need to know the true situation of Canada’s dairy system, which is that it benefits all Canadians to have a strong dairy industry and therefore a strong economy.

Graham Lloyd
is DFO’s general manager and chief executive officer.
Feb. 5, 2018
“We really like what this product does for our herd.”
— Tony Compton

“We have been using Udder Comfort™ for 6 years and really like what this product does for our herd,” says Tony Compton of Compton Dairy, Columbia, Kentucky.

Tony and his wife Pam and son Ben operate the 200-cow dairy that transitioned to robotic milking last year. The dairy received the Kentucky Dairy Quality Award in 2013.

“We like producing a good quality product and to provide good cow comfort for our herd. Udder Comfort is part of that. We like how quickly it softens and soothes udders, which is very important after calving.

“We use Udder Comfort on all fresh cows 2x/day for 3 to 4 days after calving, when we check them in the headlocks. We also use information from the robot every day to identify cows that may benefit from Udder Comfort 2x/day.”

**Udder Comfort**

1.888.773.7153  1.613.652.9086
uddercomfort.com

Call to locate a distributor near you.

For external application to the udder only, after milking, as an essential component of udder management. Always wash and dry teats thoroughly before milking.

---

**NOW EVEN MORE WAYS TO KEEP YOUR COWS MORE COMFORTABLE**

It’s a fact, a more comfortable cow is a more productive cow. And nobody offers cow comfort solutions like Promat. Please contact us to learn more or to locate your nearest dealer.

**THE INDUSTRY’S MOST PROVEN MATTRESS SOLUTIONS**

- **PASTURE MAT™** enjoyed by over 3 million cows worldwide
- **PACK MAT** all the benefits of deep bedding while using up to 70% less sand
- **COMFORT MAT™** the undisputed best foam mattress on the market

**COWCOON - THE HYBRID COW STALL**

- utilizes a flexible polyethylene tube across the bottom portion of the stall loop that acts as a shock absorber
- reduces stress on the cow while continuing to ensure proper positioning

---

1.888.337.6265 | sales@promatinc.com
www.Promatinc.com facebook.com/promatinc @Promat_inc
Gay Lea Foods Co-operative Limited has unveiled a modernized new logo and website that is reflective of its future outlook and investment plans as a leader in the Canadian dairy industry.

The new logo retains the well-recognized Gay Lea Foods script—with a contemporary twist—and projects a clean, modern image that aligns with Gay Lea Foods’s presence as a preferred dairy supplier, product innovator and engaged partner in the Canadian agriculture and agri-food sector.

“We’re very proud to announce Gay Lea Foods is continuing to advance in 2018, not only through our investments and new business ventures, but with a brand identity that is a testament to our remarkable history, and a tangible symbol of the direction we’re heading in,” says Gay Lea Foods chair Steve Dolson.

“We’ve been on a fantastic trajectory, as plans to expand our foods and ingredients business have taken shape through multiple acquisitions and a persistent strategic focus on innovation, ingredients and industry leadership,” says Michael Barrett, president and chief executive officer. The newly launched website at gaylea.com has been redesigned to highlight the co-operative’s growing brand family and catalogue of products. For the first time, the site will allow registered Canadian charities working to support education, poverty relief, co-operative development and community well-being projects to apply online for funding through the Gay Lea Foundation.

The new logo and website were unveiled at the co-operative’s 2018 annual general meeting. Directors also kicked off 60th anniversary celebrations with a video chronicling Gay Lea Foods’s story from its beginnings in 1958, to a thriving Canadian dairy industry leader with members of more than 1,360 dairy farms, totalling more than 4,250 members overall, and production facilities across Ontario, Manitoba and Alberta.

Barrett highlighted some of the co-operative’s recent and ongoing successes at the meeting, which include:

• Ongoing construction in Teeswater and Hamilton, Ont., where the initial phase of the co-operative’s $140 million capital investment
plan to build an innovative nutraceutical-grade dairy ingredients hub in Canada is well underway. The new Gay Lea Foods Dairy Innovation Centre is slated to open this summer; • The opening of Manitoba Dairy Ingredients in Winnipeg, Man., which is the result of an out-of-province, joint-venture investment; • Establishment of a framework to accept members within Manitoba; • Plans to open a collaborative, year-round Co-operative Education Centre at the Gay Lea Foods Dairy Heritage Museum in Aylmer, Ont., in 2018.

DFC PARTNERS WITH 2018 CANADIAN CHEESE AWARDS

Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) is sponsoring the cows’ milk cheese category at the coming Canadian Cheese Awards. Cheesemakers who use the 100% Canadian milk logo or new DFC certification mark of origin are eligible to compete for the best cows’ milk cheese in Canada award and win a $5,000 cash prize.

Held for the first time in 2014, the Canadian Cheese Awards is now Canada’s largest cheese competition. Organized by The Great Canadian Cheese Festival, the contest is open to Canadian cheeses made from cows, goats, sheep and water buffalo milk.

The deadline to submit entries is Feb. 16. Winners will be announced on June 6 at the awards ceremony and Tasting Gala in Toronto, Ont. For more information, visit cheeseawards.ca.

NEW DFO BOARD EXECUTIVE

On Jan. 11, Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s (DFO) board held a special meeting to elect the 2018 board executive as follows: • Ralph Dietrich, board member for region 11, was re-elected chair; • Murray Sherk, board member for region 8, was re-elected vice-chair; • Bart Rijke, board member for region 1, was elected as second vice-chair; • Ryan Mills was re-appointed secretary to the board.
## JERSEY CANADA NAMES RUSSELL GAMMON AS INTERIM MANAGER

Jersey Canada president Tim Sargent and its board of directors have announced Russell Gammon from Fergus, Ont., began a one-year term as interim manager of the organization on Jan. 8.

“Russell needs little introduction to Jersey owners,” Sargent says. “He has a long history of passion for and service to the Jersey breed and the wider dairy industry. In our deliberations, we saw him as the perfect fit to keep Jersey growth soaring upward, and it will be a somewhat seamless transition within the association.”

Gammon spent 25 years as previous manager of Jersey Canada, and has served in a leadership capacity with the World Jersey Cattle Bureau. From 2011 to early 2017, Gammon was the manager for Semex’s Global Jersey Program.

Although Gammon enjoys all things agriculture, he is most enthusiastic about Jerseys and is excited to represent the breed on a national level.

“There is a growing movement in North America and elsewhere to add Jerseys to dairy herds,” Gammon says. “Progressive dairy producers are making well-thought-out business decisions to invest in the Jersey breed. All measures indicate significant Jersey influence in the global dairy population.”

The board and Jersey Canada staff welcome Gammon to the helm and wish general manager Kathryn Roxburgh a wonderful maternity leave.

### 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 02/18 replaces DFO Regulation 01/18 and was made to adjust milk prices for Classes 1 to 4 as a result of a P5 Supervisory Body decision, effective Feb. 1, 2018 as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Butterfat ($/kg)</th>
<th>Protein ($/kg)</th>
<th>Other Solids ($/kg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1(a)</td>
<td>7.6056</td>
<td>7.6446</td>
<td>7.9817</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1(b)</td>
<td>8.6721</td>
<td>8.6721</td>
<td>7.9869</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Per current P5 policy for the 1c/4c Pricing Program for innovative products, the price discounts for milk cream and manufactured dairy products are respectively 25 per cent for the first 12 months, 15 per cent for the second 12-month period and 10 per cent for the third 12-month period. The discounts will be deducted off the appropriate P5 target class component prices for approved products.

- (a), (c)(milk) 3.4292 3.4282
- (b), (b)(ii), (c)(cream) 2.9320 2.8940

Advance billing rates were adjusted as a result of the price changes, as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Product</th>
<th>New Rate ($/hL)</th>
<th>Old Rate ($/hL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fluid Milk</td>
<td>100.20</td>
<td>100.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Milk</td>
<td>81.02</td>
<td>81.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DFO Regulation 02/18 replaces DFO Regulation 01/18 and was made to adjust the price of Special Milk Classes as a result of a CDC announcement, effective Feb. 1, 2018 as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Butterfat ($/kg)</th>
<th>Protein ($/kg)</th>
<th>Other Solids ($/kg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New</td>
<td>Old</td>
<td>New</td>
<td>Old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5(a)</td>
<td>7.0249</td>
<td>7.1913</td>
<td>5.4218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5(b)</td>
<td>7.0249</td>
<td>7.1913</td>
<td>1.5494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5(c)</td>
<td>6.6346</td>
<td>7.0698</td>
<td>1.3367</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As published by Dairy Farmers of Ontario during the first full week of the following month.
FROM FARM TO TABLE, AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN

Matt Dykerman, owner of Red Soil Organics in Brookfield, Prince Edward Island, hopes creating a division of Farm & Food Care in P.E.I. will help teach islanders where their food comes from.

“Sometimes farmers like myself can forget to share our stories with people who are consuming the fruits of our labour,” Dykerman says. “I am hopeful Farm & Food Care P.E.I. will engage consumers in a meaningful discussion on how food is produced and the hard work that goes into making it grow.”

Farm & Food Care is a coalition of farmers, agriculture and food partners, and government working together to provide credible information on food and farming.

P.E.I. is the third Canadian province to launch the organization, and the provincial government will invest $100,000 in it over the next year.

“The food industry is a key contributor to the P.E.I. economy,” says Agriculture and Fisheries Minister Alan McIsaac. “As Canada’s food island, the government wants to ensure the public has continued trust in its food and producers. We’re very pleased to welcome Farm & Food Care to our province. It will help islanders understand more about our province’s food system and develop a greater understanding for how food gets from farm to table.”

Farm & Food Care will be active in promotion, education, program development and consumer outreach. Some of its planned activities include hosting farm tours and Breakfast on the Farm programs, assisting with distribution of the nationally-acclaimed The Real Dirt on Farming publication, and more.

“Farm & Food Care will develop reliable and accurate resources for consumers,” says David Mol, president of the P.E.I. Federation of Agriculture. “These efforts will include events that allow consumers to engage with P.E.I.’s food production, sharing of credible information on food and farming, and resource development for public outreach.”

Ontario was the first province to launch Farm & Food Care in 2012, followed by Saskatchewan in 2014. For more information, visit www.farmfoodcare.org.

DAIRY FARMERS OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR LOOKING FOR MILK TRANSPORTERS

Dairy Farmers of Newfoundland and Labrador (DFNL) is currently inviting tenders from companies interested in transporting raw milk in western Newfoundland and Labrador to various locations in Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

To obtain a copy of the complete Request for Tender for the Transportation of Raw Milk document, contact DFNL by calling 709-364-6634 or emailing milk@dfnl.nf.net. You can also send your request by mail to Dairy Farmers of Newfoundland and Labrador at 308 Brookfield Rd., Building 5A, St. John’s, N.L., A1E 0B2.
FOOD AND BEVERAGE SECTOR FORMS NEW ORGANIZATION

More than 1,500 food and beverage processing businesses across the country unite to launch a new Ottawa-based, national organization mandated to work with governments and other stakeholders on industry priorities.

The new organization, called Food & Beverage Canada (F&BC), will be the national voice for the sector, and will operate under the theme united to nourish the world.

“Food & Beverage Canada is bringing businesses together from coast to coast to seize an unprecedented opportunity,” says Daniel Vieffaure, F&BC co-chair and managing director, Bonduelle Americas Long Life. “This is Canada’s agri-food century. Canada’s food and beverage manufacturers can play a pivotal role in feeding the world, while growing jobs and economic sustainability for communities in rural and urban Canada.”

F&BC will work with governments to effectively shape public policy and industry actions for the benefit of Canadians. Leading issues will include:

- Ensuring smart regulations that serve public interest while maintaining a competitive environment;
- Building a healthier, more sustainable and ethical food system;
- Promoting innovation in food and beverage manufacturing processes and practices;
- Creating global trade opportunities for products;
- Protecting and informing consumers while enabling consumer choice;
- Providing skilled jobs and rewarding employment for Canadians.

Food & Beverage Canada comprises seven regional food and beverage manufacturing associations from coast to coast, as well as industry and stakeholder members. The organization is committed to collaborative relationships and constructive communications with federal and provincial governments. The food and beverage processing industry is the second largest manufacturing industry in Canada in terms of value of production with shipments worth $112.4 billion in 2016, which accounts for 18 per cent of total manufacturing shipments and two per cent of the country’s gross domestic product. The industry supplies about 70 per cent of all processed food and beverage products in Canada and is the largest buyer of foods from Canadian farmers.

“There are a lot of important issues on the table right now,” says Michael Burrows, F&BC co-chair and chief executive officer (CEO) of Maple Lodge Farms. “We believe working together we can contribute positively to Canadians’ quality of life and deliver value for our members. We can strengthen the competitiveness and productivity of the businesses we represent while being a key engine to power sustainable growth in Canada’s economy.”

The founding board of directors comprises the following executive members:

- Co-chairs: Burrows and Vieffaure;
- Vice-chair: Sylvie Cloutier, CEO, Conseil de la transformation alimentaire du Québec;
- Secretary: Rosemary MacLellan, vice-president (VP) of strategy and industry affairs, Gay Lea Foods;
- Treasurer: Joe Makowecki, president and CEO, Heritage Frozen Foods;
- Director at large: Rory McAlpine, senior VP, government and industry relations, Maple Leaf Foods.
Mobile DHI

Access your herd data anytime, anywhere.

2017 WINNER OF
PREMIER’S AWARD FOR
AGRI-FOOD INNOVATION EXCELLENCE

IDENTIFY TRENDS
Swipe through over 20 graphs to identify variations in the herd or specific groups.

COW PROFILES
Analyze individual performance and rank animals by key indicators.

ACCESS THE CLOUD
Get instant access to your herd data from the DHI cloud.

DIRECT ACCESS
Link directly to Holstein Canada and Canadian Dairy Network from each animals’ page.

canwestdhi.com 1 800 549 4373

To celebrate Canada’s annual Agriculture Day, we’re asking you...

HOW DOES THE DAIRY INDUSTRY FIT INTO YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF AGRICULTURE?

The winning entry will be featured in Milk Producer magazine and you’ll receive a prize of $250.

ESSAY CONTEST DETAILS
Who’s eligible: Ontario high school students (Grades 9 to 12)
Essay length: 750-1,000 words
Submission deadline: February 13th at 5:00 p.m. EST
Send entries to: dairyedu@milk.org

@DairyOntario /OntarioDairy
Dairy Farmers of Ontario @dairy_farmersont
Canadians are once again gearing up to celebrate their pride and passion for an industry that puts food on tables across this country and around the world every day.

Canada’s Agriculture Day will be held on Feb. 13 this year, marking the second annual celebration of the sector of the economy that employs one in eight Canadians—from farmers and their suppliers to food processors and retailers.

“It’s a time to showcase all the amazing things happening in Canadian agriculture and help consumers see the connection to where their food comes from and the people who produce it,” says Candace Hill, manager of Agriculture More Than Ever, one of the driving forces behind Canada’s Agriculture Day.

