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Photo of Danensview Farms, Tavistock, Ont.
OPTIMISM AMIDST CHALLENGES

Canada’s dairy industry experiences resurgence and renewed interest as it faces threats to system and its future prosperity.

If you had an opportunity to attend Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s (DFO) spring policy conference (SPC), you heard one common theme throughout the three-day event: be ready. Be ready for any potential outcome from the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) renegotiations, as well as the economic impact from the recently concluded Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership. Be ready for changing market conditions as industry economists and stakeholders grapple with milk production exceeding current demand. And be ready for continued challenges to the industry’s future prosperity as Health Canada looks to remove dairy as a food group from its food guide and change labeling standards.

All these threats have immobilized the industry to respond with one voice, which is critical to ensure the sector’s future viability, noted DFO chair Ralph Dietrich during his conference address. He told delegates the possibility of a NAFTA settlement is on the horizon, which does not put the industry in an enviable position. He called on producers to watch, be mindful and prepared to fight for the industry should a possible deal unfold that is not favourable to the sector.

Producers also heard about challenges with milk supply surpassing current demand in P5 provinces, and how quickly a shift in the production-demand balance can happen. While the focus has been on creating an environment to incentivize processing investments, milk production is now higher than current demand, said Patrice Dubé, DFO economics director, at the conference. This puts a burden on processors’ capacity to process and skim the extra milk, which is also contributing to increased butter stocks. Part of the balancing act, Dubé said, is trying to predict when milk will be coming forward. When production is increasing faster than projected market growth, it means having to realign production in the short term to match anticipated demand, he said.

Another issue delegates were told to have on their radar is Health Canada’s Healthy Eating Strategy. The government agency is proposing changing Canada’s Food Guide to reflect a more plant-based diet and eliminating dairy as a food group. It is also proposing changing its labelling standards by incorporating front-of-package nutrition symbols that would identify foods high in salt, sugar or saturated fat. The concern is these warning labels will not take into account other nutritional attributes of a product, such as yogurt and cheese, Graham Lloyd, DFO’s general manager, warned delegates as he presented on the main government relations issues DFO and Dairy Farmers of Canada are tackling.

Despite having to weather these challenges, it is important to note the industry is also experiencing a resurgence as it continues to modernize and adapt to a changing landscape. The Canadian dairy industry is currently experiencing a number of investments and expansions not seen in the last 10 to 15 years, noted industry stakeholders and analysts. Recent processor investments in Ontario, Alberta and Manitoba point to renewed optimism in the industry’s long-term future. Supply management is envied around the world, Lloyd has said in the past. In fact, continuing to support the importance of supply management to the Canadian dairy industry and economy is another key DFO government relations issue, he told delegates. And in this month’s Chair’s Message, Dietrich says Canada’s supply management system makes the dairy industry stronger. He, along with vice-chair Murray Sherk, recently travelled to Wisconsin to talk to Wisconsin Farmers Union members about the benefits of supply management to producers, processors and the Canadian economy. Both Dietrich and Lloyd say such presentations are important because of the current crisis the United States dairy system is facing, and sharing this information can encourage U.S. dairy counterparts to champion Canada’s orderly marketing system and put pressure on their own governments.

There is much more to learn on these issues and more. I encourage you to read through our SPC coverage, starting on page 28, as well as the Markets section on pages 48 and 49.

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DFO shares how the Canadian dairy system originated and functions today with Wisconsin dairy farmers

This month, I would like to take the opportunity to use this message to reiterate the Canadian dairy system’s importance. To most reading this column, it will seem obvious. Yet, there are still some people who may not be aware of supply management’s origins, and the fundamental strengths and benefits we derive from the system established more than 50 years ago.

This was reinforced when Murray Sherk, Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s (DFO) vice-chair, and I travelled to Wisconsin in mid-March to speak to Wisconsin Farmers Union members about our system. We participated in five farmer meetings, conducted media interviews and spent hours answering questions about how the Canadian system originated and functions today.

Presentations like this are important because of the current crisis the United States dairy system is facing while ours is thriving. To put it into context, it is reported, on average, Wisconsin loses a farm per day. A major factor is farmers do not receive enough return for their milk, with average milk prices well below the cost of production. No business can survive for long if it cannot cover its costs, and this is compounded in dairy when, due to the timing of milk production, we can’t just “turn a cow on or off” to meet costs and satisfy production requirements.

In fact, during our travels, we learned another 100 farms from other states received notice their milk supply to a major processor was going to be cancelled and they would have no market for their milk.

Milk contract cancellations, uncertain pricing and a lack of controls were the very essence of what Canadian dairy farmers faced in the 1960s, which precipitated the introduction of supply management. During that period, farmers negotiated milk pickup and pricing directly with processors. It was not uncommon for processors not to pick up milk on days they didn’t need it.

Murray and I took the time to explain to the full rooms of Wisconsin farmers Canadian producers work closely with processors and governments to ensure milk supply meets demand, and doing so benefits all stakeholders because of the predictability, reliability and certainty of price, quality and milk availability.

Many of the questions we faced during the Wisconsin tour were regarding how Canada was able to introduce supply management. The timing of our presentations was ideal given an important announcement we learned about shortly after the tour. DFO was informed on March 18 Dairy Farmers of America (DFA), the largest co-op in the U.S., passed a resolution at its annual meeting to study the benefits of considering the value of balancing supply and demand within its own co-op. We are told this should make it much easier for other co-ops to follow suit.

We believe Canada’s supply management system makes the dairy industry stronger and works for all of us. It is not always obvious, and with the passage of time, we tend to take for granted how difficult it was to implement. Today, we should be proud our system can benefit farmers in other countries.

Ralph Dietrich, chair
Dairy Farmers of Ontario
April 2, 2018

Dairy Farmers of Ontario explique les origines du système canadien et son fonctionnement actuel avec les producteurs laitiers du Wisconsin

Ce mois-ci, j’aimerais profiter de ce message pour répéter à quel point le système laitier canadien est important. À la lecture de cette chronique, je m’adresse à vous le découvrir par vous-même. Cependant, il existe encore des personnes qui ne connaissent pas les origines de la gestion de l’approvisionnement ainsi que les forces et les avantages fondamentaux que nous tisons du système établi depuis plus de 50 ans.

Ces atouts se sont renforcés lorsque le vice-président de DFO, Murray Sherk, et moi nous sommes rendus au Wisconsin à la mi-mars pour parler de notre système aux membres du Wisconsin Farmers Union. Nous avons participé à six réunions de producteurs, mené des entrevues avec les médias et passé des heures à répondre à des questions sur les origines du système canadien et sur son fonctionnement actuel.

Il est important d’effectuer de telles présentations, compte tenu de la crise actuelle dans le système laitier des États-Unis tandis que le nôtre s’épanouit. Pour vous mettre en contexte, il a été rapporté qu’en moyenne, le Wisconsin perd une ferme par jour. L’une des principales raisons de ces pertes est que les producteurs ne perçoivent pas assez de revenus pour leur lait, puisque les prix moyens de celui-ci se situent bien au-dessous du coût de production. Aucune entreprise ne peut survivre pendant longtemps si elle est incapable de couvrir ses coûts. Cette situation s’est aggravée dans l’industrie laitière en raison de la période de production de lait. Nous ne pouvons pas simplement « mettre en marche ou arrêter une vache » pour couvrir les frais et satisfaire aux exigences de production.

En fait, lors de nos déplacements, nous avons appris que 100 autres fermes dans un état voisin avaient reçu un avis indiquant que leur approvisionnement en lait à une industrie transformatrice importante allait être annulé et qu’elles n’auraient plus de marché pour leur lait.

Les annulations des contrats de lait, l’incertitude quant aux prix et un manque de contrôle ont été l’essence même de ce que les producteurs laitiers canadiens ont dû affronter dans les années 1960, ce qui a précipité l’introduction de la gestion de l’approvisionnement. Au cours de cette période, les producteurs ont négocié la date de ramassage et le prix du lait directement avec les industries transformatrices. Il n’était pas inhabituel que les industries transformatrices ne ramassent pas le lait les jours où elles n’en avaient pas besoin.

Monseur Sherk et moi avons pris le temps d’expliquer aux producteurs du Wisconsin, qui remplissaient complètement la salle, que les producteurs canadiens travaillaient étroitement avec les industries transformatrices et les gouvernements pour s’assurer que la demande en lait est satisfaite et qu’ils le font tout en favorisant les intervenants grâce à la prévisibilité, à la fiabilité et à la survenue de l’accessibilité du lait et du prix.