The first Canada’s Agriculture Day on Feb. 16, 2017 inspired hundreds of events across the country, opened doors to food conversations through social media, and showcased the industry to young people who attended a daylong event in Ottawa alongside industry and political leaders.

“Canadian agriculture is an innovative, vibrant and forward-thinking industry, which plays a significant role in our economy,” says Lawrence MacAulay, minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada.

“As Canadians, we can be proud we produce among the safest, high-quality food for our country and the world,” MacAulay says. “Canada’s agriculture and agri-food sector contributes more than $110 billion to our economy, and Canada’s Agriculture Day is an excellent opportunity to take stock of our success and celebrate.”

This year’s celebration will feature even more events, social media conversations and speakers in Ottawa. Bob McDonald, best-selling author and host of CBC’s Quirks and Quarks, will be one of the Ottawa event’s keynote speakers. He is able to provide meaning behind some more complex scientific issues.

“The future of agriculture depends on attracting youth, so we especially want to appeal to young people who are not always aware of the wide range of career opportunities in agriculture,” Hill says. “It’s all about celebrating this dynamic and growing industry while engaging in fun, respectful and informative dialogue.”

The key to a successful Canada’s Agriculture Day starts with the participation of farmers, according to Crystal Mackay, president of the Canadian Centre for Food Integrity. Its most recent survey showed Canadians consider farmers among the most credible sources of information when it comes to making informed decisions about their food.

“Farmers and the entire food system have a great story to tell, which helps earn consumer trust and confidence in food,” Mackay says. “Consumers want to know more, and Canada’s Agriculture Day is a great way to start the conversation in person and on social media.”

Hill says to watch for events and activities happening in communities across Canada, including those sponsored by industry associations, businesses and Agriculture More Than Ever partners.

Individuals can also participate by making a meal for the family using all Canadian foods, snapping a farm or food photo and sharing it on social media using hashtags, such as #CdnAgDay and #FarmLife, or by giving back to their communities by volunteering at local food banks or soup kitchens.

For more ideas on how to celebrate Canada’s Agriculture Day or for a list of community events, visit AgDay.ca.

“To the consumer, our story doesn’t exist until we tell it.”

Andrew Campbell, Agvocate Dairy Producer

Be somebody who does something. Be an agvocate.
Learn more at AgMoreThanEver.ca.
DAIRY FARMS + TOOL AVAILABLE TO PRODUCERS

Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) wants to help producers meet their sustainability goals with the Dairy Farms + tool. Producers can now access an instructional webinar on the Dairy Research Cluster YouTube channel for information on how to use the tool and get the most out of it.

The tool can be accessed at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPEL8VprDNbdKM62H3s_eXQ. It provides an opportunity for producers to:
• Learn and assess their farms’ sustainability with a self-assessment questionnaire and access to more than 110 best management practices (BMP), proven to be efficient, in the BMP library;
• Measure and benchmark their environmental footprint and compare it with provincial and national averages. By estimating their dairy farm’s environmental footprint, producers can establish a baseline for monitoring and assessing their sustainability performance from year to year;
• Take action. A section exists to allow producers to customize their action plans and prioritize their actions based on the tool’s recommendations and their own preferences or expected benefits.

Producers can also access the Dairy Farms + introduction and instruction manual, where they will find all the information to make full use of their time online. Producers are invited to provide their feedback in the satisfaction survey online, which will be used to help improve the tool.

For information or questions, contact Edouard Clément at edouard.clement@groupeageco.ca, or Shelley Crabtree at shelley.crabtree@dairyresearch.ca.

DID YOU KNOW?
You can access Milk Producer online at www.milkproducer.ca. You can read the last six months’ worth of digital editions, as well as access PDF versions of full issues as far back as 2010. Simply scroll to the bottom of the page and click on view archived Milk Producer editions. You can also read our monthly compilation of world news stories from World Dairy Digest.
BIOGAS AND RENEWABLE NATURAL GAS OPPORTUNITIES ON ONTARIO DAIRY FARMS

Livestock manure from dairy farms is a valuable source of renewable energy and nutrients, and many farms favour anaerobic digestion (AD) to treat manure to address environmental concerns, enhance the nutrient value of soil, and diversify revenue streams. There are more than 30 agricultural AD facilities operating in Ontario, seamlessly integrating this proven technology into farm operations.

Biogas is created when organic materials, such as manure and agricultural residues, are broken down in an anaerobic digester, which provides an oxygen-free environment. Biogas is 55 to 60 per cent methane and can be combusted in its raw form for electricity and heat, or cleaned and upgraded to increase methane content producing pipeline-quality natural gas, known as renewable natural gas (RNG).

Biogas facility owners and operators have experienced firsthand the environmental and economic benefits of farm-based AD facilities. In addition to producing biogas, on-farm facilities provide several benefits, including renewable heat for greenhouses, grain drying and farm heating, manure pathogen and weed seed reduction, and production of digestate—the residual material from a biogas plant, which can be used for animal bedding and fertilizer and produces significantly less odour than manure when stored and field applied.

Supportive policies and programs are being developed to further adoption of farm-based AD facilities. Ontario is balancing a number of environmental policy priorities for which biogas and RNG can offer solutions, and unveiled plans to build RNG capacity with the release of the Climate Change Action Plan in 2016.

With proper research and due diligence, opportunities are developing in Ontario for biogas and RNG production as some dairy farms may be interested in investigating. An upcoming key learning opportunity is the 2018 Value of Biogas East conference on March 22 and 23 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Gatineau, Que. The Canadian Biogas Association (CBA) will host the conference. This is Eastern Canada’s largest biogas and RNG conference and an exciting and informative event to learn more about topics affecting the industry and potential for further growth and development.

Along with panels addressing federal and provincial policies and opportunities, there will be a dedicated agricultural session. Farmers can learn about the latest developments in feedstock pre-treatment and foam prevention with an expert panel, as well as explore new opportunities and lessons learned for agricultural biogas and RNG projects with successful and innovative case studies highlighting projects with compact solutions and RNG production.

Valuable networking opportunities provide the chance to meet biogas industry stakeholders, along with the chance to speak directly with technology providers at the exhibitor showcase.

CBA is the collective voice of Canada’s biogas sector, and has been committed to developing the biogas industry to its fullest potential for 10 years. Its members span the entire sector’s value chain and consist of farmers, municipalities, private sector owners and operators of biogas systems, technology suppliers and consultants, financial and learning institutions, utilities, and waste industry and organic residual generators.

Visit www.biogasassociation.ca for more information.

More and more firms just calculate numbers.
We help calculate your next move.

MNP Understands Agriculture.
In fact, it is both a specialty and a passion. Our business consultants, financial advisors and professional agrologists are intimately familiar with all aspects of the dairy industry. Which means not only can we help you make sense of the now, but we can also help show you what’s next.

Contact Larry Batte, Partner, at 519.272.0000 x 301 or larry.batte@mnp.ca

We specialize, you capitalize. Visit MNP.ca to learn more.
FCC CONTRIBUOTES $107,000 TO 216 4-H CLUBS ACROSS CANADA

The Farm Credit Canada (FCC) 4-H Club Fund is providing $107,000 to 216 4-H clubs across Canada to support various local events and activities. In Ontario, 51 4-H clubs received a combined total of $25,000.

“The FCC 4-H Club Fund is part of our long-term investment in the future of agriculture,” says Todd Klink, executive vice-president and chief marketing officer at FCC. “Projects offered through 4-H Canada are aimed at developing leadership, confidence and values young people will need to be successful in this vibrant and growing industry, as well as life outside of agriculture.”

The fund is part of FCC’s $1 million contribution committed over four years to 4-H Canada. This contribution, in addition to supporting local 4-H activities, supports national and provincial 4-H initiatives.

“Of course, it’s no secret we want the next generation to consider a career in agriculture and the agri-food sector, so we are proud to support 4-H programs that strengthen the bond between this industry and young people across Canada,” Klink says.

The FCC 4-H Club Fund awards up to $500 for projects, such as achievement days, horse clinics, field trips, public speaking workshops and equipment purchases to name a few. The next application period opens in fall 2018.

“We are grateful to our partner FCC for its incredible support of 4-H in Canada,” says Shannon Benner, 4-H Canada chief executive officer. “Having a partner that actively engages and shares in our values is extremely valuable to our organization.”

To view the list of recipients, visit www.fcc.ca/4-H.

COW COMFORT IS...

Huber Technik
Comfort & Soft Bed Endless Rolls
Durable Aggrolatex Comfort
The perfect balance between firmness & comfort, combined with HUBER 4GS

SUPERIOR MATTRESS

MADE IN GERMANY

SUPERIOR SAND SAVING

“45-40 percent savings in sand use convinced us to install the GRID in the rest of our stalls. A level bed means that daily stall maintenance is dramatically reduced.”

Lucas Donkers
Rose Vega Farms

SUPERIOR FOOTING

• Virgin Rubber Rolls
• Interlocking mats and patent pending slat mats

Superior Mat & Comfort Inc.
Phone: 519-485-6202 • Cell: 519-533-7643
Email: folkemafarms@sympatico.ca • Website: www.smaci.com

DID YOU KNOW?

You can receive updates on policy matters and programs through various publications. Check out these sources:
• DFC’s Dairy Express e-newsletter;
• Milk Producer, Le Producteur de lait, provincial newsletters;
• www.dairyuniversity.ca/proAction;
• Twitter: @DairyOntario, @dfc_plc;
• Facebook: @OntarioDairy, @dfcplc.
CanWest DHI’s board of directors has re-elected Ed Friesen as chair and Matthew Flaman as vice-chair during a board meeting on Jan. 10, following DHI’s 37th annual general meeting in Toronto.

A milk producer from Kleefeld, Man., Friesen is serving his 12th year on DHI’s board and eighth year as chair. Flaman, a milk producer from Vibank, Sask., is serving his seventh year on the board and second year as vice-chair. Joining Friesen and Flaman on the executive committee are directors Harold Kress of Lucan, Ont., and Bob Matzek of Rosedale, B.C.

CanWest DHI is a milk recording organization providing herd management solutions to dairy producers in Ontario and Western Canada. The board of directors comprises 10 directors representing five provinces serviced by CanWest DHI. A unified board of directors and a single administrative structure support the delivery of DHI services to more than 3,600 herds across four time zones.

ALBERTA MILK STRENGTHENS ENTRANTS PROGRAM FOR NEW DAIRY FARMERS

Alberta Milk recently made changes to its New Entrants Assistance Program (NEAP) to make it more sustainable for current and future participants. The program is aimed at helping alleviate costs associated with starting a dairy farm in Alberta.

Application acceptance for the revised 2018 program began on Jan. 1, 2018 and will continue until March 31, 2018. The program works by offering a quota loan at no cost to successful applicants, under the following criteria:

- Successful applicants will receive two kilograms of loaned quota at no cost for every one kg bought, up to a maximum of 25 kg per day. The 25 kg loan translates to enough quota to milk 18 to 25 additional cows. Previously, applicants would have received only one kg for every one kg bought;
- The quota loan will gradually decrease beginning in the 11th year, previously at seven years, at a rate of 10 per cent per year and then be reduced to zero at the end of year 19;
- While using the program, new entrants can expand up to 100 kg per day of total quota holdings, or about 71 to 100 cows. The previous maximum was 70 kg per day;
- Applicants need to submit a two-year financial business plan, a 10-year implementation plan, a risk mitigation plan, and a signed conditional approval letter from their financial institution agreeing to finance their operation.

The program, which started in 2011, has welcomed 17 new dairy farms into the province and is reviewed annually. Up to three qualified applicants will be accepted in 2018. Although the program is geared toward helping potential farmers enter the industry, one does not need to join the program to become a dairy farmer in Alberta.

“As we look forward, having programs that support new entrants assures the sustainability of our industry,” says Tom Kootstra, Alberta Milk chair. “We have made adjustments to the program to improve the opportunity for new dairy farmers to succeed.”

Further details about the program are available at albertamilk.com or by calling 877-361-1231.

UPCOMING COMPOSTED BEDDING PACK WORKSHOPS:

- Session 1 – Feb. 15, Alma Community Centre, 51 Simpson St. E., Alma, Ont., N0B 1A0;
- Session 2 – Feb. 22, Solina Community Hall, 1964 Concession Rd. 6, Hampton, Ont., L0B 1J0;
- Session 3 – March 8, Richmond, Ont. (Hall to be confirmed).

The cost if you register seven days before a session is $75, and less than seven days is $105. To register and view the detailed agenda, visit www.pdo-ontario.ca.

You Milk. We Help.

Dairy farming today means measuring every input – including advice. Our Agriculture Banking Specialists know the challenges and rewards of milking a herd and keeping the cream.

Talk to one of our Agriculture Banking Specialists today

Mary Lou McCutcheon
Vice President Southwestern Ontario Agriculture Central
519-421-2414

Lorna McKercher
Vice President Southwestern Ontario Agriculture West
519-235-5214

Visit rbc.com/agriculture
Double Grabber, A Proven Winner

This enhanced mechanical head allows the robot arm to fetch two cups at once, creating efficient arm movement and box performance. That means more time available for milking.

This standard feature on all single-box and double-box robots can help you reach your performance and profitability goals.
SMART CALF SYSTEM

There are many options for using technology to help monitor and manage your herd, and the calf barn is no exception.

Calf behaviour is a great indicator of health and welfare. Calf managers know the key to success is watching calf behaviour, knowing what is normal, and responding to changes. However, most farms don’t have the luxury of having staff standing by the calf pen to observe their behaviour all day long, and it can be difficult training people to notice small behavioural changes that could indicate a health or welfare problem if they aren’t watching calves all day. Luckily, innovative technology companies have developed sensors and computers to perform this vital task.

The Smart Calf System was introduced by Förster-Technik to the public for the first time at EuroTier 2016, the leading trade fair for animal husbandry professionals in Germany, and one of the world’s top livestock trade-shows. The system earned a gold medal from DLG, a German agricultural association, for the system’s highly innovative design. At this year’s World Dairy Expo, the system made its debut to the North American market. Canadian producers at Canada’s Outdoor Farm Show got to see the smart neckband in the Grober Young Animal Development Centre. Producers can visit http://bit.do/smartcalf to watch a video of the Smart Calf System, which will be available in North America in 2018.

The two main components of this system are the activity box attached to a Förster-Technik automatic feeder and smart neckband. Data from the activity box and smart neckband are transmitted via CalfCloud, an Internet-based service. The system provides information on calves’ growth, development and disease risks from the data.

The smart neckband is a collar with an activity sensor and LED signal light. The activity sensor is similar to a fitness tracker one wears on their wrist or has on a smartphone. By measuring a calf’s activity, conclusions can be drawn about the animal’s growth and health status.

Extensive behavioural studies have shown movement and playing behaviour decrease significantly with illness, and result in reduced activity times, and more time doing the same activity, such as laying down longer. These studies also revealed there is a significant difference in behaviour and activity between healthy and sick animals.