De nombreuses questions auxquelles nous avons dû répondre lors de notre visite au Wisconsin concernaient la manière dont le Canada a été capable d’introduire la gestion de l’approvisionnement. Le moment choisi pour nos présentations était idéal, compte tenu de l’annonce importante que nous avons reçue peu après la fin de notre visite. Le 18 mars, DFO a été avisé que les membres de Dairy Farmers of America (DFA), la plus grande coopérative des États-Unis, ont adopté une résolution lors de leur réunion annuelle afin d’étudier les avantages de prendre en considération la valeur d’un approvisionnement équilibré et la demande au sein de leur propre coopérative. On nous a expliqué que cela permettrait aux autres coopératives de plus facilement faire de même.

Nous croyons que le système de gestion de l’approvisionnement au Canada permet de renforcer l’industrie laitière et qu’il fonctionne pour nous tous. Cela n’a pas toujours été facile, et avec le temps, nous sommes portés à tenir pour acquise la difficulté de sa mise en œuvre. Aujourd’hui, nous devrions être fiers de voir que notre système peut avantager les producteurs d’autres pays.
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The Canadian dairy industry has been experiencing a unique challenge over the last few years. Managing growth has not been something the industry has had to address in the past where traditionally, only one to two per cent annual market growth would occur. At this level of growth, meeting production and processing capacity requirements was manageable. In the past couple of years, Canadian demand for butterfat has grown from five to eight per cent annually, with Canadians consuming higher fat dairy products. Some of the challenges our industry is facing include making sure we have the feed, cows, facilities and labour to produce the additional milk needed, more transporters to move milk from farms to processing plants, as well as examining processors’ ability to receive and process the added milk and increase dairy product sales.

Producers and processors welcome this opportunity by investing in their operations right across this country. The problem the industry is now facing is milk production is coming in faster than processors’ investments are coming online. This is creating a bottleneck resulting in the industry not being able to process milk and having to skim butterfat and discard the excess skim milk. The consequence is high revenue loss to dairy producers. Processor investment was an integral part of the implementation of Class 7 in the national ingredients program. These cross-country investments are coming online one at a time with some not until late 2019. The problem is the additional processing capacity is needed now. The P5 is currently skimming millions of litres of milk. The P5 recognizes enough milk needs to be produced to fill the domestic butterfat market while keeping in line with the current processing capacity so whole milk does not need to be discarded. With the amount of skim milk being dumped, producers across the Maritimes are feeling the effects of increasingly tight margins. This is not sustainable long term.

In Prince Edward Island, we are investing to produce additional milk required to fill the P5 market. Among the 165 dairy operations on the island, many dairy farms are either expanding or building new facilities. Producers are utilizing P5 quota policies to maximize their quota and production capabilities. In P.E.I., New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, there exists an extra tool in quota policies to lease quota credits in or out to producers who have the capacity to produce additional milk. This policy puts quota in the hands of those who can fill it. P.E.I. has had strong production, and by using P5 quota policies, producers have had the strongest fill rates of incentive days in the past few years. The credit leasing policy has limitations to prevent it from being abused, but is welcomed by producers as a management tool to deal with production problems and limitations, such as herd health and barn capacity while barns are being expanded. When proAction’s biosecurity module is implemented, it will allow quota credits to be moved between farms compared with moving animals, which will minimize the risk of disease spread between herds.

P.E.I.’s processor is also investing to increase its processing capacity and modernize all aspects of its operation to handle the additional milk expected to be produced in the province over the next few years.

Les producteurs utilisent également des politiques du P5 en matière de quotas afin de maximiser leurs quotas et leurs capacités de production. À l’Î.-P.-É., au Nouveau-Brunswick et en Nouvelle-Écosse, il existe un outil de plus parmi les politiques de quotas permettant de prêter des crédits de quotas à des producteurs qui ont la capacité de produire plus de lait. Cette politique met les quotas dans les mains de ceux qui peuvent les remplir. L’Î.-P.-É. a connu une forte production, et en utilisant les politiques de quotas du P5, les producteurs ont obtenu les plus forts taux de remplissage quotidien des dernières années. Cette politique de crédit-bail et de prêts est limitée pour éviter les abuses, mais elle est considérée par les producteurs comme étant un outil de gestion permettant de régler des problèmes et des limites de production, comme la santé du troupeau et la capacité des étables lorsque celles-ci sont en expansion. Lorsque le module de biosécurité proAction sera mis en place, il permettra la transmission de crédits de quotas entre des fermes comparées avec des animaux déplacés, ce qui aidera à minimiser les risques de propagation de maladies entre troupeaux.

Le transformateur de l’Î.-P.-É. investit également dans le but d’augmenter sa capacité de traitement et de moderniser tous les aspects de son exploitation afin de pouvoir gérer la quantité supplémentaire de lait qui devrait être produite dans la province au cours des prochaines années.
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By Graham Lloyd

General managers came together for the first time to share common operational goals and practices

Relationship-building is a strength all good corporations strive to pursue and manage. The business environment increasingly requires interdependencies due to globalization, and expanding markets and economies.

By building strong relationships, dairy industry stakeholders can improve their operations by collaborating where beneficial and learning best practices from one another. Best practices is a term that identifies what others have done or are doing and how those procedures may work in your own situation. Essentially, it’s a way to learn and improve.

One of my first priorities when I assumed Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s (DFO) general manager position was to continue building relationships with key stakeholders, a goal I consider best practice. Naturally, this included working strategically with our provincial and federal governments whenever possible, as well as working with Dairy Farmers of Canada, processors and our P5 and P10 provincial partners. I believe we can continue to grow and strengthen the Canadian dairy industry by working together.

In fact, DFO’s vision statement aims to achieve “a dynamic profitable growing Canadian dairy industry.” This statement specifically identifies growing a Canadian dairy industry—not just an Ontario dairy industry—because growing it together nationally strengthens us provincially.

In pursuit of these objectives, DFO hosted a meeting in early March to bring together general managers (GM) from across the country. All the GMs, except from Newfoundland due to a last minute scheduling issue, travelled to Mississauga so we could share and identify common operational goals and practices. After a successful first meeting, we strongly felt we should meet regularly to continue building relationships and share commonalities and differences with respect to the daily management of our organizations. As well, we agreed to restrict our discussions to operational matters since policy issues are reserved for elected officials.

We also felt if we can better understand what each person does, is authorized by legislation to do, and any emerging provincial-specific issues, we can create better policy implementation. For instance, I learned although DFO has broad authority and jurisdiction to set regulations, some of the other provinces must operate under more restrictive provincial legislation.

After concluding two full-day meetings, the group emerged with a much greater appreciation of one another’s challenges and opportunities. We each returned to our respective organizations with a renewed commitment to continue strengthening our relationships and the Canadian dairy industry, knowing we have much to gain from working together.

The next GM meeting will take place in mid-June in Montreal. I imagine it will be even more fruitful and beneficial than the first one.

Graham Lloyd
is DFO’s general manager and chief executive officer.
April 2, 2018

“...over 10 years for show cows and fresh cows...”

— Ysabel Jacobs

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

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Pour la première fois, les directeurs généraux se sont réunis pour partager des objectifs et pratiques opérationnelles communs.

Toute bonne entreprise s’acharne à bâtir et gérer de bonnes relations. À cause de la mondialisation et des marchés et économies en développement, le milieu des affaires nécessite de plus en plus d’interdépendances.

En bâtissant des relations solides, les intervenants de l’industrie laitière peuvent améliorer leurs entreprises en collaborant là où ceci est bénéfique et d’apprendre les meilleures pratiques de chacun. Meilleures pratiques est un terme qui identifie ce que les autres ont fait ou sont en train de faire et comment elles pourraient fonctionner dans votre situation. Essentiellement, il s’agit d’une façon d’apprendre et de travailler.

Une de mes principales priorités lorsque je suis devenu directeur général de Dairy Farmers of Ontario (DFO), était de continuer à bâtir des relations avec les intervenants clés, un but que je considère comme une meilleure pratique. Naturellement, ceci comprenait de travailler de manière stratégique avec les gouvernements provincial et fédéral si possible, ainsi que de travailler avec Les producteurs de lait du Canada, les transformateurs et nos partenaires provinciaux du P5 et du P10. En travaillant ensemble, je crois que nous pouvons continuer à croître et solidifier l’industrie laitière canadienne.

En fait, la vision de la DFO est de réaliser « une dynamique profitable pour une industrie laitière en croissance ». Cette affirmation identifie spécialement une industrie laitière canadienne en croissance – pas seulement l’industrie laitière ontarienne – car la développe ensemble au niveau national nous renforce au niveau provincial.

En visant ces objectifs, DFO a tenu une réunion au début mars rassemblant les directeurs généraux de tout le pays. À l’exception du directeur général de Terre-Neuve à cause d’un problème de dernière minute, tous les directeurs se sont rendus à Mississauga pour partager et identifier des objectifs et pratiques opérationnelles communs. Suite à une excellente première rencontre, nous avons fortement ressenti que nous devions nous renconter régulièrement pour continuer à bâtir ces relations et partager des points communs et différences tout en respectant la gestion de nos entreprises. De plus, nous acceptons de limiter nos discussions aux points opérationnels puisque les points portant sur les politiques sont réservés aux élus.

Nous avons aussi pensé qu’en comprenant mieux ce que chaque entreprise fait, ce qu’elles sont légalement autorisé à faire, ainsi que tous les problèmes émergeants spécifiques aux provinces, nous amélioreront la bonne mise en œuvre de politiques. Par exemple, bien que DFO ait l’autorité et la juridiction de mettre des lois en place, j’ai appris que certaines autres provinces doivent fonctionner selon des règlements plus contraignants.

Après la conclusion des deux journées de réunions, le groupe a maintenant une meilleure compréhension des défis et opportunités de chacun. Nous sommes tous retournés à nos entreprises motivés par un nouvel engagement de continuer à bâtir ces relations et l’industrie laitière canadienne.

La prochaine réunion des directeurs généraux aura lieu à la mi-juin à Montréal. Je pense que cette réunion sera encore plus efficace et bénéfique que la première.

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When Darin Von Ruden, Wisconsin Farmers Union president (WFU), used his speech at Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s (DFO) recent annual meeting to invite Canadian dairy officials to his state to talk about supply management and help Wisconsin dairy farmers set up a system to better manage inventory controls, no one could anticipate the far-reaching impact such a gesture would produce.

“We looked forward to meeting with American farmers as it was an opportunity for us to share the benefits the Canadian dairy system provides to farmers, as well as debunk the myths many seem to have about supply management,” says DFO chair Ralph Dietrich.

Not long after that initial invitation, DFO vice-chair Murray Sherk and Dietrich went to Wisconsin in March to present to groups of dairy farmers on the benefits of Canada’s orderly marketing system and how it ensures a fair return for dairy farmers’ labour, a concept with which many in attendance could not relate. The five meetings were well received by producers, and word even spread to Missouri and Michigan’s dairy communities, which also expressed interest in hearing the same message. The presentations were also heard by several elected officials, including representatives of both of Wisconsin’s U.S. Senators, as well as four out of eight state representatives.

Along with extolling the benefits of orderly marketing, the meetings provided a way to clarify misconceptions Canada’s dairy industry was the cause of U.S. oversupply issues and a barrier to fair trade. At the end of each meeting, attendees were asked how many of them thought Canada was the cause of the challenges within their dairy system. Not one person raised their hand. In fact, one person shouted out “It’s not Canada’s fault. You’re just good scapegoats.”

There’s no question, the current situation in Wisconsin’s and many other states’ dairy industries has resulted in producers struggling to make ends meet, Von Ruden notes. After facing such dire situations on the farm, he says more producers are open to talking about implementing a system similar to supply management.

“We need a dairy supply management program to make sure we can keep as many family farms on the land as possible,” he says, adding for a growing number of farmers and processors, their dismal experience has opened their eyes to the need for a long-term program that better meets demand without oversupply, reduces price volatility and pays farmers a fair price for their milk.

The renewed push to improve farmers’ and processors’ circumstances, coupled with DFO’s presentations, has now laid the groundwork in what could be the beginning stages of adopting revolutionary solutions to the challenges faced by many American dairy farmers.

After completing the Wisconsin tour, DFO learned Dairy Farmers of America (DFA) announced in late March its members passed a resolution at its annual meeting to consider the value of implementing a system to help balance supply and demand within its own co-op, the largest in the country. Two DFA board members who attended DFO’s presentations were so impressed by what they heard they brought back suggestions to the co-op.

The resolution outlines a plan for DFA’s board to investigate a DFA-wide inventory management system similar to the base-excess system DFA implemented in California and other states. Essentially, a base-excess system is a pricing plan to encourage producers to adjust their production to a desirable seasonal pattern. It involves the annual reassignment of a production base that reflects a producer’s deliveries during a specified time of year when demand for milk is strong. The producer then receives a higher price for milk produced up to the amount of the production base and the “excess” or surplus price for additional supplies.

WFU officials say although passage of such a proposal is far from certain for DFA, it is a good vehicle to get the ball rolling on potential solutions for managing oversupply, and that DFO’s presentations helped breathe new inspiration into their efforts.
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NESTLÉ CANADA ANNOUNCES $51.5M EXPANSION IN LONDON ICE CREAM FACTORY

Nestlé Canada has announced plans to invest $51.5 million to increase production capabilities at its London ice cream factory on Wilton Grove Road, London, Ont.

The factory supplies Canadians with brands, such as Häagen-Dazs, Parlour and Drumstick, and has seen increased growth within the ice cream category, resulting in greater production demands. This expansion will help the company continue to innovate and bring new products to the market.

“We are really proud to be a part of the London community and excited to be making this significant investment,” says Jayne Payette, business executive officer for Nestlé Canada’s ice cream division. “Our employees work hard every day to bring these great made-in-Canada brands to our consumers and this investment allows us to bring even more exciting and innovative products to market.”

Nestlé Canada received $390,000 in funding from the Southwestern Ontario Development Fund for an early phase of the project, which enhanced the cleaning technology for each individual production line—a step that was essential to the success of the expansion.

“We are pleased to support Nestlé’s significant investment in southwestern Ontario’s food processing and dairy sector,” says Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Jeff Leal. “Our support for Nestlé Canada is helping create good jobs and economic opportunities for workers, dairy farmers and communities throughout the London area.”

Nestlé Canada is one of the largest purchasers of Canadian dairy. The expansion project will increase ingredient, packaging and raw material supplier purchases. It will create an additional 12 jobs, as well as move 45 seasonal part-time jobs to full-time positions.

The company started expanding the London facility in early 2016 by reconfiguring and consolidating production lines to increase capacity and flexibility for Häagen-Dazs. The second phase of the project included the addition of a second Drumstick line to further meet the increasing demand for the frozen treat. The third phase helped modernize existing processes to allow for greater flexibility within the production lines. The latest expansion includes an increase to the factory’s current footprint by 9,000 square feet to create more capacity for future growth of Häagen-Dazs and other products. Groundwork has already begun with production planned in early 2019.

DAIRY FARMER NAMED 2018 SOIL CHAMPION

By Lilian Schaer

For Dan Breen, soil is a living, active biosystem that needs protecting. It’s like the skin of the earth, he believes, and much like people cover their bare skin when going outside in the winter, fields also need covering to protect them from the elements.

The third-generation Middlesex County dairy farmer, who farms with his wife, daughter and son-in-law near Putnam, Ont., has been named the 2018 Soil Champion by the Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association (OSCIA). The award is handed out annually to recognize leaders in sustainable soil management.

Breen had just bought the 100-acre family farm from his parents in late 1989 when he
faced a major decision: replace the operation’s worn-out tillage equipment or come up with a different strategy.

A chance encounter introduced him to an emerging new cropping system—and in spring 1990, Breen made his first attempt at no-till, planting 40 acres of corn with a used two-row planter he'd modified. He’s been gradually growing his farming business ever since, today farming 300 owned and 500 rented acres.

“I treat the rented acres like the ones I own and that’s crucial. It’s all about stewardship, so whether you own or rent, you have the responsibility to do the best things you can,” he says. “Nature is in balance and we mess up that balance with excessive tillage, taking out too many nutrients, or not providing biodiversity, so we need to provide a stable environment as we go about our farming practices.”