Another feature of the smart neckband is the signal light, which is controlled via CalfCloud. Animals can be displayed individually or in temporary groups, such as animals with an increased risk of disease, in need of vaccination, or meeting any alarm criteria as set by the farm. When activated, the light on the collar flashes, making the selected calf or calves easy to find.

The activity box is equipped with a two-axis movable nipple. This allows the calf to perform natural udder bumping behaviour. An integrated activity sensor registers these udder bumps. Thus, a new parameter is recorded, which supports the early detection of stress and increased disease risks.

Studies have shown drinking behaviour is closely related to emerging diseases. The Smart Calf System signals an increased risk of disease about two to four days before a visible finding. Activity on the nipple is also a parameter that supports automated and objective assessment of animal welfare since environmental conditions affect drinking behaviour. Using this novel behaviour tracking, new insights into calf health and welfare can be used to enhance management. As this is such a new area of research, necessary algorithms are currently still under development.

The Smart Calf System combines the activity box and smart neckband data. Even before you see signs of sickness, activity, visits to the feeder and drinking speed decrease and drinking interruptions increase. The system also provides messages to the automatic calf feeder and-or an external device, such as a computer, tablet or smartphone, by sending early warnings and alerts. Since the system is browser-based, it does not matter which hardware or operating system is used. Calf health monitoring can take place anywhere.

The Smart Calf System has a modular structure that includes a smart water station to monitor water intake. As a result, individual components can be combined to create a smart calf barn that works for producers and their herds. Taking advantage of these innovative products past generations could only dream of can provide major stepping stones for staff in charge of calf care to focus on big-picture management. The Smart Calf System can help managers understand their calves’ needs and respond with targeted management changes to keep calves productive, healthy and experiencing good welfare.
CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Feb. 9-10
JERSEY ONTARIO AGM
Belleville, Ont.
www.jerseycanada.com

Feb. 13
CANADA’S AGRICULTURAL DAY
www.agriculturemorethanever.ca/cdn-ag-day

Feb. 22
35TH SOUTHWESTERN DAIRY SYMPOSIUM
Woodstock Fairgrounds
Woodstock, Ont.
www.dairysymposium.com

Feb. 27-28
ONTARIO BRANCH ANNUAL MEETING
The Festival Inn
Stratford, Ont.
www.ontario.holstein.ca

Mar. 6-8
WESTERN CANADIAN DAIRY SEMINAR
Sheraton Hotel
Red Deer, Alta.
https://wcds.ualberta.ca

Mar. 15-17
JERSEY CANADA AGM
Ajax, Ont.
www.jerseycanada.com

Mar. 17-18
AG IN THE CITY
The Forks Market
Winnipeg, Man.
www.aginthecity.ca

Mar. 20-22
DFO POLICY MEETING
Nottawasaga Inn Resort
Alliston, Ont.
www.milk.org

Apr. 4-5
CANADIAN DAIRY XPO
Stratford Rotary Complex
Stratford, Ont.
www.dairyxpo.ca

Apr. 5-7
2018 JERSEY ONTARIO YOUTH SEMINAR
400 Club region
Barrie, Ont.
www.jerseyontario.ca

May 3-5
DAIRY SENSE WORKSHOP
University of Guelph
Guelph, Ont.
www.4-hontario.ca

June 3-5
ONTARIO DAIRY COUNCIL
The Westin
Ottawa, Ont.
www.ontariodairies.ca

Brrr... It’s Cold Outside!

Mapleview Agri

Watch for your FREE Mapleview Calf Coat

Included in full skids of Mapleview calf milk replacers.

For a complete list of our dealers visit our website at www.mapleviewagri.ca

Easy to mix
Highest quality ingredients
Optimum digestibility
For use in computer feeders or hand mixing

Tip of the Month:
Using a calf coat from October to April reduces stress on calves.
With more than 25 years of experience across multiple sectors, Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) has appointed Jacques Lefebvre as DFC’s chief executive officer (CEO) as of Jan. 8.

“I am very excited to be joining DFC and for the opportunity to work closely with our board of directors, members, staff and stakeholders on behalf of Canadian dairy farmers,” Lefebvre says.

Lefebvre is a strong leader who brings a wealth of knowledge and insight to DFC. In his former role as president and CEO of Dairy Processors Association of Canada (DPAC), he acquired an in-depth understanding of Canada’s dairy sector, and the importance of Canadian dairy farmers to the economy, as well as the health and well-being of Canadians.

“(Jacques) is a proven leader and is deeply committed to our dairy sector,” says Pierre Lampron, DFC’s president. “Jacques understands all the challenges we are facing, and will be a champion for us. I look forward to working closely with him.

Lefebvre says the industry is currently enjoying unprecedented growth in the market. At the same time, new trade agreements are raising questions that need to be addressed in the interest of producers. These key areas will be his main focus in his new role.

“I want to ensure DFC continues to provide high value for producers in line with their expectations of the organization,” he says. “Additionally, it is critical we continue to promote the value of our supply management system to key decision-makers, and work to educate all Canadians

Jacques Lefebvre has been appointed Dairy Farmers of Canada’s new chief executive officer.
about the system. Finally, I believe our sector should have a clear vision for its future, and we need to get the ball rolling. In the absence of that vision, we will be left reacting to somebody else’s agenda.”

Lefebvre says the past two years at DPAC enabled him to learn about the sector, including the challenges it faces. “I have also had the privilege to work with leaders in the dairy community. It was important for me at the time to understand the realities of dairy producers across the country. One of these opportunities came when Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s board member Henry Oosterhof and his family invited me to their farm. They were very generous with their time, and my many questions. I look forward to meeting many more producers to further my knowledge and understanding so I will be even better equipped to be a champion on behalf of our industry.”

Lefebvre has held senior executive positions with national member organizations, both in business and non-profit sectors. Over the last 25 years, he acquired experience in senior management, government relations, strategic affairs, stakeholder relations, communications, change management and journalism.

He began his career as a national affairs reporter and was elected president of the Parliamentary Press Gallery in 1996. He later transitioned into the federal government and held senior positions with cabinet ministers, before pursuing senior executive opportunities with Canada’s Research-Based Pharmaceutical Companies and the Canadian Medical Association.

“I welcome the opportunity to use my past experience, inside and outside the dairy sector, to bring our industry together as we face tremendous pressure on trade and government relations issues,” Lefebvre says. “It is more important than ever we work collectively to defend and promote the industry.”

Lefebvre has a bachelor’s degree in social communications from the University of Ottawa/Saint Paul University, and a master’s degree in public ethics from Saint Paul University. His executive development includes strategic planning, marketing, and certification from the Reputation Institute.

DFC brings you the latest national marketing and nutrition news with this feature. Learn more about the programs and activities we carry out to get the most from your promotion dollar. We welcome your comments, so write or fax us at:

DFC, c/o co-ordinator, member relations and internal communications
21 Florence St., Ottawa, Ont., K2P 0W6
Tel: 613 236-9997 ext 2780
Email: Emilie.Jadot@dfc-plc.ca

STAY INFORMED WITH
THE DAIRY EXPRESS

Sign up now for Dairy Express, Dairy Farmers of Canada’s bi-monthly newsletter. Email emilie.jadot@dfc-plc.ca to have your name added to the mailing list.


EVERY INDUSTRY, including agriculture, is required to assess workplace violence risks. This involves evaluating a workplace’s physical environment and any threats it may pose, as well as other risk factors, such as whether employees undergo violence and harassment training.

LAST MONTH, we discussed the first steps in establishing a health and safety program, particularly in developing a commitment statement. We laid out the foundation for what your commitment statement must include, as well as the purpose of drafting such a document. It was noted everyone has a general obligation to health and safety on the farm. Following up to the initial implementation, this article will cover the second component of a health and safety program, which involves setting specific responsibilities that address violence, harassment and bullying in the workplace.

Violence, harassment and bullying are increasingly becoming a concern in many workplaces. Due to this issue, and the need to provide a safe work environment for employees, the Ontario government introduced an amendment to Ontario’s Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA) known as Bill 168. The legislation went into effect in 2010 and aims to protect workers from violence and harassment.

The act sets out roles and responsibilities of workplaces with respect to violence and harassment, including developing and implementing policies and programs, and providing information and instruction on these areas. The bill outlines stiff penalties for Ontario employers who fail to meet their responsibilities and duties under the law.

In some provinces, such as British Columbia, provincial legislation exists which outlines the importance of implementing measures to prevent and address workplace violence and harassment. For example, B.C. workplaces are subject to the Occupational Health and Safety Regulation, which contains legal requirements that must be met by all workplaces under the inspectional jurisdiction of WorkSafeBC. In provinces that do not have such legislation, there is still a duty for employers to protect employees from such actions under other general labour laws regarding employee well-being and providing a safe working environment. No matter what province your farm resides in, the same concern and duty for action remains, which is to take all necessary steps to prevent and address harassment and violence in the workplace.

ASSESSING RISKS

Every industry, including agriculture, is required to assess workplace violence risks. This involves evaluating a workplace’s physical environment and any threats it may pose, as well as other risk factors, such as whether employees undergo violence and harassment training.

Assessments are easy to conduct. In Ontario, there’s an online resource available through the Occupational Health and Safety Council of Ontario’s workplace violence risk assessment e-tool at http://www.pshsa.website/wvrat/index.php?sid=24399&lang=en. This online tool outlines all the potential areas that should be assessed on your farm. The assessment can be done either by the farm owner, farm manager or, if you have multiple managers or supervisors, by an appointed person. By conducting the assessment, you will automatically generate the required documentation you’ll need to prove your farm’s compliance with applicable regulations, as
well as highlight areas you need to address to ensure your team’s continued safety. For example, here are a couple questions you’ll need to consider when conducting the assessment:

1. Is the lighting around the farm’s exterior adequate?

2. Is there a sign notifying visitors to report to the main office immediately upon entering the facility?

Violence and harassment do not only occur between co-workers, but can arise from external parties, such as visitors, salespeople or suppliers. Therefore, make sure you assess your farm from every perspective. Your focus should be on building a comprehensive workplace violence and harassment policy and program that is applicable to everyone and every scenario.

Throughout the assessment exercise, you will be given suggestions based on what areas you’ve reviewed. Once you have completed the assessment, you’ll be left with a list of items that may require attention. For example, you may realize when examining your farm’s parking area you need more exterior lighting to prevent someone being startled by an intruder in the dark. Not only will this assessment give you this kind of detail, it’s a handy reference you can refer to throughout the year to ensure you’ve addressed all the flagged items. Print it and keep a copy in your office in case you need to demonstrate compliance if you’re ever questioned by a government body visiting your farm.

DEVELOPING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Another component of a health and safety program is developing workplace violence and harassment policies and procedures that meet legal requirements under Bill 168. The following outlines what components need to be included in this document:

• Employee responsibilities, including supervisory and management roles. This section is to ensure everyone is aware of and follows these policies and procedures, and investigate and deal with all complaints and incidences of workplace violence and harassment;
• A statement on your farm’s stance on workplace violence and harassment. For example, this section could contain a simple statement that violence and harassment will not be tolerated, which could result in disciplinary action up to and including termination;
• A list of actions that will not be tolerated, such as sexual harassment, sexual abuse, bullying, physical violence, malicious behaviour, targeting another employee, and domestic violence. Although domestic violence happens at home, if an employer suspects domestic violence is also occurring at the workplace, he or she has a duty to inquire about the matter;
• Definitions of the above behaviours and actions;
• Procedure for reporting violence and harassment, such as how and when an employee should report such an incident, and to whom;
• Investigation procedures, such as determining how quickly management will investigate complaints, including who will be involved in the investigation. This section should also include a provision that states any parties involved in a dispute resulting in an investigation will not work together during that time period;
• Investigation results. Include wording that outlines if and how results from the investigation will be communicated to the affected parties and-or management;
• Confidentiality. Include a statement that lets your staff know you will keep their information confidential, but if they make a formal complaint against another employee, you will inform the other party a complaint has been made against them and by whom;
• No reprisals policy. It’s important for your team members to know you will not punish, reprimand or treat them differently when they bring forward a claim of violence or harassment in the workplace.

Along with complete policy and procedure guidelines detailed above, a shortened, one-page summary of your farm’s viewpoint on workplace violence and harassment should be posted in the barn or farm office. Place it in an area where all visitors and team members will see it, and ensure the document is signed and dated yearly by the most senior person in your operation.

NEW POLICY TRAINING

As you build your health and safety program, you will find each step involves a lot of training. At a minimum, your employees should be aware of the following:

• Responsibilities of each employee and manager with respect to violence and harassment procedures in the workplace;
• What violence, harassment, bullying, etc. are and what each of these serious actions entail;
• What to do if they experience or witness violence and-or harassment;
• How investigations into violence and harassment will be handled, including reporting results;
• Consequences if they have committed a serious offense, including disciplinary steps that may be taken, such as suspension without pay, written warning, termination, extra training, etc.;
• Anything else you deem important and relevant to inform your team about violence and harassment in the workplace.

By developing a set of policies and procedures, properly training employees and conducting a thorough workplace assessment, your operation will be one step closer in preventing and eliminating workplace violence and harassment, and complying with OHSA or other provincial labour laws.

Watch for the March Farm Safety article, which will address the internal responsibility system and other day-to-day responsibilities under OHSA for employees, supervisors and managers. Now that we’ve covered your commitment statement under a health and safety program, and how to prepare workplace and violence procedures, you and your employees are two steps closer to being compliant, happy and safe.

DANIELLE PASZTOR is the dairy safety specialist with People Management Group. For more information, visit www.peoplemanagementgroup.com or follow on Twitter @udderlysafe.
Working in the dairy industry and for dairy farmers are privileges that must not be taken for granted, says Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s (DFO) newest general manager and chief executive officer.

Graham Lloyd told delegates advocating for the industry amidst ongoing trade threats, changes to domestic policies concerning Canada’s Food Guide and strategy, and evolving consumer trends are his primary focus throughout this year.

Despite the fact the industry has been thriving and growing while also experiencing real threats to the system that sustains it, it’s important to recognize Canada is in a unique position to face these challenges and overcome them, Lloyd says, adding dairy producers in the United States, Europe and Australia face incredible hardship due to having to operate under highly volatile and unregulated markets.

There was a time when the issue of trade affecting the dairy industry would not have come to mind, Lloyd says, especially since just over a year ago Canada had concluded two agreements—the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) with the European Union.

“When you stop and think about it, after TPP and CETA, there were no other dairy exporting countries left that we didn’t have a trade agreement with, so we assumed we would be safe from trade threats for a while,” Lloyd concedes.

But today’s environment presents a different reality, which started after the election of U.S. President Donald Trump. One of his first acts was to withdraw from TPP, and by last summer, he announced his intention to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Since then, the U.S. has repeatedly demanded the dismantling of supply management during the renegotiation process.

This constant threat creates uncertainty, which harms investment and growth, Lloyd says. As if NAFTA alone were not enough to deal with, the revised TPP raises other concerns for the industry, Lloyd points out. Many elements in TPP overlap or coincide with NAFTA. For instance, in the original TPP it was expected the U.S., Australia and New Zealand would share the 3.25 per cent access to Canada’s dairy market. However, in the revised TPP with the remaining 11 countries, the same 3.25 per cent access is now only available to New Zealand and Australia, while the U.S. seeks its own access through NAFTA. Lloyd says Canadian dairy stakeholders recognize this imbalance and have been asking government officials to readjust access in the new TPP to reflect the U.S. no longer being a part of negotiations.

"Officially, the Canadian government has stated supply management is not on the table and will be protected.”   - Graham Lloyd
“There remains a real risk of more access being granted to the U.S. through NAFTA, and that Canada will (have to) open its borders even more,” Lloyd says, adding DFO and other industry stakeholders are committed to continue working with the Canadian government to protect and defend Canada’s dairy system.

“Officially, the Canadian government has stated supply management is not on the table and will be protected,” he says. “But it remains our job to continue to work with them to ensure they appreciate why it should be protected.”

On the food guide issue, Lloyd says dairy has been targeted as a food group Canadians should reduce or treat as an alternative. “This, to me, could be one of the biggest threats to our industry,” he says.

In the proposed new food guide, dairy—particularly low-fat varieties—could move from an essential category to being recommended as a second or alternative source of protein, with vegetables and legumes coming first. The food guide is used by institutions, such as hospitals, cafeterias and schools, to determine menus. Removing dairy as a main category and recommending only low-fat milk and milk products could harm the industry, Lloyd says.

The federal government’s food strategy is also examining front-of-pack labelling, which looks to implement a system that will warn Canadians not to consume foods high in fat, sugar and salt, regardless of their nutrient values.

“So a diet soft drink may be seen as healthier than a yogurt drink, and a bag of potato chips better than a piece of cheese. This, too, is problematic (for the industry) because it will cause confusion and deter milk consumption,” Lloyd says.

Working with other stakeholders and spreading positive messages about the industry are helpful ways to combat myths and misinformation, he says. Lloyd asks producers, processors and stakeholders to help tell dairy’s good news story.

“We need Canadians, media and politicians to know what we are doing to debunk myths about our industry,” he says. “My challenge to everyone is to do everything you can to get this message out. Use social media, tell your friends, meet with politicians, your neighbours, anyone who will listen. I hope you will accept this challenge.”

**DFO CHAIR: INDUSTRY PRIMED FOR GROWTH**

“O ur system works best when we can get the right amount of milk, at the right time, to the right places. This is the essence of the Canadian dairy system that benefits all stakeholders, including producers, processors and government,” says Ralph Dietrich, DFO’s chair.

During the 2016-17 dairy year, the industry experienced fantastic growth, he says. “This is a great time for the Canadian dairy industry. With continued record growth and support from our government and processors, we have a very bright future to sustain our supply-managed system,” he adds.

Producers also benefitted from more than 10 per cent new quota, and with recent processor investments, the demand for milk will continue to grow. In fact, the industry needs to prepare for six per cent anticipated growth in demand heading into 2019, which will require producers to increase production at the farm level, Dietrich says.

“We will need more milk in the system because we know of new processing plants and even more growth. For instance, the Chinese infant formula plant has started its construction and we need to make sure we can provide the milk they need. As well, we know other plants have made and are making significant investments, which will require more milk,” he says.

Dietrich also talked about other achievements, including the national ingredients program, proAction, trade and DFO’s decision to implement an Ontario marketing and promotion strategy, to name a few.

**PROACTION**

The national proAction program not only lets producers demonstrate dairy excellence and leadership, it enables them to provide proof to processors, retailers and consumers Canadian dairy producers provide safe milk in a responsible manner.

“proAction is important to the industry as a whole since it formalizes what we all know should be done with respect to animal care, traceability, safe environmental and biohazard care and practices,” Dietrich says. “If we truly believe processors are our customers, and consumers determine our markets, then proAction is really important because they—our customers and consumers—are increasingly expecting proof of where their food comes from and how it is made.”

**TRADE**

Talking about why the Canadian dairy system works to provincial and federal government representatives has been the goal of DFO, Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) and other stakeholders over the past year, and will continue to be throughout 2018, Dietrich says. “If we can show them (government) why the system works and the benefits it brings, they will have a greater appreciation of why it deserves to be defended because it is in Canada’s best interest to do so,” he says.

**PROMOTION**

DFO’s board and staff are currently developing an effective marketing and promotion program as they determine how best to allocate and invest the marketing and promotion dollars DFO no longer submits to DFC. Dietrich says the goal is simple—to maximize the use of promotion dollars to grow markets.

“We expect over the course of 2018, DFO will develop its own programs, working closely with key stakeholders to meet our primary goal of growing the dairy market in a measurable and sustainable way,” he says.

Dietrich emphasizes while DFO is no longer funding DFC marketing and promotion, DFO’s board will continue to recognize DFC as the national organization and will work collaboratively with DFC in several areas, such as national lobbying, national dairy policies and trade.

“We believe there is a very important role for DFC and we want a strong DFC to represent the industry in these national matters,” he says.

**RALPH DIETRICH, Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s board chair.**
PREPARING FOR FUTURE PROACTION VALIDATIONS

With proAction’s biosecurity validations starting in September 2019, dairy producers are encouraged to review their biosecurity measures to prepare for implementation.

“We have an opportunity to learn about these requirements and put them into action on our farms,” says David Wiens, chair of the proAction committee, during DFO’s annual general meeting in January.

Some of the biosecurity requirements include a risk assessment, vaccination, measures when bringing new or returning cattle to the farm, visitor management and recording disease events. When biosecurity validations begin in September 2019, training for the environmental sustainability requirements will also begin to prepare producers for the first phase of implementation in September 2021.

Along with updating producers on future program requirements, Wiens also provided an update on proAction’s animal care and traceability requirements, which were implemented in September 2017. He says the animal care and traceability validations have “gone quite smoothly,” with cattle assessments the highlight of the program.

“When cattle assessments began, there was some apprehension from farmers, but they found it actually helped them manage the herd,” Wiens says. “Farmers appreciate having good people on the farm to assess their cows.”

About 40 per cent of herds have been assessed in Ontario as of the end of 2017. Since July 2017, DFC began releasing peer reports, which gave producers an indication of how their farms compare with their peers.

This year, Wiens says DFC’s animal care technical committee will evaluate cattle assessment results to explore options to move to static targets, define expectations for continuous improvement, and corrective action plans. Overall, Wiens says feedback on proAction has been positive.

“Farmers have noted appreciation for more awareness on certain issues and for bringing the industry to a common standard,” he says.

Across Canada, 99 per cent of farms have premises identification numbers and farms have been double tagging cows at birth, Wiens says. The Ditto committee will evaluate cattle assessment results to explore options to move to static targets, define expectations for continuous improvement, and corrective action plans. Overall, Wiens says feedback on proAction has been positive.

“We have an opportunity to learn about these requirements and put them into action on our farms,” says David Wiens, chair of the proAction committee, during DFO’s annual general meeting in January.

Some of the biosecurity requirements include a risk assessment, vaccination, measures when bringing new or returning cattle to the farm, visitor management and recording disease events. When biosecurity validations begin in September 2019, training for the environmental sustainability requirements will also begin to prepare producers for the first phase of implementation in September 2021.

Along with updating producers on future program requirements, Wiens also provided an update on proAction’s animal care and traceability requirements, which were implemented in September 2017. He says the animal care and traceability validations have “gone quite smoothly,” with cattle assessments the highlight of the program.

“When cattle assessments began, there was some apprehension from farmers, but they found it actually helped them manage the herd,” Wiens says. “Farmers appreciate having good people on the farm to assess their cows.”

About 40 per cent of herds have been assessed in Ontario as of the end of 2017. Since July 2017, DFC began releasing peer reports, which gave producers an indication of how their farms compare with their peers.

This year, Wiens says DFC’s animal care technical committee will evaluate cattle assessment results to explore options to move to static targets, define expectations for continuous improvement, and corrective action plans. Overall, Wiens says feedback on proAction has been positive.

“Farmers have noted appreciation for more awareness on certain issues and for bringing the industry to a common standard,” he says.

Across Canada, 99 per cent of farms have premises identification numbers and farms have been double tagging cows at birth, Wiens says. The

NEW PERSPECTIVE ON FAT AND CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

There is no clear evidence saturated fats and cholesterol lead to cardiovascular disease, according to Dr. Andrew Samis, assistant professor in the department of surgery at Queen’s University.

“There are no clear health benefits of reducing the total fat we eat,” Samis says. “We need to start a dialogue about healthy fat and we need to have research around healthy fat, but that dialogue is not happening.”

Samis spoke to dairy producers during DFO’s annual general meeting, providing a new perspective on saturated fat and cardiovascular disease. Samis focuses on looking after his patients and those who have suffered a heart attack or stroke, but he says it is problematic when the federal government is making non-scientific dietary recommendations.

He says society tends to cringe when they think of fat believing it’s not healthy, but he says today, there are almost the same number of studies claiming saturated fat is healthy, neutral or bad, making it confusing for consumers. Samis says when there are such contradictory studies on this topic, the government should not be making recommendations one way or the other because if they get it wrong, it could do harm to people.

Cholesterol has been vilified as far back as 1913, and fat has been demonized since the 1950s. The diet-heart hypothesis in 1951 promoted diets low in saturated fat and high in carbohydrates. A hypothesis made during this period claimed the more dairy and meat people eat, the higher the chance of heart attack and stroke, but Samis says there was no real evidence supporting this claim.

The McGovern Report, chaired by United States senator George McGovern, added to that belief, listing guidelines on what people should eat with no scientific evidence to back those claims.

“He proclaimed to the world the world was made without evidence,” Samis says, adding many of those guidelines are still used today, and has also been seen through the evolution of Canada’s Food Guide.

Between 1970 and 2000, following the release of the McGovern Report, 15,000 low-fat products were introduced on the market creating big business for food processors. Samis says hundreds of millions of dollars were spent trying to prove cutting out fat reduces heart disease, but science has yet to prove that claim. In fact, when the McGovern Report was released and people switched away from fat and increased carbohydrates, that was the beginning of the obesity epidemic, he says.

Samis says total dietary fat represents about one-third of what people eat, and yet society is ignoring the remaining two-thirds of the diet. He says people should instead pay attention to the whole diet, and look at the effects of processed and highly refined foods, including sugar and flour.

“People are moving away from whole natural foods to things that come out of a box and they think they’re making a healthy choice,” Samis says. “Let’s talk about the whole diet.”

Currently, one of the guiding principles in developing a new Canada’s Food Guide is people should consume foods with more unsaturated fats and less saturated fats, such as meat and dairy.

“Our federal government is about to release a food guide that’s not based on scientific evidence,” Samis says. “They need to do a proper scientific review and they haven’t.”

He says not only will this hurt his patients, but it will also hurt the dairy industry.

“You are invested because it affects your livelihood, so you need to raise the alarm about this food guide,” he says. “There is no science behind this.”
Wisconsin Dairy Farmers Favour System Similar to Supply Management

When the reason you’re not able to service your feed costs, pay your vet bills, or cover any of the other myriad expenses to run a dairy farm is due to supply and demand imbalances, it makes you respect the idea of inventory management, such as Canada’s supply management system, says Darin Von Ruden, Wisconsin Farmers Union president (WFU).

Von Ruden, a third-generation dairy farmer, has served as WFU president since 2010. He also serves on the National Farmers Union Board and is chair of the NFU Membership Committee. It has been Von Ruden’s mission to not only increase membership enrollment for WFU, but find ways to keep dairy farming as a viable livelihood in his state. In 2015, he formed a committee to examine why dairy farmers were leaving the profession in record numbers. Recent statistics reveal Wisconsin loses a dairy farmer every day and about 500 dairy herds per year. In fact, Von Ruden says Wisconsin will likely have fewer than 8,000 dairy farms by the end of this year.

The union surveyed its members in 2016 and received just over 1,000 responses from close to 8,500 it sent out. The results showed the average farmer has been in business since 1986 and milks 126 cows, but what was troubling is many of these producers were struggling to make ends meet, and most never fully recovered from plunging milk prices that occurred in 2008-09. In fact, U.S. milk price volatility has been growing larger since the mid-80s, and has been ongoing since 2009, which is unlikely to be reversed anytime soon, Von Ruden says.

Not only do solutions need to be found in the immediate to address attrition in the industry, Von Ruden says a long-term option to address fluctuating supply and demand issues needs to be established.

“At one point we talked about supply management, but no one in the U.S. likes to talk about quota,” Von Ruden notes.

However, after facing such dire situations on the farm, Von Ruden says more producers are opening up to talking about implementing a system similar to supply management. The general consensus is farmers want a program they run, and not someone else doing it for them.

“It’s hard for farmers when they’re getting $23 per hundredweight one month and then next month it’s down to $14. You can’t update and invest or modernize equipment,” Von Ruden says, adding some producers recognize supply management tightly controls market needs with production, unlike in the U.S., which does not follow a responsible approach to managing supply.

However, Von Ruden says there are still some farmers who want to produce as much as they can and don’t think about the repercussions over production will have on everyone else. Add this to the fact processing capacity in the state is very limited, one can see why so many farmers are struggling to stay afloat, Von Ruden says.

And the struggle is real. Von Ruden shared some feedback received through the survey, which paints a very troubling picture of what’s happening in the industry. For instance, one farmer wrote, “We personally have never recovered from 2009 low prices. We are just treading water and getting very tired. Not sure how long we will be able to hold on.” Another wrote, “Don’t know what to do. What’s here today is gone tomorrow.” And yet another said, “Farming used to be fun. It’s not fun anymore.” The most troubling comment came from a farmer experiencing health issues as a result of financial stress. “I cannot afford monthly bills. I rely on loans just to pay monthly bills. The stress of this—not knowing if my family is going to have a home—gives me high blood pressure and migraines. My kids, ages eight and 10, love living on the farm, but the stress is making it not worthwhile.”

WFU believes the U.S. needs to take steps to control production in order to have a sustainable dairy system, Von Ruden says. He cautions the same scenario is playing out in other states, such as New York and California, which are pushing for more milk production. “What happens in New York and California affects the whole country,” he says.

Von Ruden says one way to get buy-in for some sort of control system would be to call it something different. “U.S. farmers tend to shy away from the words ‘supply management’ or ‘quota’ so maybe we need to use different terminology, but we should still implement a similar system to Canada’s,” he says.

He suggested Canadian dairy officials visit their U.S. counterparts to help them set up a system, and that this would be a good way to increase interaction between the two countries.

“Keeping inventory in check keeps farmers on the land and food on the table,” he says.