His typical rotation involves corn, soybeans, wheat and cover crops, which he started planting 12 years ago. Breen rotates about 100 acres of alfalfa and spreads manure between crops when favourable soil and weather conditions allow.

“The only acreage that doesn’t have year-round living and growing crop is grain corn ground. I try to keep everything green and growing all the time and never have bare ground,” he says, adding he follows the motto, “keep it covered, keep it green, keep it growing.”

According to Breen, no single activity will result in healthy soil and there’s no set recipe for farmers to follow due to the variability of soil type, topography and climate. Instead, it’s important to consider what crop is being grown, what it needs, and what the nutrient levels and biological activity of the soil are.

“A true no-till system is more than just not tilling. It is biodiversity, water retention and nutrient cycling,” he says. “When I first started no-till, it was just to eliminate tillage. Now it is to build a whole nutrient system—cover crops weren’t even on the radar when I started farming.”

One of the pillars of his soil success over the years has been a willingness to try new things—as long as they support the goal of building stronger, more stable soil—and adapting to what a growing season brings.

To other farmers considering a switch to no-till, Breen recommends perseverance to keep going when success looks doubtful, strength to resist naysayers, and starting the transition gradually, such as with no-till soybeans after corn, and then no-till wheat after soybeans.

Lilian Schaer is a freelance journalist based in Guelph, Ont. This article was written on behalf of Ontario Soil and Crop Improvement Association.
WHAT HAPPENS WHEN PEOPLE MAKE COMPLAINTS ABOUT MANURE SMELL?

By Tim Brook

With farms, woods, wildlife and fresh air, rural residents cherish the charm and beauty of the countryside. Many people move from cities seeking peace and a pristine environment in the country.

Most people understand a rural community includes farmers and farming is a business. Ontario’s agri-food sector employs 760,000 people and contributes more than $35 billion to the province’s economy every year. This means certain activities take place according to a production schedule, and some of these activities affect residents living close to farms. In almost all cases, farmers and their rural neighbours get along well together. However, there are some exceptions.

For 2015-16, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) received 107 complaints related to farm practices. Of these, 45 were about odour, while the others were mainly about noise, flies and municipal bylaws.

Odour complaints are generally related to:
- farmers spreading manure on fields;
- fans ventilating livestock barns;
- manure piles;
- mushroom farms.

To manage conflict around farm practices, the Ontario government enacted the Farming and Food Production Protection Act (FFPPA). The act gave rise to the Normal Farm Practices Protection Board (NFP PB) to determine what constitutes “normal farm practices.” When a person complains about odour or other nuisance from a particular farming practice, the board has the authority to hear the case and decide whether the practice is a “normal farm practice.” If it is determined to be normal, the farmer is protected from any legal action regarding that practice.

When people lodge complaints about farm practices, a regional agricultural engineer or environmental specialist from OMAFRA’s environmental management branch works with all parties involved to resolve the conflict. The board requires any complaint go through this conflict resolution process before it proceeds to a hearing.

Each year, OMAFRA staff has resolved the vast majority of complaints using the conflict resolution process. In 2015-16, only 12 of the 107 cases resulted in hearings before the board. Of these 12, only two were due to odour cases involving multiple nuisances, such as noise, dust and flies. Thus, while odour remains the biggest cause of complaints about farm practices, OMAFRA staff, working through the conflict resolution process, has been very effective in dealing with them.

DID YOU KNOW?
You can read full issues of Milk Producer online by visiting www.milkproducer.ca. You can also keep up to date on the latest dairy-related issues via DFO’s social media accounts on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.
In an effort to improve barn fire awareness and prevention, Farm & Food Care Ontario has started a lending program for forward-looking infrared (FLIR) cameras. Dust, moisture, manure gases and other corrosive elements within barns create an environment generally unfriendly to electrical components—even when designed properly. Over time, that corrosion in electrical receptacles can foster electrical resistance, heat and possible combustion.

FLIR cameras use thermal imaging to show differences and range in temperature. By directing them at walls, outlets and other apertures within a structure, they can help producers detect electrical components that are overloaded or corroded.

These tools come as either a separate handheld unit or smartphone plugin. Both are available in this free lending program.

For more information or to borrow a unit, contact Bruce Kelly, projects manager at Farm & Food Care Ontario, at 519-837-1326 or bruce@farmfoodcare.org.
Robert McKinlay, owner of Harcolm Farms in Beachville, Ont., is proud to say his farm is now carbon neutral.

The farm recently celebrated the installation of a small-scale anaerobic digester that captures methane from cattle manure and converts it to renewable biogas. The small-scale digester, which was installed in January, is the first of its kind for Ontario, McKinlay says.

“It was interesting to me to be able to have a system where we can take material that wouldn't otherwise be used and close the loop,” McKinlay says during a farm open house in March.

While typical digesters in Ontario range from 200 to 500 kilowatts, McKinlay’s digester is 20 kilowatts. With about 72 milking cows, the digester produces enough electricity to run the farm and any excess is sold to the grid.

When it comes to completely closing the loop, Harcolm Farms is also able to use the solid digestate for animal bedding and apply liquid digestate to the fields.

“As far as infrastructure, we didn't really have to change much on farm to receive the digester,” McKinlay says “We poured a concrete pad. The digester arrived in a truck, and we built it up in three or four days.”

McKinlay, along with John Hawkes from Way- side Energy, began discussing the idea of installing a small-scale digester about two years ago. A year later, they applied for government funding for this pilot project through the BLOOM Clean Technology Demonstration Program, which administers provincial funding for projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

“The digester certainly does that,” McKinlay says. “We’re capturing methane, which has a global warming potential that’s 20 times higher than carbon dioxide, so it fits their criteria in terms of a project that would reduce greenhouse gas emissions.”

As part of the pilot project, McKinlay and Hawkes are taking measurements to try to quantify the contributions to reducing emissions. They’re looking at every aspect of the project, including the reduction of bedding loads as a result of the solid digestate.
AG FEASIBILITY STUDY UNDERWAY IN KAWARTHA LAKES

Farmers in the Kawartha Lakes area are being asked to take part in an agricultural plastics survey.

Since 2009, the City of Kawartha Lakes has delivered a municipal bale wrap recycling program at two locations. This study will provide another layer of support to local farmers, as well as a thorough analysis of how ag plastics are currently being managed to help identify barriers and opportunities. Farmers who are interested in participating in the survey can contact Cori Crawford at crawford@cleanfarms.ca. Interviews will continue until mid-May and should take 30 to 60 minutes to complete. Producers will be compensated for their time.

Kawartha Conservation and Cleanfarms are partnering on this project as part of joint efforts to support stewardship best practices and help keep agricultural communities clean.

Funding for this program comes from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs through the Lake Simcoe Protection Plan.

POLICY NOTICE:
On March 27, 2018, Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s (DFO) board approved changes to the every day pick-up policy that will go into effect June 1, 2018. A detailed description of the changes for your review can be found on DFO’s website at www.milk.org. A notice will also be mailed to all producers.
Livestock producers have been urged to cut unnecessary antibiotic use to try to prevent resistant bacteria from developing in their herds and flocks. But on the farm, the question being asked is where and how?

Consider dairy calves, for example. More than half of calf deaths occur from diarrhea. Producers often treat this condition with antibiotics as soon as they detect it. They’re concerned delaying treatment could harm calf health and welfare.

But a University of Guelph research team says methodic management, in particular using oral electrolyte replacement and water when calves are dehydrated from diarrhea, can provide better results. They’ve found antimicrobials are required just a fraction of the time.

Ontario Veterinary College researchers have created a flow chart or algorithm to help guide producers’ decisions about treating diarrhea with antibiotics. They are one of the first research teams to investigate the effectiveness of protocols to reduce and refine antimicrobial treatment in pre-weaned calves.

“Use of the algorithm for treatment of diarrheic calves reduced antimicrobial treatment rates without a negative impact on their health,” says professor and lead researcher Scott Weese.

He says antimicrobial therapy is commonly recommended for diarrhea regardless of its cause, to try to eliminate the suspected pathogen that’s causing the problem. But to some extent, almost all calves get diarrhea.

“We don’t need to treat them all with antibiotics. There are other ways,” he says. “Antibiotics may not be beneficial and, in fact, may lead to longer recovery times because besides killing pathogens, they’re also killing the beneficial bacteria in the gut.”

After working for a year with two Ontario dairy farms with a total of 1,200 calves, researchers found antibiotics were seldom a necessary treatment for diarrhea. In fact, by adhering to the algorithm they created, they cut antimicrobial use by a whopping 80 per cent, with no consequences.

On the test farms, researchers found with good management, calves usually got better in time. Mostly, those measures were centred on fluid replacement. Fluid loss during diarrhea is significant, but the current go-to treatment of antibiotics doesn’t fix fluid loss.

“Antibiotics are important if calves have an infection outside their intestines,” he says. “But if the infection is inside their intestines, don’t use antibiotics to try to help the calf get better. (Producers) can save money … we’ve shown the algorithm works.”

This research has recently been expanded to include 10 Ontario farms. Weese believes the flow chart could also work for farmers outside Ontario.

Research sponsors included the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs and Dairy Farmers of Ontario.

Owen Roberts is a journalist at the University of Guelph and president of the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists. This story first appeared in RealAgriculture.
REGULATION 761 GETS FINAL APPROVAL

Changes to Ontario Regulation 761 regarding milk quality and animal welfare will be implemented on May 1, 2018.

As a result of harmonization of milk quality programs across P5 provinces, Ontario Regulation 761 has been amended to reflect new penalty provisions for somatic cell count (SCC), bacteria and abnormal freezing point (AFP). Animal care and welfare regulations will also be introduced.

In late March 2018, the amended regulation received final approval, and will be effective May 1, 2018.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES:

1. Implementation of demerit system for SCC and bacteria penalty calculation. A SCC or bacteria penalty will apply when the following two criteria are met:
   • at least one test result exceeds the standard in the third month of a rolling three-month period;
   • at least 40 per cent of the test results in the same rolling three-month period exceeds the standard.

   While the regulatory limit for bacteria will remain at 121,000 cells per millilitre, the regulatory limit for SCC will change slightly, from 400,000 cells/mL to 401,000 cells/mL.

2. Introduction of a warning for AFP:
   Within the new environment, the dollar value of the first AFP test result in penalty range in a rolling 12-month period will be $0. This means a penalty level will be applied to the first test result in the penalty range but with zero financial consequences. Financial penalties will apply for subsequent test results in the penalty range.

   The SCC, bacteria and AFP penalty history will be carried over into the new environment.

   A factsheet detailing the new milk quality programs is available on the producer dashboard at www.milk.org.

3. Animal care and welfare provisions:
   The following provisions related to animal care and welfare will be included in the updated regulation:
   • prohibition of tail docking unless medically necessary as determined and documented by a veterinarian. Producers should consult with a vet when docking a dairy animal’s tail;
   • prohibition of housing cattle whose tails were docked on or after May 1, 2018, unless done in accordance with above. If an animal whose tail was docked on or after May 1, 2018 is brought into a dairy facility, the producer must have on file documentation signed by a vet confirming the tail was docked for a medical reason;
   • provision of clean and comfortable housing;
   • cattle hooves in good condition;
   • provision of adequate ration and access to water;
   • animal identification per federal regulations;
   • adherence to provincial and federal animal transportation regulations;
   • proper storage of deadstock until removal or disposal within 48 hours in accordance with provincial regulations;
   • provision of veterinary report and requirement to follow orders issued by the director of regulatory compliance when there is evidence of potential animal welfare issues.

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Dairy Farmers of Ontario (DFO) partnered with Restaurants Canada to ensure dairy would be represented at the RC Show—Canada’s largest food service event that took place in February at the Enercare Centre in Toronto, Ont.

The organizations worked together to connect thought-leaders from the dairy and food industries and align innovation that would drive the sectors forward. This includes supporting the hospitality, food service and distribution industries’ access to Ontario’s supply of high-quality, locally-produced dairy products.

“Both organizations and the industries they represent understand the need for improved access to the local food supply chain for the food industry, and nutritious, local food for consumers,” says Graham Lloyd, DFO’s general manager and chief executive officer.

On behalf of Ontario’s dairy producers and dairy sector partners, DFO engaged and connected with more than 16,000 hospitality professionals from across the Canadian food industry, showcasing the exceptional quality and variety of Ontario cheese at three VIP events over three days. Dairy was well-represented at the RC Show with dairy processor Saputo sponsoring the Breakfast with Champions.

Fresh Ontario ricotta cheese was also a black box ingredient during the Garland Canada Chef Competition.

DFO also used the RC Show as an opportunity to launch a chef competition on its consumer-focused Twitter account (@OntarioMilk), as well as Facebook (/OntarioDairy) and Instagram (@dairy_farmersont) accounts. The competition called on chefs to submit original dairy recipes for a chance to earn a place and be profiled in the 2019 Ontario Dairy Recipe Collection.

The competition, along with the announcement DFO was partnering with Restaurants Canada for the show, garnered @OntarioMilk 352 new followers in two weeks since the contest was teased online. In comparison, during the entire month of January, @OntarioMilk had 15 new followers.

DFO and Restaurants Canada intend to continue the partnership and work to promote food safety, quality and nutrition, as well as facilitate new conversations and innovation to address the food trends of consumers, and the hospitality and culinary communities.
Progressive Dairy Operators and Alltech have announced the successful completion of their fifth business management workshop series in March.

This year, 17 participants took part in five sessions, which included presentations by informative industry speakers, as well as real-life examples of established dairy producers. The workshops provided a good learning opportunity for the group and generated a tremendous amount of discussions.

Topics covered included: debt management and capital utilization, business management and benchmarking, business structures and succession planning, human resources and the requirements of health and safety on the farm, insurance and legal considerations of construction and benefits to having a general contractor.

On the last day of the workshop, each participant was required to prepare a presentation on a subject they learned in one of the workshops and explain how it applies to their enterprises.

LEFT PHOTO shows from left Adam Rae from Alltech and Peter Spruit from Spruit Dairy Farm, who prepared a presentation on the financial advantage of heifer rearing during the workshop series. Right photo shows Rae with Jennifer Bryson from Bryt Farms Ltd. Her presentation was on buying cows to fill increases or sell quota.
Early diagnosis and treatment of disease in your calves can reduce the economic impact sickness and mortality can have on your farm, while improving calf health and welfare. Detecting disease sooner makes it easier to treat, requiring reduced medical care and fewer antibiotics, as well as preventing a herd level outbreak and further complications. This leads to improved average daily gain. However, early disease detection can be challenging since some symptoms can be difficult to identify and monitor.

Two apps from the University of Wisconsin school of veterinary medicine aim to help make health scoring your calves easier. Based on Dr. Sheila McGuirk’s calf health scoring chart, the apps let you track health parameters, such as nasal discharge, ocular (eye) discharge, ear position/head carriage, appetite, attitude, coughing, rectal temperature, manure consistency, navel characteristics and joint appearance. The apps provide a simple-to-use interface that displays photos and descriptions of health parameters so you can score each calf on a scale of 0 to 3, representing normal to very abnormal observations (see Photo). If two or more parameters are moderately or severely abnormal, such as a score of 2 or 3, disease is likely present, and the app will alert you.

The group pen respiratory scorer lets you make observations at pen level, and classify any high-risk pens (a pen with more than 25 per cent of calves with two or more abnormal observations) and potentially sick animals. You can then score each animal in a high-risk pen using the calf health scorer to track disease progression. If you prefer, the calf health scorer can be used independently of the group pen respiratory scorer to score each calf individually.

Calves should be health scored twice weekly. You can set aside a small amount of time daily to score a few pens or you can score your whole herd at once. Health scoring calves may be something you are already doing, but making it systematic and recording your observations will help you catch illness sooner, identify patterns and keep track of treatments administered. Twice weekly health scoring should not replace daily observations; you should health score animals that have abnormal observations more frequently and record any abnormal findings as you see them.

Once you have completed the health scoring, you can review a report generated by the app, indicating which calves need to be treated and which calves were treated in the past. It is easy to send information about a herd’s health by email, making sharing important health records with a herd veterinarian a breeze.

Dr. Renaud, now an assistant professor in the department of population medicine at the Ontario Veterinary College, used the app as part of his recently completed calf health research. “The app is a really valuable tool that allows a standardized approach to identifying sick calves. When using the app, producers might be surprised they may be able to identify sick calves sooner. Also, it is a great way to ensure everyone identifying sick calves on the farm is using the same approach so no sick calves are missed,” he says.