Dairy producer committees voted to approve DFO’s 2018 budget during the organization’s annual general meeting.

The budget is largely the same as what was presented during DFO’s fall regional meetings in October. This includes spending about $20.77 million in operating expenses during 2018, as well as about $1.43 million in capital expenses.

Some of the capital projects include $585,700 for the application framework, $160,000 to replace vehicles for field services representatives, and $139,100 to purchase a calibration truck.

DFO staff is projecting revenues to increase by $1.48 million over 2017 due to higher production, licence fees and interest revenue. Reserve levels are estimated to be at $9.3 million at the end of the fiscal year, giving DFO a $381,300 surplus by the end of the year.

Along with presenting the 2018 budget, staff also gave producers a snapshot of 2017’s financial report, which includes accumulated reserves of $8.9 million—representing more than five months of operating expenses. Excess reserves were returned to producers in the form of licence fee holidays in February 2017 and September 2017.
PROCESSOR PERSPECTIVES ON ANIMAL WELFARE POLICIES

Interest in animal welfare, including abuse and neglect, is growing at the consumer and retail levels. Implementing sound animal welfare policies is not just good business practice, it allows farmers and those working with animals to demonstrate to the public they are committed to providing good animal care and following certain standards.

It is why DFO is currently discussing next steps in implementing an animal abuse and neglect policy, says George MacNaughton, DFO’s operations director. It has already initiated discussions with processors and academia on what to do when there’s animal abuse on a farm, MacNaughton says. Defining what is abuse and how to qualify it, what to do with a downed animal, and what practices are needed that outline what producers should be doing to reflect their values and align with processors’ needs are all a part of those discussions, he says.

With heightened awareness on the issue, DFO invited two processors, one from Canada and one from the U.S., to share their views with delegates on how animal welfare impacts their businesses. Here is what they shared during their presentations:

SAPUTO

Saputo, a multi-national company with 12,500 employees and the largest cheesemaker in Canada, has had an animal welfare policy for some time, says Dr. Warren Skippon, director of animal welfare for the company. The original policy, which comprised a set of “motherhood statements,” lacked teeth, he says. But that changed in 2014 when an animal cruelty video surfaced from a Chilliwack farm in British Columbia. Saputo got caught in the crossfire when people saw its Dairyland milk carton used on the farm’s website. What ensued was an immense outcry from the public and on social media, Skippon says. It went as far as people demanding Saputo cease operations and its call centre staff receiving death threats.

It didn’t take long for Saputo to stop accepting milk from the farm due to loss of demand for products made from the farm’s milk. Not long after, Saputo hired Skippon and launched the Saputo Animal Welfare Policy. Developed through extensive consultations with industry stakeholders across the Saputo value chain, the policy is based on science and aligns with national animal welfare assessments, Skippon says.

The policy has two main elements: zero tolerance for any act of cruelty to an animal, which includes steps for reintegration, reinstatement and other measures, and incorporating recognized codes and minimum standards, which could include lameness and body condition scores. Other areas in the policy deemed important to animal welfare are appropriate handling procedures, which include educating truckers, euthanasia protocols, and dealing with downed and sick cows.

The policy also covers what Saputo considers “non-negotiables,” such as tail docking, and pain control with dehorning and disbudding. Saputo also developed the Saputo Dairy Care Program, offered at the University of Guelph through the Campbell Centre for the Study of Animal Welfare and the Ontario Veterinary College. The program focuses on providing practical dairy welfare education to veterinary students, veterinary practitioners and dairy producers.

Skippon says other measures the industry should consider putting in place are aligning consequences for major non-compliance with programs such as proAction, and adding a third-party auditing component in programs with a subset of farms on an annual basis to make animal welfare programs even more robust.

DEAN FOODS

One of the leading food and beverage companies in the U.S., Dean Foods produces a full line of dairy products made with milk the company purchases from farms across the country and as far as Hawaii, says Dr. Jennifer Walker, director of dairy stewardship. Dean Foods receives about one load of milk every 80 seconds and has more than 5,000 farms that contribute to its supply, she says. An expert in bovine health and on-farm management practices, Walker was hired in 2010 to help Dean Foods create industry-leading best practices in animal welfare, milk quality and farm resource management.

“We are well aware the decisions we make as a company have an impact on the welfare of your cows and your business. We take it seriously,” she says, adding her job is to protect Dean Foods’ brand and its end users, such as Walmart and McDonald’s. “We have to protect them since we are their supplier.”

Walker says the practices producers follow have a direct impact on the company’s bottom line. Concerns with milk quality, antibiotic use, cull cow decisions and animal welfare all play a part in determining whether consumers buy Dean Food’s products.

“So a lot of producers still think if their milk meets our Grade A standards then what do we have to worry about, but that is simply not the case,” she says.

Gross and negligent abuse of handling cattle can result in massive food recalls, even though such an act is initially deemed an animal welfare issue. “The decisions you make on your farm matter to companies such as Saputo and Dean Foods,” she says.

Walker recalled a story that directly affected Dean Foods when an animal abuse video from Florida went viral. Three workers from McArthur Farms in Okeechobee were arrested after Miami-based Animal Recovery Mission released video footage showing cows being abused with sticks and pipes. The uproar resulted in Dean Foods receiving backlash and Walker death threats.

“If you only care when the light is shining on us then we have a problem.”

- Dr. Jennifer Walker

“We can’t have a sustainable system that doesn’t put animal welfare at the center,” Walker says. “People expect we treat animals well. There’s an element of trust and social licence. It’s not enough to say you do it. You also have to prove it, but it has to be credible. It can’t be fluff.”

Dean Foods’ approach to dairy stewardship is to promote good welfare of dairy cattle, Walker says. It developed a comprehensive animal welfare program that requires on-farm assessments of all farms delivering milk to its plants. The assessment is performed by Dean Foods and its co-operatives, and based on industry-wide standardized guidelines. It identifies three critical areas: access to water, improper downed cow care and disbudding. The frequency of each farm’s assessment is determined by greatest need for improvement, but does not go beyond three years. All farms have to meet the standards of assessment, resolve deficiencies in an allotted time, or demonstrate adherence to a plan of action to address deficiencies.

Part of the program involves Dean Foods and its dairy suppliers undergoing annual third-party audits to ensure on-farm assessments are being implemented correctly. Walker says, adding the processor also benchmarks its farms, with goals set to the top 25 percent of producers.

“Programs have to be enforceable all the way through and show consumers all those standards are being met,” Walker says. “It’s not just about putting out a glossy book that says you are following these practices.”

She acknowledges it’s impossible for producers to be in the barn 24/7, which is why it’s even more important farm staff be trained in proper animal handling procedures.

“It’s not enough to have an employee handbook or just conduct yearly training. Regular communication with staff about cow care is critical,” she says. “And you can’t blame employees for everything; it’s up to management to ensure practices are being met at all times. We can minimize abuse through programs, but it’s not foolproof. It may be that in the future, every farm will have to have camera equipment installed for video monitoring.”
EXCITEMENT SURROUNDING NEW PARTNERSHIP

“The neat thing I like about working together is you now have an entity to attract certain people to meet needs,” says DHI Zone 1 director Harold Kress.

He says the partnership is an important move for the organizations, as the industry continues to experience changes, including increased pressure on dairy farm profit margins, farm technologies driving demand for new services and farm consolidation.

The benefits of the partnership include product and service innovation, risk management, operational efficiencies, talent attraction and access to Valacta’s Centre of Expertise.

Kress says not proceeding with the partnership would result in a missed opportunity and the potential for duplication as partners compete in the same space. It would also be difficult to introduce new products and services to meet increasingly diverse demands, and create financial pressure as overhead costs would be covered by fewer farms.

“We hope to work closer together and that’s really what we’re trying to set up,” Kress says, adding the new entity is structured to welcome future partners, leverage the strengths of each organization, enhance the rate of product innovation, and capitalize on operational synergies and economies of scale.

DHI will host a special general meeting on March 20 in Alliston, Ont., where delegates will vote on bylaw changes necessary to implement the partnership. If approved, the new organization will start on Oct. 1, 2018.

Along with the partnership, Friesen also highlighted other DHI successes over the last year, which include Mobile DHI receiving the Premier’s Award for Agri-Food Innovation Excellence, as well as the successful Future Leaders Development Program.

Neil Petreny, general manager of CanWest DHI, shared highlights over the past year and commented on what producers should expect to see in the future. DHI plans to renovate the DairyComp software, explore options to collect farm-sourced data, implement automated traceability reporting to assist producers in being compliant with proAction’s traceability module, consider strategies to reduce antibiotic use, and explore Ontario raw milk payment/quality services.

In the near future, producers can expect to see low-cost genomic testing options, sensor technology evolution, artificial intelligence and machine learning, and international partnerships.

“This will be another trend we will see evolve over the next decade,” Petreny says about future partnerships.

DFO SCHOLARSHIP WINNER ANNOUNCED

Amanda Armstrong, PhD candidate in the department of population medicine at the Ontario Veterinary College, is the recipient of DFO’s Doctoral Research Assistantship award presented at DFO’s annual general meeting in January. Armstrong completed an animal science degree from Dalhousie University’s faculty of agriculture where she investigated animal care on dairy farms in Eastern Canada. After finishing her undergraduate degree, Armstrong moved to England where she worked on an organic dairy farm for more than six months. After returning from England, she completed her masters of science in animal welfare and behaviour at the University of Guelph. Armstrong is currently working alongside Dr. David Kelton to investigate characterization and resolution of hock, knee and neck injuries in dairy cattle and how quickly they heal.

For more information on this project, refer to the August 2017 Research @LRICDairy article in Milk Producer magazine.

AMANDA ARMSTRONG is the recipient of Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s Doctoral Research Assistantship award.
Dairy Farmers of Ontario held its wine and cheese event at the Fairmont Royal York hotel in January where it showcased several leading cheese processors.

**SAPUTO**

Saputo is the largest cheese manufacturer and leading fluid milk and cream processor in Canada. Several of its cheeses, including the firm Friulano as seen in picture below, were enjoyed by many at the wine and cheese event. Saputo produces, markets and distributes a variety of cheeses in Canada, including mozzarella and cheddar, specialty cheeses, such as ricotta, provolone, parmesan, goat cheese, feta and havarti, fine cheeses, such as brie and camembert, and other cheeses, including brick, colby, farmer, munster, monterey jack, fresh curd and processed varieties. Since its founding in 1954, Saputo has grown to become a well-known leading brand, processing more than eight billion litres of milk into a variety of cheeses, as well as a complete range of dairy products and ingredients sold in more than 40 countries.

**THORNLOE CHEESE**

Known as the company that delivers quality cheese from northern Ontario, Thornloe Cheese, located in the heart of Temiskaming Valley, is proudly owned and operated by farmers with family values. Thornloe Cheese’s owners have a proud tradition of producing outstanding cheddar and curds. Their cheesemakers have expanded this tradition by creating a line of award-winning new specialty cheeses, including hard, blue-veined and soft options. Each of the cheeses is crafted the old-fashioned way, in small batches using only milk from Temiskaming area dairy farms. Thornloe Cheese, which began in 1940, is also known for making grass-fed mild cheddar and mozzarella cheeses.

**AGROPUR**

Agropur Dairy Co-operative, a leader in the Canadian dairy industry with more than 70 years in business and more than 3,780 member dairy farmers, has a large cheese division that encompasses its import collection, and award-winning OKA cheese, collection cheeses, and other signature and fine cheeses with a plethora of hard and soft varieties. Agropur processes more than 5.9 billion litres of milk annually in 39 plants spread throughout North America. The processor took a major step last year by announcing all its Canadian-made products sold under its own brands would contain 100 per cent Canadian milk and dairy ingredients, and bear Dairy Farmers of Canada’s Quality Milk certification logo.
Adam van Bergeijk and his wife, Hannie, pride themselves in making fine artisan cheeses right on their farm in New Hamburg, Ont. Mountainoak Cheese is a modern, state-of-the-art processing plant that allows the van Bergeijks to continue the tradition of great-tasting, high-quality, Gouda-style cheeses made with high-quality, fresh milk from their own dairy cows. The couple handcrafts award-winning Mountainoak gouda cheese, available in numerous varieties and flavours. Their Farmstead Gold premium dutch gouda has won numerous awards, most recently for first place at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair, best Canadian cheese at the International Cheese Awards, and third place at the British Empire Cheese Competition, all in 2017. Mountainoak cheeses are available at several retailers across Ontario. Customers can also visit Mountainoak Cheese every Thursday and Saturday at the St. Jacobs Farmers’ Market in Woolwich, Ont.

Gay Lea Foods Co-operative, owner of cheese brands Ivanhoe Cheese, Salerno, Black River and Alberta Cheese, had many of its products on display at the event.

- Ivanhoe Cheese is the oldest cheese company of its kind in Canada, and has a reputation for high-quality, aged cheddar and specialty cheeses;
- Salerno Dairy offers locally-made, fine Italian cheeses, including mozzarella, mascarpone, bocconcini, pecorino and many more;
- Black River Cheese provides cheddars, mozzarella, curds and specialty cheeses. All its products are gluten- and rennet-free;
- Alberta Cheese offers everything from cheddar and Monterey Jack to bocconcini and ricotta.

MOUNTAINOAK CHEESE

INTERNATIONAL CHEESE

International Cheese has been manufacturing fine, handcrafted cheese since 1963. The company prides itself in offering a variety of fresh, semi-soft, firm and aged cheeses, along with Italian-style specialties. All its cheeses are sold under its signature Santa Lucia Cheese line, which has earned a glowing reputation and a host of awards, including World’s Best Ricotta. International’s Santa Lucia Bocconcini was among the finalists of the 2009 Canadian Cheese Grand Prix, and the Toronto-based processor was also named a finalist for its mozzarella ball for the 2015 Canadian Cheese Grand Prix.

CHEESES FROM THE FOLLOWING PROCESSORS WERE ALSO ON DISPLAY:
- ARLA FOODS
- BRAR’S SWEETS
- GUNN’S HILL ARTISAN CHEESE
- ORGANIC MEADOW
- PARMALAT
- QUALITY CHEESE
- ST-ALBERT FROMAGERIE
- STONETOWN ARTISAN CHEESE
- UPPER CANADA CHEESE

GAY LEA FOODS
When I was a young girl, my uncle, Ray McDougall, served as a board member for Middlesex/Elgin counties. I remember eagerly listening to him talk about the importance of agriculture, especially the dairy industry. I’ve come to realize his knowledge has greatly rubbed off on me, which has helped me in my role as educator. Every time I walk into a classroom, I remember I’m there to represent dairy farmers in Brant County and across the province. Prior to each presentation, I ensure the information I’m going to present is accurate. I also try to anticipate questions that may come up and prepare appropriate answers. However, I think it’s important to admit when you don’t have an answer to a question and let that person know you will get back to them with the right answer. As an educator, I always try to make the presentations fun and show students I enjoy what I’m doing and I’m passionate about the industry.