You may experience an initial increase in number of calves treated, treatment costs, respiratory illness and calls to your herd veterinarian as sick calves are noticed earlier. However, early disease detection will reduce treatment costs, number of calves given repeat treatments, and sickness and mortality over time. Further, you will be able to track performance, cost of production, disease incidence and treatment efficacy to measure average daily gain and long-term improvement in profitability. Those outcomes make health scoring worth the investment.

The group pen respiratory scorer and calf health scorer apps are available for iPad and cost $2.99 each. An Android version is currently in development.

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In February, Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) participated in the International Dairy Federation’s (IDF) symposium in Seville, Spain, which focused on the role of dairy in sustainable diets. The symposium brought together experts in nutrition, public perception, socioeconomics, environment and policy, to holistically consider the benefits of dairy in human nutrition, its social and economic importance at a global level and its relationship to the natural environment. The experts provided evidence showing how dairy meets four conditions of a sustainable diet as defined by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations:

• Nutritionally adequate, safe and healthy;
• Culturally acceptable;
• Protective and respectful of biodiversity and ecosystems;
• Accessible, economically fair and affordable.

On its own, dairy is sometimes vilified for its greenhouse gas emissions, largely as a result of methane emissions from cows and their manure. However, in the context of a whole diet, it provides nutrients that can allow for a healthy, nutritious, economically-viable and low environmentally-impacting diet. When viewed on the basis of its protein, the footprint of milk is actually lower than many of its plant-derived alternatives. Similarly, when viewed as part of a balanced diet, greenhouse gas contributions of a moderate consumption of dairy products are roughly the same as those from fruit and vegetables.

The symposium highlighted the need for broad-based metrics and a holistic understanding of sustainability and nutrition. Simple metrics can easily portray the dairy industry in a negative light, such as metrics showing it takes 1,000 L of water to produce one L of milk. While the number is accurate in some ways, it is also misleading. The vast majority of this 1,000 L falls as rainwater onto crops and never leaves the water cycle.

However, applying complex and recognized metrics is more challenging but will yield a more balanced and positive perspective of the dairy industry.

Governments are increasingly considering the sustainability of food sources as they update and revise health guides, promoting plant-based foods over animal-based products. Consumers could interpret this as plants being better for their health. However, the symposium highlighted dairy’s strong health profile, potentially associated with decreased risk of stroke and Type 2 diabetes, and the difficulty in achieving healthy eating for the population in the absence of dairy products, where dairy provides a wide range of nutrients in a convenient format.

IDF will continue discussions in this area, with action teams following science and considering how best to communicate dairy’s health benefits and environmental performance.

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Building relationships in the industry is the key to facing challenges that lie ahead, says Graham Lloyd, DFO general manager and chief executive officer (CEO). Whether it is with consumers, government, producers, provincial boards or Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC), building solid relationships is the best way to strengthen the industry and form meaningful partnerships, both from a strategic alliance standpoint and good business practice, Lloyd says.

One vital area he is working toward solidifying is the relationship between DFO and DFC, which has been strained the last couple of years. Since Pierre Lampron became DFC president, Lloyd has made it a point to speak with him on a biweekly basis.

“This has strengthened our relationship,” Lloyd says. “It is easier to address challenges when you already have a relationship established.”

Lloyd has also reached out to new executive director Jacques Lefebvre, whom he speaks with every week to ensure continued dialogue on important matters, such as the Recharge with Milk promotion, DFC’s involvement with a DFO-led calendar, proAction communications, lobby day collaboration and processor relationships.

Lloyd is also fond of building partnerships with other provinces, specifically through establishing regular meetings with general managers from other provincial boards. The first such meeting took place over a two-day period in March at DFO’s office. General managers came together to find commonalities, talk about operations and regulatory issues specific to one’s region, as well as how to better communicate with producers.

“The first meeting was tremendously helpful and eye-opening,” Lloyd says, adding the next meeting will take place in June. “For instance, it helped us understand why one province may have an issue with managing aspects of proAction due to the fact they have different regulatory requirements they have to follow.”

Lloyd says meeting with processors, both large and small, is also important to industry success. DFO has to help small processors grow and work with larger processing companies, he says. Currently, five large processors—Parmalat, Kraft, Saputo, Agropur and Gay Lea Foods—control at least 85 per cent of the market in Canada.

“Understanding what challenges they have is important to our industry,” he says. “It’s all about communication, and communication is about relationships.”
**STRATEGIC APPROACH TO TACKLE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS ISSUES**

There is clearly a trade imbalance between Canada and the United States, says Graham Lloyd, DFO’s general manager and chief executive officer, who lists trade, along with Health Canada’s Healthy Eating Strategy and supply management, as the main government relations issues DFO and DFC are tackling.

Lloyd says trade imbalance is one of the key messages Canada needs to deliver as North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) renegotiations continue.

In 2016, Canada imported $971 million in dairy, and had a total dairy trade deficit of almost $735 million. Meanwhile, the U.S. enjoyed a net trade surplus of $445 million. As well, it has been reported New York, Michigan and Wisconsin overproduce as much milk on a daily basis as Ontario produces in a day. Lloyd says the U.S. dairy model is broken with its overuse of milk, and gaining access to Canada’s dairy market would be detrimental to Canada and only be a drop in the bucket in addressing milk surplus in the U.S.

“It is important everyone understand NAFTA benefits U.S. dairy, and that is why we use these numbers when we’re meeting with various stakeholders,” Lloyd says, adding NAFTA is clearly an important trade agreement for the U.S. since 35 states have Canada as their number one trading partner. The simple economics of NAFTA illustrates the importance of the agreement in that the U.S. cannot simply walk away from it.

When it comes to asking for more access to Canada’s dairy under NAFTA, the U.S. had already obtained 3.25 per cent access under the original Trans-Pacific Partnership agreement, now known as the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), which included the U.S. as a member country. Lloyd says industry representatives are standing firm on the position if the U.S. wants access to dairy under NAFTA, it should rejoin CPTPP, and Canadian dairy should not give up additional access through NAFTA.

Lloyd and DFO chair Ralph Dietrich have attended every round of NAFTA renegotiations to reiterate this message to Canadian negotiators.

**HEALTHY EATING STRATEGY**

Health Canada’s Healthy Eating Strategy is another government relations issue the dairy industry must have on its radar, Lloyd says.

“It could have a serious long-term effect on our industry,” he says. “I really want to prepare our dairy farmers and the general public for what’s happening.”

Health Canada is proposing changes to Canada’s Food Guide that would eliminate dairy as a food group, and promote plant-based proteins over animal-based proteins.

It is also proposing changes to its labelling standards by incorporating front-of-package nutrition symbols that would identify foods high in salt, sugar or saturated fat. Whole milk is exempted from this proposed policy, however, many other nutrient-rich dairy products, such as cheese and yogurt, would carry a warning label under this new standard, while diet sodas and potato chips may not carry a label.

“There is no conclusive scientific evidence to make that recommendation,” Lloyd says. “It is irresponsible to make recommendations in a food guide to exclude foods that aren’t backed by conclusive scientific evidence.”

The front-of-package warning labels target the levels of salt, sugar and saturated fat and don’t take into account other nutritional attributes of the product, Lloyd says.

The dairy industry is asking for exemptions to be made for nutrient-rich dairy products, which are unique in its position, from Health Canada’s Healthy Eating Strategy. It is also asking Healthy Canada not solely define the overall healthfulness of a food for any policy under the Healthy Eating Strategy by its levels of salt, sugar and saturated fat.

DFO is continuing to work with the Ministry of Health, members of Parliament and other officials to deliver this message. As well, www.keepcanadianshealthy.ca endorses this message.

**SUPPLY MANAGEMENT**

Continuing to support the importance of supply management to the Canadian dairy industry and economy is another key government relations issue for DFO.

Lloyd says part of DFO’s strategy is to get in front of senior policy decision-makers and participate in activities that influence policy-making. This includes working closely with DFC as the national lobby group, as well as other provincial marketing boards, to reiterate key messages.

“It’s important that you, as our dairy producer committee members, understand what our messaging is and meet with elected officials to keep the dairy industry in the forefront,” Lloyd says. “There are so many myths about our system we have to debunk.”

Lloyd says DFO is meeting with U.S. unions and dairy groups to educate them about Canada’s dairy system. This was recently the case when DFO’s board members visited Wisconsin dairy farmers to talk about supply management.