Some of the many valued resources that help keep me up-to-date on industry matters include Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s (DFO) annual report, DFO’s social media accounts, and emails from DFO communications manager Laural Adams and dairy education program manager Audrie Bouwmeester. However, my greatest resources are my dairy farmer husband, Mark, and the Brant County milk committee.

I use the information I glean from all these sources to help students understand what the industry is about and how it contributes to society. I’ve been doing this job for so long, I often encounter students I’ve presented to when I’m out and about in the community. They will often ask me about the cows on my farm and my blow up cow named Molly, which I usually bring to every presentation. Sometimes I ask them if they recall what they’ve learned from my visit. The feedback I get is usually very positive, and some have shared they realize now the negative videos they see on YouTube or other media is not true of all the industry.

My most memorable moment in a classroom was with a Grade 6 class. We were talking about how important it is for cows to get pregnant when a student stood up and asked “if you don’t have a bull on your farm, how do you get cows pregnant?” I replied by telling the student farmers use artificial insemination and explained how the procedure works. I’ve realized people need to be given accurate information about the industry, and dairy educators are some of the best people to share these facts since we are on the frontline educating the public every day. It is one of the reasons I enjoy participating in events throughout the year, such as the Paris Fair Ag Awareness, Bite of Brant, Keg Lane Fair, Doors Open Brant at Holstein Canada’s offices, Recharge with Milk Tankard, as well as many farm tours.

I’m always fascinated by how amazed students are every time I pull out one of my dairy farming tools. Even though I have served as one of the Ontario dairy educators since 2010, and now as educator in the Durham region, I love to see children’s faces light up every time I enter a classroom. One of my favourite topics to present is dairy technology. Our mystery tools, which include a milking claw, transponder, ear tags, treated and dry bracelets, and a magnet, are my most valued go-to resource. The children enjoy seeing and touching the tools farmers use every day. So far, I am booked to conduct upwards of 100 presentations throughout the Durham region, and possibly impact more than 1,000 students from kindergarten to Grade 8. Think about that for a moment; if you consider most students go home and share what they’ve learned with their parents, our presentations potentially impact three times the number of people. This is why the dairy education program is so important.

I value the opportunity to teach students and teachers about what dairy farmers do to supply milk to the market. I think it’s important to be organized and flexible when working with students. Organization is key when booking and scheduling presentations. Classroom environments can change quickly and you must always be prepared and flexible to go in another direction at a moment’s notice.

Being prepared for the unexpected reminds me of one of my most memorable moments, which happened at the end of a full day of presentations. A kindergarten class had asked me back to their classroom, so they could present me with a special cow card they had made. They had all signed their names and drew pictures of cows. It was a treasured moment I will never forget.

Teachers love our education program and the fact we can bring the farm to them since some students never leave the city. They also appreciate how interactive and involved the students are in the presentations. I think it’s important to educate students about where their food comes from and learn the facts about the foods they eat to fuel their bodies.

If I had one special superpower while in the classroom, I would love to snap my fingers and be able to transport students to an actual dairy farm. The children could see a live cow, watch how they are milked and see all the new technology used on the farm. They could get up close to a composter and see how it works and its varied uses. Not only would they be amazed, I believe it would make them more appreciative of farmers’ hard work.

While I don’t have superpowers, the next best part of working as an educator is attending events. I have conducted dozens of milking presentations at the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair and Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto over the past seven years. It is always priceless to see how students and their families who attend these events react when seeing a cow pie for the first time.

Joyce Clement
Dairy educator since 2002
Brant County

Melissa Braido
Dairy educator since 2010
Durham region
Widen Your Horizons

The road to more efficient manure transport is now wide open. Extend your range of operation with the STR Series Manure Semi-Tankers from GEA - the first-class manure hauling solution.
AWARDS OF DISTINCTION

Nominations open for Alberta Farm Animal Care’s Awards of Distinction

Alberta Farm Animal Care (AFAC) is looking for individuals or groups who have made exceptional contributions to livestock welfare for its awards of distinction.

Award categories include:
• 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;
• 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;
• 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.

The awards of distinction were initiated in 2001 to recognize individuals or organizations that apply new, innovative ideas and management practices to ensure high standards of animal well-being. They understand the public's need for assurance that farm animals are raised humanely, and they can be held up as examples of those who are making a difference.

Nominees must demonstrate a strong commitment to others through contributions to their community or society, and be recognized by peers as having reached a high level of accomplishment and expertise in their field. To nominate a deserving individual or organization, summarize in letter format why they deserve the award, and email the information to AFAC.

Award recipients will be notified on or before March 1 and will be invited to receive the award at the Livestock Care Conference on March 15 in Olds, Alta. The names of the award recipients will be posted on AFAC’s website and published in AFAC updates and media releases following the conference. To submit a nomination, visit www.afac.ab.ca, or email Kristen Hall at kristen@afac.ab.ca.

DO YOU KNOW A FOOD AND FARMING CHAMPION?

Farm & Food Care Ontario (FFCO) is looking for the next 2018 Food and Farming Champion.

This annual award is presented to individuals, organizations or businesses that have taken the initiative to help engage consumers about agriculture in Ontario.

Potential nominees would have used their skills to help inform Canadians or correct misinformation about production practices, and did a measurable job of promoting agriculture.

Nominations must be submitted to Farm & Food Care Ontario by March 21. The award recipient will be honoured at FFCO’s annual conference in April.

Nominations are open to those who have taken an active role in getting the message out about agriculture;
• A nominated individual or group does not have to be a member of Farm & Food Care Ontario to be eligible;
• Nominations will be accepted from all Farm & Food Care Ontario members, as well as the current board of directors. Board members themselves, however, are not eligible for nomination;
• Members may nominate more than one individual, organization or business;
• A panel will select the award winner(s).


SAVE THE DATE FOR FFCO’S CONFERENCE

Farm & Food Care Ontario’s annual conference is set to take place at Country Heritage Park in Milton, Ont. on April 11. The conference will celebrate the 30th anniversary of Farm & Food Care’s two founding organizations—the Ontario Farm Animal Council and AGCare.

This year’s event features two keynote speakers:
• Simon Haley is an agricultural social media and business specialist based out of the United Kingdom. His topic will be on “Learning lessons from the U.K.: How farmers can tell their stories better.” He will dive into the rise of special interest groups and show how ignoring this voice has contributed to societal change;
• Tamar Haspel is a journalist with the Washington Post who has been on the food and science beat for nearly 20 years. Her keynote address will discuss working toward better communication about food and farming, and having a public conversation about agriculture that isn’t polarized, vitriolic and counterproductive.

Those who register before March 23 can take advantage of early bird ticket prices. For more information or to register, visit www.FarmFoodCareON.org

DAIRY SECTOR ECONOMIC UPDATE

The Mainland Milk Producers has invited Farm Credit Canada chief agricultural economist Jean-Philippe Gervais to give an economic update for the dairy sector.

He will be discussing the North American Free Trade Agreement, milk prices, and consumer demand during a meeting held on Feb. 9 at 10:30 a.m. at Quality Hotel in Abbotsford, B.C. This presentation will be geared specifically to the dairy sector and should be very informative. There will also be time for questions after the presentation.

The event is free but registration is strongly encouraged. Participants can register by emailing Christine Koch at koch.c@telus.net. Lunch will be served after the presentation.

MILK MAKER FORAGE COMPETITION

The Ontario Forage Council (OFC) and Canadian Forage and Grassland Association will be hosting this year’s fifth annual Milk Maker Forage Competition.

The competition will be open to forage producers across Canada. Seed companies and dairy organizations can support and encourage their customers and members to participate for a chance to become the Milk Maker Forage Champ.

For 2018, the haylage and baylage classes will be combined into a hay silage class. As in previous years, classes for alfalfa hay, grass hay, corn silage and brown midrib corn silage will still be available. Producers will be invited to submit samples for lab and visual analysis. The winners from each category will be showcased at the 2018 Canadian Dairy XPO in April.

For more information or to enter into OFC’s Milk Maker Forage Competition, visit http://www.ontarioforagecouncil.com/programs/milk-maker-forage-competition.
Dairy producers are invited to attend Alberta Farm Animal Care’s (AFAC) annual Livestock Care Conference on March 14 and 15 at the Pomeroy Inn and Suites in Olds, Alta.

As part of AFAC’s 25th anniversary, speakers are asked to share their take on the industry and how it has evolved since 1993.

Keynote speaker Temple Grandin will set the tone on March 15 and be joined by a group of speakers, showcasing the livestock industry in Alberta, progress made in the last quarter century and what lies ahead.

For more information or to register, visit www.afac.ab.ca.

The Dairy Research and Extension Consortium of Alberta is hosting several workshops aimed at sharing research and perspectives on building healthier, more productive cows and herds through nutrition, health, selection and management of replacement heifers.

Workshops are scheduled for:
- Feb. 13 - Executive Royal Inn (Leduc, Alta.); and
- Feb. 14 - Barrhead Neighbourhood Inn (Barrhead, Alta.);
- Feb. 15 - Lacombe Memorial Centre (Lacombe, Alta.);
- Feb. 16 - Coast Lethbridge Hotel (Lethbridge, Alta.).

Participants can expect to learn about calf nutrition, heat detection and technology, health monitoring and management, and evaluating and selecting heifers. Experts leading the workshops include Dr. Michael Steele and Dr. Clover Bench from the University of Alberta, as well as Dr. Graeme Boender from Farm Animal Hospital and dairy producer Mike Vanden Dool.

Each workshop attendee will receive a booklet of information, as well as lunch and refreshments.

Check-in begins at 9:30 a.m., and workshops run from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Registration fee is $75 at the door.

MID-FEBRUARY: Leeds & Grenville, Lanark & Renfrew, Grey, Bruce, Huron, British Columbia
LATE FEBRUARY: Halton, York & Peel, Simcoe & Dufferin, Ontario
EARLY MARCH: Peterborough, Northumberland, Ontario Central, Lambton, Middlesex, Elgin, Essex & Kent
MID-MARCH: Victoria & Durham, Northumberland, Alberta
LATE MARCH: Waterloo, Alberta, Manitoba
EARLY APRIL: Oxford
MID-APRIL: Wellington, Northern Ontario, Thunder Bay
LATE APRIL: Perth

Italics indicate mid-round classifications

STUDENTS INVITED TO APPLY FOR EXCELLENCE AWARD

Farm Management Canada (FMC) and the Canadian Association of Diploma in Agriculture Programs (CADAP) have announced the launch of the 2017-18 Excellence Award for Agricultural Students, which is designed to encourage students to improve their critical thinking, communication and leadership skills through a national competition.

FMC and CADAP are collecting submissions from students across Canada and will award three winners with scholarships toward furthering their education in agriculture. First place prize is $1,500.

The award is designed to help students develop their communications skills by giving them the opportunity to voice their opinion on a subject related to farm management.

Students are asked to submit a multimedia presentation, video, Twitter chat, blog or Wiki responding to the following question: What aspects of the North American Free Trade Agreement should be addressed and amended in the current negotiations that will benefit Canada’s agriculture sector?

To take part in the competition, for details on how to enter, or to apply, visit www.fmc-gac.com. All applications are due by May 6.

LIVESTOCK CARE CONFERENCE

Dairy producers are invited to attend Alberta Farm Animal Care’s (AFAC) annual Livestock Care Conference on March 14 and 15 at the Pomeroy Inn and Suites in Olds, Alta.

As part of AFAC’s 25th anniversary, speakers are asked to share their take on the industry and how it has evolved since 1993.

Keynote speaker Temple Grandin will set the tone on March 15 and be joined by a group of speakers, showcasing the livestock industry in Alberta, progress made in the last quarter century and what lies ahead.

For more information or to register, visit www.afac.ab.ca.

Grooves
1/2” or 3/4” Width

Don’t lose another cow to slippery concrete!

- Best Permanent Traction for Cows
- Grooving for New or Existing Barns
- Aisles, Holding Areas, Yards, Slats
- Fast Drying for Healthier Hooves
- No Stone Chips, No Chards, NO DUST!
A growing calf is a hungry calf, but feeding calves to appetite by hand is prohibitive from a labour point of view. Each calf would need to be fed roughly 10 times daily.

At the same time, there's a growing emphasis on mimicking natural settings and accommodating animals' natural behaviour on the farm. Consumers want products from animals that are humanely managed, so a balance must be reached between animals having quality of life and economic and efficient production systems.

Enter the automated calf feeder. It uses sensors to read the electronic ID tag in a calf’s ear and dispenses a measured amount of milk formula, which can help ensure calves are not feeling hungry waiting for feed.

In nature, cows communicate with their calves and encourage them to nurse. Of course, it’s different with an automated feeder, in which calves are in a pen, expected to walk into a metal stall, latch onto an artificial rubber teat and drink milk.

Professor Derek Haley from the department of population medicine at the University of Guelph (U of G) is developing reliable methods for teaching calves to use the feeder. He’s also testing the efficacy of automated feeding systems, making sure those on the market are up to par.

“We’re really trying to make sure the systems that are put on the market are animal-friendly, take behavioural biology of the animal into account, and ultimately ensure the well-being of the animal and efficient use of that system by farmers,” Haley says.

Besides allowing calves to feed more often, the automated calf feeder monitors milk consumption and weans calves when it’s time to change their diet. The system has the ability to recognize individual calves by sensing their ear tags, and keeps track of each calf’s dietary needs, which can be programmed by producers to meet the needs of individual calves. That means calves additionally benefit from being able to roam within a larger pen and socially interact with others.

Other feeding methods, such as feeding from a pail, don’t take the calf’s strong motivation to suck from a teat into account, which can lead to behavioural problems. Calves will start to suck on body parts of nearby calves, even mistakenly drinking urine from male calves in some cases.

Looking ahead, Haley and his team want to continue to test the benefits of automated feeding systems and find which design components work best, and how changes can improve animal welfare while keeping expenses low.

This research project was completed with the support of U of G MSc student Tanya Wilson and PhD candidate Catalina Medrano-Galarza. Dairy Farmers of Canada’s Dairy Research Cluster program funded the project, with collaborators from the University of British Columbia and McGill University.
INCREASING YOUR MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

- **Management tools** to help you achieve maximum profitability from your herd
- **Improve efficiencies** in production, reproduction, udder health, and overall herd performance
- **Access leading edge** lab services for health testing through the same convenient milk sample
- **Powerful** herd management software fully equipped to meet industry standards

Reports • Farm Services • Software • Mobile • Health • Technology

1 800 549 4373   canwestdhi.com
At Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s (DFO) fall regional meetings, staff reported since proAction’s animal care and livestock traceability requirements were implemented on Sept. 1, 2017, Ontario’s “on-the-spot” pass rate for proAction validations in September dropped compared with the pass rate for the Canadian Quality Milk (CQM) program—from approximately 80 per cent to around 60 per cent. With that said, the CQM program experienced similar challenges during its initial rollout in 2011 and 2012, with pass rates of around 60 per cent. This “on-the-spot” pass rate represents producers who meet requirements at the time of validation, and therefore, did not have to implement any corrective actions for their validations to be approved.

While this trend continued in October, November and December 2017, this does not mean approximately 40 per cent of producers have been levied a proAction penalty since the vast majority closed their corrective action requests (CARs) and met requirements without penalty application. In fact, of the 431 producers due for validations in September, October and November, four producers (or 0.9 per cent) were levied a penalty. In three of these cases, the validation did not take place since the producer did not meet Grade A requirements, which is a prerequisite for proAction. The remaining penalty was applied because the producer did not close the CARs issued at validation. This penalty rate is consistent with the one experienced before September 2017.

COMMON VALIDATION FINDINGS

Specific standard operating procedures (SOPs) and records have been identified as the requirements most commonly resulting in CARs. They are listed below, along with tips and suggestions to ensure they are compliant.

Animal health practices SOP
- Include required elements and edit the SOP to ensure there is sufficient detail regarding your specific procedures on the farm;
- Ensure the SOP includes the following procedures: disbudding/dehorning, castration, supernumerary teat removal and branding. If any of these procedures is not done on your farm, state this in your SOP;
- State the name of the product(s) used for pain control for both castration and disbudding/dehorning;
- Keep in mind the SOP is required even if a procedure is conducted by an outside party, such as a veterinarian or veterinary technician.

Colostrum management and calf feeding SOP
- Specify the source of colostrum used on your farm (dam, frozen stores or colostrum powder).

Euthanasia SOP
- Include required elements and edit the SOP to ensure there is sufficient detail regarding specific procedures on the farm, even if euthanasia is done by a veterinarian.

Downed cattle corrective action plan
- Ensure there is a written plan on how to properly handle downed cattle based on specific scenarios that could take place on your farm. Describe any specialized equipment you have to move downed cattle and how to use it.

Livestock treatment records
- Record all treatments that have a milk or meat withdrawal, including dry cow treatment and pain control medications;
- Remember to record the date when an animal and-or milk are suitable for shipping (“clear dates”).

Animal birth records
- Check that the premises ID (PID) is included. To save time when recording births, you may print your PID on a separate page, indicate in writing it pertains to all traceability record entries and enclose with your records/binder.

Corrective action record
- Remember to record all time-temperature recorder alarms, as well as corrective actions taken for each alarm.

A complete checklist of proAction requirements was included in the November 2017 issue of Milk Producer magazine, which can be used to verify implementation of all proAction requirements.
YOUR Canadian Dairy Showcase!
STRATFORD, ON CANADA
APRIL 4-5, 2018

GENOMICS EDUCATION & HEIFER CALF SALE

NEW LOCATION FOR CLASSROOM
UPPER LEVEL, RUNNING BOTH DAYS

DAIRY AT GUELPH
& DFO LOUNGE
SPONSORED BY: DAIRY AT GUELPH & DAIRY FARMERS OF ONTARIO

PETERSON FARM BROTHERS
SPEAKING BOTH DAYS
& PERFORMING AT CheeseFEST

EDUCATION • INNOVATION • DAIRYXPO.CA • GENETICS • HOSPITALITY

info@dairyxpo.ca | 519.838.0117
When cow diets are formulated for protein, the intent is to convert as much protein as possible into milk and tissue protein, with little wasted protein. What happens in reality is protein in the diet is either broken down in the rumen by rumen microbes, or it escapes the breakdown process and becomes an available supply of protein and amino acids to the cow. This is not always as efficient as one would like.

Milk urea nitrogen (MUN) is the first indicator protein is being wasted. Waste occurs when too much is provided, or the protein that is provided does not have the correct complement of amino acids. As a result, unused protein from either source is broken down and ammonia is produced, which is converted to less toxic urea in the liver. Urea is then moved into the blood. The concentration of urea in blood is very similar to urea in milk, so measurements from milk provide a convenient, non-invasive tool for evaluating the dairy herd’s protein status. Wasted protein results in greater ammonia in the barn, as well as more nitrogen in manure. Because proteins in feed are often purchased, the waste represents a financial and environmental burden.

By improving the efficiency of protein use, producers can reduce dietary protein concentrations. This is certainly desirable for cow health, barn environment, waste management and cost management. Less protein in the diet coupled with more efficient use of the protein that is provided is beneficial all around. The rule of thumb is for every one per cent less protein in the diet, MUN drops by two milligrams per decilitre. Lowering crude protein in the diet from 17 to 16 per cent for cows eating 24 kilograms of dry matter per day is equal to 240 grams less protein being wasted (about half a pound) along with about 45 g less ammonia output per cow per day.

Well-balanced diets provide sufficient rumen degradable protein (RDP) to support microbial protein production. Rumen microbes are a very important source of protein and amino acids for cows and necessary to maximize energy retrieval from dietary fibre. High MUN is often caused by too much RDP in the diet, or more than is needed to optimally support rumen microbes. Producers should not provide more than 10 per cent of the diet as RDP since it will exceed the ability of rumen microbial protein production.

Well-balanced diets also provide rumen undegraded protein (RUP) or “bypass” protein to supplement microbial protein and meet maintenance and lactation requirements. High MUN can also be caused by too much RUP in the diet and even when RUP cannot be used because it is not balanced.

Microbial protein, derived from the RDP fraction of the diet, has an excellent amino acid profile. However, many added proteins have unfavourable RUP amino acid profiles, and the only way to ensure requirements are met is to...
provide enough amino acid. As a consequence, other amino acids end up wasted. Cows can only produce protein to the level of the most limiting amino acid. If an amino acid is missing, protein synthesis stops and excess protein is disposed via urea nitrogen. In this case, though MUN levels are high, milk production or milk protein most likely do not meet expectations.

The RUP fractions of some protein sources have a better amino acid balance than others. For example, corn distillers grain, particularly when it’s included in a diet already based on corn grain and corn silage, will not easily meet amino acid requirements. On the other hand, some animal and vegetable proteins, for example canola meal, provide a more balanced array of amino acids that more closely resembles milk protein being synthesized in large amounts. Proteins can sometimes be blended, allowing the RUP amino acid profile to better meet a cow’s needs. When the RUP fraction of protein is well balanced, lower amounts of these proteins can be used to efficiently meet amino acid requirements.

Although any amino acid can be limiting, methionine and lysine are two amino acids most likely to be limiting in the RUP component of the diet. These amino acids can be supplemented since several companies provide rumen-protected forms of these nutrients. These can make meeting requirements without over-supplying protein easier. By adding just a few grams of these nutrients, ration protein can be lowered in many cases.

Feeding lower protein diets may not be easy, and it may mean different protein sources and rumen-protected amino acids are needed. However, the many benefits—less strain on the cow’s liver, lower ammonia emissions in the barn, improved nutrient management, and the financial gain that arises from better cow health and component yield—are worth investigating.

Essi Evans
is a ruminant specialist and president of Essi Evans Technical Advisory Services Inc. in Bowmanville, Ont. She can be reached at essievans@sympatico.ca.
The Industrial Research Chair NSERC-Nova-lait-DFC-Valacta in Sustainable Life of Dairy Cattle has been underway for 18 months. The objective of the chair, located at McGill University, is to optimize cow comfort with a focus on stall housing, and to increase dairy cattle longevity while considering dairy farm sustainability. So far, more than a dozen graduate students are working under the supervision of chair Elsa Vasseur. It is expected future results from their work will generate concrete recommendations and promising benefits for dairy farmers.

Research carried out under the chair is divided into three main themes:

**Theme 1: Cow comfort and management**
The first research theme focuses on producers’ needs to provide a suitable environment for future compliance requirements, such as proAction. Another goal is to better understand the needs of animal comfort with a focus on tiestall barns, which are predominant in Ontario and Quebec.

**Theme 2: Cow longevity**
The second research theme focuses on industry sustainability in terms of long-term measures of profitability and survival of animals in herds. Researchers will investigate replacement animals and cows in production. Projects of this theme will benefit from data collected on commercial farms and from Valacta’s database.

**Theme 3: Environment and society**
The third research theme aims to broaden the perspective on international standards, life cycle analyses, and consumer acceptability. The research team will validate measures to improve cow welfare and longevity that do not contradict dairy farming’s overall sustainability, including environmental, economic and social impacts.

**KEY HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2017**
In 2017, the research team investigated options for best tierail height to reduce injuries and optimal tiechain length to facilitate in-stall movement. Four combinations of tierail heights and tiechain lengths were tested on cows. Two combinations were designed to follow the natural slope of a cow’s neckline, another combination reflected current recommendations, and the final combination reproduced the most common practice on farms. Over the course of the 10-week project, cows were assessed multiple times and numerous observations were made, particularly related to injury and lameness. Preliminary findings indicate following the natural slope of a cow’s neckline looks promising. Final results are being compiled, and recommendations in support of proAction implementation will be made available in the short term. In the longer term, the project will assess the impact of changes on cow productivity and health. The impact of stall width will also be assessed in the next research phase.

**SEEKING HIDDEN PROFITS OF ANIMAL WELFARE PRACTICES**
The chair is also investigating the impact of cow comfort on longevity to identify hidden profits of animal welfare practices. The research team is currently combining data collected from about 100,000 cows from more than 500 herds between 2007 and 2015. The purpose of analyzing the data is to identify key factors and management practices that positively impact cow longevity and profitability. The project’s findings will take the form of a culling decision support tool.

Milk recording and automatic milking system databases are also being used to generate performance indicators for milking robots. These indicators will be accompanied by efficiency thresholds.

Stay in the loop by subscribing to the chair’s blog at cowlife.mcgill.blogspot.com, or visiting novalait.ca where you can watch the chair’s latest video. New results will be available soon.
You can’t afford storage losses. Prepare for unexpected challenges and use the best inoculant protection your money can buy – Biotal®. Featuring specifically selected bacteria and enzymes to optimize silage preservation, Biotal forage inoculants have been proven in independent trials and commercial silage operations around the world.

When you consider the big picture, an investment in Biotal yields the best protection for your silage. That’s a promise you can take to the bunk!
RAISING A PROFITABLE HERD

Quebec study analyzes which management decisions yield the most profit and best cow health

In the dairy industry, cows are moneymakers, and their milk production helps pay the bills. This article will examine which traits or what areas producers should consider to better manage their dairy herd while ensuring their farms are profitable.

Being a dairy farmer means more than just milking cows. One must be mindful of decisions made concerning productivity, health, housing and reproduction. A farm manager must consider how each decision leads to making a profit versus the cost of doing something else that may yield greater monetary benefits.

A recent study of Quebec dairy herds analyzed factors affecting which management decisions yield the most profit. Lifetime production and health records from more than 13,000 cows in more than 100 herds were examined from cows calving for the first time from 2000 to 2009. The intent was to build decision-making tools that account for lifetime profit of a cow and the cost of replacing an animal.

Opportunity cost in a milking herd considers the profit from a current cow, compared with the lifetime value of a replacement when examining current and future production impacts.

The study, which used data from Valacta and information from provincial health databases from veterinarians, looked at identifying key performance indicators based on health and reproduction to assist with opportunity cost determinations.

Researchers examined cow events, including age at first calving, cumulative days in milk (cumDIM), lifetime clinical cases of clinical mastitis, reproductive problems, and feet and leg issues.

Data for herd performance were collected from Valacta, which included milk quality and quantity, milk components, milk revenue and feed costs.

All costs and revenues at varying stages of a cow’s life over the study period were calculated and converted to 2012 dollars using Statistics Canada methodology. This was done to avoid differences in inflation in the value of the dollar over time.

IMPACTS ON PROFITABILITY

Two measures were studied in the trial. One was cumulative lifetime profit (CLP), and the other was cumulative lifetime profit considering opportunity cost (CLPOC). The CLP formula accumulates on a lifetime basis based on revenues obtained from milk value, calves’ value and salvage value. It deducts heifer rearing costs, lifetime cumulative feed, health and reproductive costs, as well as opportunity costs of capital invested in quota. The second formula, CLPOC, includes the above parameters, as well as opportunity costs of postponing replacements.

AGE AT FIRST CALVING

In the study, age at first calving averaged 26.79 months. The CLP was highest for heifers calving at 24 months, with profit decreasing gradually thereafter. The lowest profit index was for heifers calving after 34 months or before 21 months. Other studies have shown calving before 19 months or after 31 months significantly reduced lifetime productivity. The study concluded calving at 23 or 24 months provided the greatest expectation of profit. Since the data show heifers were typically large enough to be bred by 14 months, the cost of delaying breeding reduced profit.

CUMULATIVE DAYS IN MILK

The average cumulative days in milk (cumDIM) was 606 days. Cows with greater than 422 cumDIM had a positive CLP. The average lactation was 357 days, and cows removed from the herd prior to the end of their first lactation did not cover variable costs. Fewer than 40 per cent of cows in the study lasted three or more lactations. Since other studies have shown the optimum culling rate is 25 per cent, there is opportunity...
for farmers to improve on this aspect.

When the CLPOC, or opportunity costs are factored in, the break-even cumDIM was 770.

The top three reasons cows left the herd before day 770 were:
• Low milk production (19.7 per cent);
• Mastitis (13.9 per cent);
• Reproduction (10.7 per cent).

The main reasons cows left the herd after day 770 were:
• Mastitis (18 per cent);
• Reproduction (16 per cent);
• Udder breakdown (10 per cent).

The data indicate at least 30 per cent of cows leaving before 770 days left because they were not meeting production or management criteria, and their contribution to CLPOC was negative. Not being able to spread the cost of rearing over more lactations made those cows unprofitable. Cows leaving the herd that had more than 770 days cumDIM left for more involuntary reasons, even though they were reaching their production goals.

DAYS DRY
The longer a cow was dry, the bigger the impact on CLPOC. However, there is a balance between a cow having too short of a dry period and one that is too long, from a health perspective. The study also looked at some health challenges and their impacts on lifetime productivity.

Cases of metritis, endometritis and purulent discharge occurred at about 0.3 incidences per cow lifetime. The average milking life was 1.95 years. Feet and leg incidents were 0.22 incidences per cow lifetime, and clinical mastitis occurred 0.37 events per cow productivity lifetime. For example, every cow had a 37 per cent chance of getting mastitis while she was on the farm. Cows lasted around two lactations in the study.

The CLPOC for these three health events were -$260, -$137 and -$178, respectively. As well, these three health challenges were the key reasons for involuntary culling, representing 18.4 per cent, 14.4 per cent, and 8.6 per cent, respectively.

By combining all the data on an individual cow, a picture of the animal’s cumulative lifetime profit can be pieced together. All costs associated with raising a heifer, including production, salvage value and health costs, can be inputted. From this, producers can determine an animal’s cumulative lifetime profit opportunity cost. The ensuing number will let producers know whether it is better to keep a cow or replace her with a heifer.