Lloyd says this encourages U.S. counterparts to champion Canada’s orderly marketing system and put pressure on their own governments.

**NON-BINDING RESOLUTIONS**

Delegates approved six out of the 11 non-binding resolutions presented at the spring policy conference.

While resolutions are non-binding for DFO’s board, they provide direction for it to consider. Here is a summary of the six approved resolutions.

**Milk tank calibration** – DFO should calibrate all milk tanks within one year of installation;

**Non-binding resolutions** – DFO should issue a report to producers on all non-binding resolutions passed at the spring policy conference no later than the following fall regional meetings indicating what action, if any, was taken to implement suggestions contained in the resolutions;

**Entering premises** – a standard procedure should be developed in which producers are informed by text message or phone call if anyone, such as an inspector or field services representative, will be entering their premises;

**DFO board member** – DFO should put a term limit in place for its board members;

**Research dollars** – DFO should direct some of the funding going to the University of Guelph toward organizations, such as the Ontario Association of Bovine Practitioners, to help fund real-life education programs for food animal or large animal veterinarians;

**Quota price cap** – DFO should not touch the $24,000 quota cap price until it is thoroughly discussed at regional meetings, spring policy conference and fall regional meetings.
A shift in production-demand balance can happen quickly, says Patrice Dubé, DFO’s economics director. And since the Canadian Dairy Commission (CDC) has changed the way it calculates requirements and quota allotted to provinces in order to be more responsive to market needs and allow forecasting beyond a one-year period, the new forecast model will be more reliable going forward, Dubé says, adding producers have been asking for this for a long time.

The main issue at the moment is the need to rebalance production to be in line with current and anticipated short-term demand, he says. While the focus has been on creating an environment to incentivize processing investments, milk production is now higher than current demand. This puts a burden on processors’ capacity to process and skim the extra milk, which is also contributing to increased butter stocks.

What implications will this have two to three years down the road? The CDC’s past calculation model, which Dubé described as “broken,” was systemically underestimating butter-fat demand. There was a lag in quota allocated to pools because the model used was developed at a time when growth was not observed for all products at the same time as has been seen in recent months, he says. “We (economists) were shooting in the dark because we did not have a fair assessment of what was the actual demand. Now we have a model that is much more reliable.”

Production is expected to increase in all provinces for the coming year, Dubé adds. Part of the balancing act is trying to predict when milk will be coming forward, particularly when provinces, such as Quebec, will have more than 20 credit days available to use.

“We need to make sure when we rebalance production it is not done too strongly, which could have a counterproductive effect,” he says, adding there could be a shift over time in where the highest amount of milk is being produced. It is expected Ontario will have slower production growth in the coming years compared with other eastern provinces to allow it to fill PS demand with production credits.

“We can’t do anything drastic because if we cut production momentum on the farm, it could be negative in the long run when milk will be needed to supply new investments coming online in 2019, as well as the continuous increase in growth expected beyond that year,” he says. “However, the more we wait to get production in line, the bigger the problem will be; we have to maximize all available options.”

Since validation, most producers were able to close their corrective action requests (CARs) before a penalty was levied. As a result, only four producers were levied a penalty, which is consistent with the CQM program, Leal says.

The most common CARs producers received were related to animal health practices standard operating procedure (SOP), colostrum management and calf feeding SOP, euthanasia SOP, downed cattle corrective action plans, livestock treatment records, traceability records and corrective action records.

“Many veterinarians are providing their clients with written protocols so producers can use that to write their SOPs,” Leal says.

In regard to livestock treatment records, it is not uncommon for validators to find some treatments not being recorded, such as dry cow treatment or pain control medications.

“The biggest risk to food safety is the presence of drug residues,” Leal says. “Treatment records help producers control this risk. Also, with antimicrobial resistance concerns, your stakeholders are counting on you to use drugs responsibly. One of the ways to show that is to maintain good records on drug use.”

The current contract with Holstein Canada for cattle assessments expires in October 2018. In January 2018, DFO’s board approved contracting Holstein Canada as the sole service provider in Ontario for up to four years under a national contract.

DFC, in consultation with provincial market-
EVALUATING QUOTA POLICY OPTIONS

The dairy industry is at a critical stage in terms of managing milk production prior to the next three processor infrastructure projects coming online in 2019 and 2020, according to George MacNaughton, DFO’s director of operations.

“We’ve got an immediate issue,” he says, adding the dilemma is finding a balance between supply and demand, and ensuring supply will be readily available when demand calls for it.

Paul Risebrough, DFO’s milk allocation lead, says for the first few months in 2018, the industry experienced a surplus in milk production.

“Skimming was very high and it’s continuing as of today,” Risebrough says. “There is no immediate end in sight, and I project we’ll be skimming until October.”

With production increasing faster than short-term projected market growth and P5 provinces currently at maximum skimming capacity, P5 boards decided not to extend the incentive day beyond March 2018, as well as not issue additional quota in the 2017-18 dairy year.

Other mitigation strategies include the 5d export permits for cheese, aged cheese program, ice cream program, exporting at domestic prices and following up with processors for available capacity.

MacNaughton says processor infrastructure projects in 2019 and 2020 should offer some relief, but the issue is finding a balance between supply and demand in the short and long term.

“The goal is to get milk when we need it and when we issue a signal,” MacNaughton says.

This is particularly crucial to ensure milk is available to fill high fall demand and upcoming infrastructure projects, while at the same time, ensure the industry doesn’t experience a surplus in milk production ahead of projected market growth.

MacNaughton asked dairy producer committee members to consider elements that could make up a quota policy, allowing P5 provinces to immediately receive milk when quota is issued. The policy would mainly target producers who aren’t filling their quota.

“There are a number of producers who want to hold quota for equity gain,” MacNaughton says.

Some producers might hold quota in anticipation for future expansion, or they’re concerned they won’t be able to get the quota back if they sell it, MacNaughton says.

“Essentially, there’s nothing in the system that says you have to fill quota,” MacNaughton says. “That’s not reflected in the current quota policy environment, but there are several policy options.”

Those options include within quota and-or underproduction credit leasing, a maintenance clause, preventing producers from purchasing quota if they reach a certain number of days of underproduction credits, increasing new entrant/new producer positions, selling increases on the quota exchange, or preventing producers from purchasing quota if their quality record is poor.

UPDATE ON DFO’S PROMOTION AND MARKETING ACTIVITIES

When DFO decided in June 2017 to withdraw promotional funding from DFC, effective Jan. 1, 2018, its goal was to ensure promotional dollars were targeted specifically to growth that can be measured. It also wanted better reporting, transparency and accountability about how money was being spent on promotional and marketing activities.

After the decision, DFO quickly set up an advisory group comprising veteran industry experts, which met several times in 2017. The committee’s mandate was broad, with no preconceived notions on how promotional dollars should be spent, says Graham Lloyd, DFO’s general manager and chief executive officer. The group’s main aim was to look at how to grow the market at the farmgate, as well create an environment favouring domestic butterfat production over exports.

The advisory group identified five areas DFO’s board should consider when developing a promotional and marketing strategy:
1. Invest in pre-competitive generic advertising;
2. Work collaboratively with supply chain partners in marketing and promoting dairy consumption;
3. Allocate funds to support investments and capital expenditure;
4. Continue to invest in research;
5. Set aside funds for community involvement and leverage DFO’s dairy producer committees to promote dairy.

Lloyd says working with processors, further processors, food distributors and retailers is an important consideration in determining how best to use promotional dollars.

“We want to partner with them since they are the experts. We want to ask them what we can do to support them growing the market, as opposed to us coming up with a campaign and expecting them to support it,” he says, adding DFO will develop its own metrics to measure return on investment (ROI).

If there’s an opportunity to provide capital support to facilitate innovation then that’s better use of dollars, Lloyd adds. Partnering with food services and thinking outside the box with respect to finding new ways to use dairy ingredients is also a main goal.

The areas DFO will fund and support include dairy research, community investments, partnerships, such as the recent agreement between DFO and Restaurants Canada, extending the Recharge with Milk campaign, developing a new milk calendar, continuing the Elementary School Milk Program, improving dairy producer committee relations, among other initiatives.

DFO recently established an interim marketing and promotions committee comprising select board members and staff to further investigate funding allocation and establish criteria for existing projects. It is also looking to continue the advisory group to provide arms-length guidance on promotional activities.