INVESTMENT COSTS
Why is CLPOC an interesting evaluation tool to consider? In the last four decades, milk production has increased more than 40 per cent. However, herd longevity has not increased. Involuntary culling decisions, such as health issues identified above, reduce the opportunity to weigh options of replacing a cow or keeping her. According to a study by Dr. Trevor Devries released in 2017, a heifer born in 2015 was $50 more profitable per lactation than a heifer born the previous year. The more lactations a cow experiences, the greater the opportunity to spread investment costs of raising replacements over time. In this study, where the average lactations were just over two, it becomes challenging to fully implement CLPOC and CLP concepts.

When comparing opportunity costs, a cow may be in a negative profit situation versus a replacement, but involuntary culling of other cows may require that particular cow to be retained. Using lifetime profitability indices through CanWest DHI provides information on a cow’s profitability. By adding in opportunity cost, a decision-making tool can be added for producers to help them make further selection decisions.

Determining what to do with incentive days going forward is the focus of the P5 quota committee’s meeting on Feb. 23, says Patrice Dubé, Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s economics director.

Committee members will be considering three options: whether to crystallize incentive days into quota, eliminate the incentive day on April 1, or continue to issue an incentive day until it gets crystallized into quota later, Dubé explains, adding the main reason an incentive day would be eliminated or not crystallized into quota on April 1 is because of current processing constraints. Crystallization happens when an incentive day that was issued outside the fall period is converted into quota.

The good news is new investments in ingredients processing infrastructure in the first half of 2019 will help rectify current processing limitations, which will enable the P5 quota committee to issue quota to fulfil domestic butterfat market requirements as needed without having to worry about whether or not accumulating solids non-fat can all be processed, Dubé says.

With more than one million kilograms in butterfat demand nationally every day, of which 74 per cent has to be filled by P5 provinces, the demand for Canadian dairy products has reached a new milestone, Dubé says. Sales at the retail level continue to be strong, most notably for fluid cream, butter and cheese. However, there are signs indicating market requirements are finally being adequately filled with domestic milk, he adds. One of these signs is the Canadian Dairy Commission (CDC) reporting butter stocks at their highest level for the month of December in the last five years. This occurred at the same time the CDC stopped importing supplementary butterfat beyond World Trade Organization (WTO) obligations as of September 2017. On the other hand, more milk will be required to satisfy new processing investments in the first half of 2019, Dubé says.

“We’ve been hoping for a long time to be at a point where domestic butterfat demand can be supplied strictly from domestic production and our normal imports obligations at WTO, and that is where we seem to be at now,” he says.
Ensuring processors have enough milk to fulfil current demand, as well as expected demand coming from new investments, is the key objective in Ontario and should be the key objective in other P5 provinces once they confirm their commitment to supply the milk needed, Dubé says. In fact, the projected natural domestic growth and new project investments are estimated to require up to 15 per cent more milk from P5 provinces over the next three years.

The need for this additional milk does not necessarily mean it will get translated into quota issuance to producers since it is projected P5 production could increase 11 to 13 per cent over the same period with current quota, incentives and production credits, Dubé says.

“Producers need to fill issued quota because milk needs to be supplied for new infrastructure projects, as well as for the domestic market,” he says.

Summary: P5 producers are encouraged to keep up with production heading into the spring period to ensure current and projected butterfat requirements will be met. The aim is to fulfil all market requirements with domestic butterfat production and not have to rely on supplementary imports of butter and cream to help meet current and future market needs.

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).

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

ONTARIO DEDUCTIONS, PER HL
For December 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Within quota</th>
<th>Over-quota</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DFO Administration</td>
<td>$0.635</td>
<td>$0.635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CQM Administration</td>
<td>$0.020</td>
<td>$0.020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DFO Research</td>
<td>$0.050</td>
<td>$0.050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canwest DHI</td>
<td>$0.060</td>
<td>$0.060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>$2.650</td>
<td>$2.650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Expansion</td>
<td>$1.500</td>
<td>$1.500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Deductions</td>
<td>$4.915</td>
<td>$4.915</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average total net</td>
<td>$70.217</td>
<td>$-4.915</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*These figures are based on Ontario’s average composition for December 2017 of 4.20 kg. butterfat, 3.44 protein and 5.77 other solids, rounded to the nearest cent.

A total 3,570 producers sold milk to DFO in December compared with 3,658 a year earlier.
NEW TRIAL SHOWS LOW SUBCLINICAL HYPOCALCEMIA LEVELS IN DAIRY COWS SUPPLEMENTED WITH CALCIUM BINDER

Cornell University tested the efficiency of X-Zelit, a calcium binder for preventing hypocalcaemia. Feeding low level calcium in the pre-partum diet has shown to be effective in improving calcium levels at calving. However, as this is difficult to obtain using commonly used feeds, binding the dietary calcium using X-Zelit can mimic low calcium approach. Preliminary results from the trial were presented at the annual Cornell Nutrition Conference 2017. The overall conclusion was X-Zelit markedly improved calcium status during the periparturient period.

The trial was performed at Cornell University during the spring of 2017. Fifty-five multiparous cows were assigned to either the control or experimental X-Zelit group. In the experimental group, 500 grams per day of X-Zelit was supplemented during the last three weeks prior to calving. The dietary cation-anion difference (DCAD) level of both rations was 14 to 15 milliequivalent per 100 g. The calcium level for the two groups is showed in Figure 1. The figure shows calcium level was overall higher for the X-Zelit group compared with the control group.

The values of plasma calcium were higher for the X-Zelit group during the pre- and post-partum period. It took around one week before the control group's calcium level reached normal levels. The higher calcium level around calving shows cows' own defence mechanism for preventing low calcium levels has been activated by the X-Zelit treatment. High plasma calcium level around calving is important for animals' health and production levels. The improved calcium status decrease the prevalence of subclinical hypocalcemia. The threshold for subclinical hypocalcemia was set to 8.5 milligrams per decilitre (2.125 millimoles per litre). The incidence of subclinical milk fever was much lower for the cows on X-Zelit than the control cows. The result shows X-Zelit is a highly-efficient product for preventing subclinical hypocalcemia in high-yielding cows fed a typical United States ration.

X-ZELIT INFORMATION

The X-Zelit product has been on the market in Europe and Canada since 2008. Just recently, it has been launched in the U.S. and worldwide. X-Zelit is a product of Vilofoss, Protekta is the distributor of the product in Canada and the U.S. The product has been successfully adapted in many countries, however, large-scale use of the product in the U.S. still needs to be explored. The expectation is X-Zelit will substitute DCAD treatments and calcium bolus products as the preferred method for preventing hypocalcemia. X-Zelit works independent of DCAD treatments, which make pre-diit feed formulation simpler since potassium level no longer needs to be considered, late cut silage can be fed and non-fertilized hay is no longer necessary, and even better, not targeting urine pH.

For more information, visit www.x-zelit.com.
NEW FLEX HUTCH FOR IMPROVED EFFICIENCY IN OUTDOOR CALF HOUSING

Agri-Plastics, an Ontario-based manufacturer of calf housing solutions, has introduced Flex Hutch for improved efficiency in an outdoor hutch system.

“Flex Hutch makes it much easier to care for calves in two- and three-calf hutch systems,” says Agri-Plastics owner Darren VanBuuren. “Instead of opening three doors—one for each calf—the caregiver only has to open one. That’s a huge labour and efficiency savings.”

Flex Hutch can accommodate two or three calves using a changeable inner panel system. Hutches can be placed directly on the ground or elevated on skids to optimize drainage. Rugged, moulded plastic construction outlasts traditional wooden hutches, and is easy to clean and sanitize for reduced downtime.

Additional benefits include:
- Adjustable, hinged flex roof cover provides effective protection for calves in foul weather, and opens in one easy movement for light and ventilation;
- Streamlined setup to simplify daily chores, such as bedding, feeding and watering;
- One-step rear vent control;
- Another innovative calf housing solution from Agri-Plastics, the calf housing specialist.
The milk boards of Atlantic Canada have joined forces to host this inaugural Atlantic-wide dairy conference taking place from March 20 to 22, 2018. The event will combine and replace Nova Scotia’s Dairy Focus and New Brunswick’s Milk 2020 to become Atlantic Canada’s leading dairy conference. Dairy Focus Atlantic promises more than 300 participants, an expert speaker program and more than 50 exhibitors. “Strong today, stronger tomorrow” is the theme and vision behind Dairy Focus Atlantic.

**NEW N NOTED**

*Milk Producer*’s special section, New N Noted, offers an opportunity for agribusinesses to inform readers about new and exciting products available to them. To have your new products and services in our issue, forward your information to pat.logan@milk.org. (Space restrictions will apply.)

---

**DUPONT PIONEER LAUNCHES COMMUNITY INVESTMENT PROGRAM FOR YOUTH IN RURAL COMMUNITIES**

DuPont Pioneer announced the launch of Growing Today, Leading Tomorrow, its new community investment grant program for youth in rural communities across Canada. The program is focused on supporting agricultural education, farm safety and food security initiatives, while contributing to the development of future generations of Canadian farmers and leaders. “DuPont Pioneer strives to enrich the lives of people in the communities where our employees, customers and Pioneer sales representatives live and work,” says Bryce Eger, Canadian commercial unit leader at DuPont Pioneer. “This includes ensuring the next generation of farmers and leaders have access to resources and support, such as education, safety and good nutrition, which they need to be successful and have a bright future.”

Recently, Pioneer’s community investment initiatives have included the Funding Initiative for Rural Emergencies (2012-2015), which supported emergency services and first responders, and the Full Belly! Full Mind! (2016-2017) initiative, which focused on breakfast and student nutrition programs. To date, donations from these two programs have totalled more than $500,000.

Programs focused on agricultural education, farm safety and food security for youth in rural communities. Request an application package by contacting a local Pioneer sales representative (Eastern Canada) or Pioneer Hi-Bred sales representative (Western Canada), or by emailing Pioneer at growingtoday@pioneer.com.

---

**Dairy Showcase**

**Build your Dream Dairy in central ALBERTA**

- 5 qtrs together plus one more down the road
- Location in central Alberta dairy corridor
- On paved highway • 7 kms from the city
- 3 phase power at border • High land for building site

For information, email bestdairylocation@gmail.com

**The proven, economical, safe way to clean udders**

- Washes, sanitizes & dries in 10 seconds
- Enhances teat stimulation for faster milking
- Thoroughly removes dirt from the sphencter
- Helps reduce the levels of bacteria
- Improves mastitis control
- Improves milk quality
- No more pre-dipping
- No more towels or paper
- Adaptable to any milking parlor
- Proven in Europe for over 10 years

Ask about the Pul Footbrush and Comfort Brush.

To help your herd, contact Rob Krynen 519-617-1100 rkrynen@start.ca www.puli-sistem.com

---

**Dr. Hoof**

**Hoof Trimming Chute**

- Heavy duty automatic headgate
- Exceptional rear leg control
- Brake winches • Bifold sides • Wide belly band
- Front leg lift with new swivel design
- Wood floor with rubber mat is standard

Weber’s Farm Service

1769 Listowel Rd. RR4, Elmira, Ontario

800-825-4961 www.cowcatcher.ca • Email: weberfarmserve@hotmail.com
DeLaval continues to make strides in innovative udder health technology by launching a new barrier teat dip for dairy producers in Canada. LactiFence is a lactic acid-based barrier dip that can help producers fight mastitis-causing pathogens and produce high-quality milk.

Producers can give their herd the ultimate protection against mastitis between milkings with LactiFence. The patented DeLaval barrier technology lasts up to six hours. The sharp green colour shows how well each teat is covered and gives producers peace of mind LactiFence is protecting their herd against mastitis-causing pathogens.

“Udder health is essential for a healthy, productive and profitable herd,” says Yves St-Onge, DeLaval aftermarket solution manager. “DeLaval is proud to add LactiFence to the lineup of solutions to aid in udder health and hygiene for our herds in Canada.”

This post-dip solution also features LactiSyn—another patented technology from DeLaval to optimize teat dip efficacy. It breaks down the cell membrane of bacteria, allowing lactic acid to enter the cell and kill bacteria before a mastitis infection can occur.

Christian Routier, owner of Ferme Josélito in St-Sylvestre, Que., was one of the first to try LactiFence. He noticed significant improvements to cows that previously had dry, cracked teats.

“When you apply the dip, it stays there,” he says. “It has really improved teat skin and has led to more comfortable milking for these cows.”

For more information, contact a local DeLaval dealer, or visit www.delaval.ca.

LACTIFENCE LACTIC ACID BARRIER DIP ATTACKS AND DEFENDS AGAINST MASTITIS-CAUSING BACTERIA
Babybel cheese wax the focal point of England man’s hobby

In a story cheese lovers would appreciate, an artist from England has found a new purpose for everyone’s favourite snack.

With a creative imagination, steady hand and eye for detail, Mitchell McLanaghan uses discarded red wax casings around Babybel cheese and shapes them into intricate works of art.

His collection includes characters from Disney, Star Wars and Lord of the Rings, as well as other figures inspired by seasons, holidays, scenes, and fruits and vegetables. He’s crafted some pretty precise pieces, perfecting his hobby after 20 years of experience.

The 32-year-old has been sculpting since he was 12 years old, creating a simple stick figure that started it all. But McLanaghan took it a step further and gave the stick man a skeleton, followed by all the organs. If that wasn’t detailed enough, he then covered it in skin and dressed it in a tuxedo.

It’s an amazing talent for McLanaghan who has autism and needs assistance from family and friends with many everyday tasks.

He could spend as little as 20 minutes on a small piece or as long as days to create a more detailed sculpture, and most of his models are sculpted from memory.

They’re all impressively eye catching, and has even earned the talented artist a spotlight in the media.

It takes a lot of cheese, however, to make one sculpture, so he often disassembles his old models so he can reuse the wax to create new stunning pieces.

Family and friends help McLanaghan collect Babybel wax for his hobby, and he even has a group of fans who also donate.

To support McLanaghan and his work, visit his Facebook page at [https://www.facebook.com/groups/786589144833052/?ref=group_header](https://www.facebook.com/groups/786589144833052/?ref=group_header).
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.

- **Improve profitability** – Excellent cow traffic and safety resulting in higher milk production
- **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
Comestar Lineman, Canada’s highest newly proven Holstein sire debuts with an exciting first proof! Lineman is a maternal brother to #3 GLPI, Comestar Lautrust, a bull used heavily in today’s breeding strategies. Made for today’s dairymen, Lineman is sure to sire well-balanced cows with impressive udders, great feet & legs and tremendous health trait improvement. It’s time to put Lineman to work in your herd!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trait</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GLPI</td>
<td>+3177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pro$</td>
<td>$2266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk</td>
<td>1006 kg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fat</td>
<td>+73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protein</td>
<td>+54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conformation</td>
<td>+11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herd Life</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somatic Cell</td>
<td>2.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mastitis Resistance</td>
<td>105*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

GEBV 17°DEC
*GPA