“We will measure every program, with each having a stated goal and objective. There will be some program specifics we can’t share due to confidentiality, but our overall aim is to ensure our stated goals are being achieved,” Lloyd says. He adds not every program will be measured by ROI, as some are designed to do so, such as the Dairy Education Program. However, all programs must have stated goals and objectives that are measured for accountability purposes.

DFO is currently in the process of searching for a top-tier candidate to fulfill the newly-created director of marketing role, Lloyd says.
DAIRY INDUSTRY LABOUR TRENDS SHOW A NEED FOR MORE EXPERTISE AS FARMERS NEAR RETIREMENT

In the agriculture sector, it is oftentimes hard to find qualified, skilled labour. According to the Canadian Agricultural Human Resource Council (CAHRC), Canada’s agriculture sector, although poised for growth, faces significant labour challenges that could jeopardize its growth potential and contribution to the national economy. In 2014, 26,400 jobs went unfilled in the sector, which cost it $1.5 billion in lost revenues, or 2.7 per cent of product sales. The agricultural sector—the backbone of Canada’s economy—employs 2.3 million in all categories, and is the fifth largest exporter of feeding the world population, says Portia MacDonald-Dewhirst, CAHRC executive director.

CAHRC’s mandate is varied and broad and includes exploring emerging labour issues, tracking and addressing labour challenges and providing practical staff management tools and training programs. It also informs industry partners, including their boards, staff and members, about emerging labour issues, while providing partner members with assistance and tools to implement comprehensive staff management techniques.

Understanding labour and staffing issues from producers’ perspectives, their plans for retirement and the skills needed for their farm’s future success are all part of what CAHRC does, MacDonald-Dewhirst says, adding now is the time to talk about dairy farm labour and staffing issues as the industry experiences unprecedented growth. Dairy is the fourth-largest employer in the agriculture sector, comprising 11 per cent of the agri-workforce. Although the gap in finding qualified and skilled workers in the industry is not as severe as other agriculture sectors, 3,400 dairy-related jobs went unfilled in 2014, according to CAHRC data.

One critical issue the industry is facing is most dairy farmers are approaching retirement age. By 2025, about 31 per cent of dairy farmers will retire. This means in the next seven years, a third of the dairy farmer workforce will no longer be controlling the farm. What is the implication of this trend? What are dairy farmers’ plans for succession? Are their children interested in taking over the farm? These are questions the industry needs to address now to ensure business continuity and success, MacDonald-Dewhirst says.

The biggest labour gap in the industry is with managers and owner/operators, with about 4,000 vacancies in these two areas, MacDonald-Dewhirst notes. Unfilled vacancies can cost the industry upward of $71 million year over year, she says, and the impact will only grow as the industry gets larger.

On a positive note, the industry has below average turnover rates. People are more willing to stay with dairy farm operations, and the sector is less prone to seasonal variations. It also has fewer negative perceptions of working in the industry, and technology on the farm makes it a less physically demanding job. “All these factors work in your favour,” MacDonald-Dewhirst says.

Despite these advantages, there are critical challenges that must be addressed, including long work hours, particularly the 24/7 schedule, an aging workforce, and changing Canadian demographics.

“We need to work together and use a careful and strategic approach to address these concerns,” MacDonald-Dewhirst says. “Everyone has a role to play to be part of the solution in ensuring a strong, skilled and viable workforce. That means investing in people and providing supportive training so people understand what they are asked to do, clarifying workforce policies, providing fair compensation and building loyalty in workers.”

Jade Reeve, manager of AgriJobs, a CAHRC resource that clarifies skills requirements for agricultural positions, says the organization provides farmers with many tools to help them find and retain skilled workers.

Employer tools available at www.cahrccrha.ca include an AgriHR Toolkit, which provides instructions, tools and templates producers can use for effective human resource management, and AgriJob Match, a comprehensive job board, to help businesses find and keep the staff they need to be successful.

CAHRC also deals with mental health and how to manage this issue. Resources are available in the toolkit on this subject, including information on how to deal with depression and stress and what an employer can do to help an employee adapt in a workplace.

Some challenges producers face in keeping employees is lack of proper job descriptions. CAHRC has adaptable job description templates, as well as sample interview guides so producers can learn to ask the right questions to capture behavioural attributes in a prospective employee, Reeve notes.

For more detailed information on what CAHRC offers, visit www.cahrccrha.ca. The website is also available in French.
“This is history in the making for Ontario DHI, as well as the rest of Canada,” says Ed Friesen, chair of CanWest DHI, during a special general meeting on March 20. “We are making this proactive move before we’re in a crisis situation.”

DHI delegates voted unanimously to change the organization’s bylaws to support the partnership between CanWest DHI, Valacta and the Canadian Dairy Network (CDN).

Pierre Lampron, chair of Valacta, says he’s enthusiastic about the partnership, which is a strategic move that would make the organizations stronger.

“This partnership will keep Canada on the leading edge of genetics,” Lampron says.

For the last two decades, the organizations have been working closely together, and Lampron says no one has ever questioned this partnership.

“This is the thing we’ve all been waiting for,” says Norm McNaughton, chair of CDN. “This is where the future needs to be, and it’s been an honour to be a small part of a great thing.”

DHI members approved seven key changes to its bylaws, including:

- Modifying the board of directors composition for the partnership;
- Adjusting the director terms to match partner wording;
- Removing director zones to allow directors to be elected province-wide with all delegates voting;
- Removing the honourary director option;
- Clarifying a director election process if ballots are tied;
- Establishing a new section for transition timing and director change process;
- Cleaning up and adding clarity to other sections without changing intent.

The partnership, which is anticipated to start on Oct. 1, 2018, would create a single entity, operated by one board of directors and one management team with more than 500 staff working in six time zones. The new organization would provide milk recording, genetic evaluation and herd management services to more than 11,000 dairy producers across the country.

While the new partnership would operate as one visible entity, behind the scenes, each partner will remain a separate legal entity and maintain their current assets and liabilities, separate financial statements and be financially self-supporting. The new organization would technically be made up of four partners—Ontario DHI and Western Canadian DHI, which make up CanWest DHI, as well as Valacta and the Canadian Dairy Network.
RECOGNIZING EXCELLENCE

Jersey Canada acknowledges award recipients at annual general meeting

A t Jersey Canada’s annual general meeting on March 17, the organization recognized the following award recipients:

• Master Breeder (recognizing long-term excellence in breeding Jersey cows) – Glen and Sheila Burgess from Golden Jerseys in Mildmay, Ont.;
• Constructive Breeders (recognizing breeders who excel in Jersey breeding over a shorter timeframe) – Bridon Farms in Paris, Ont., Audrey Fortier and Luc Deschenes from Ferme Prés Verts Inc. in St-Gabriel-de-Rimouski, Que., and Ferme Guimo from Guimo Farm in Saint-Gervais, Que.;
• Jersey Young Achievers (recognizing the accomplishments of Jersey breeders under the age of 40) – Julia and Thomas Boojink from Jamink Farms in St. Andrews West, Ont., Matt and Meghan Brosens from Brosendale Farms in Skye Glen, N.S., Charlie Anderson and Jennifer Peart from Maple Leaf Jerseys in Selkirk, Ont., Eline Van der Ven and Dave Ingalls from Eli-da Dairy in Shawville, Que., and Ley Winch from Brandhaven Jerseys in Ramara, Ont.;
• Youth of Distinction (recognizing youth 18 to 25 years old who are involved with the Jersey breed in Canada) – Caleigh Van Kampen from Amaranth, Ont.;
• Honorary Life Member (recognizing long-term leadership contributions to the Jersey breed) – Robert and April Jarrell from RJ Farms in Cornwall, Ont., Wayne and Elaine Simpson from Chasena Jerseys in Shanty Bay, Ont., Peter and Charlotte Doble from Verdurelea Jerseys in Sunderland, Ont.;
• Jersey Performance Awards: President’s Cup (recognizing the cow with the leading living lifetime milk, fat and protein production record) – Kevin and Steve Jones from Midland, Ont.;
• Jersey Performance Awards: Hall of Fame Trophy (recognizing the hall of fame cow with the highest composite breed class average for protein and butterfat) – Jonathan and Shelly Howe from Embro, Ont.

UPCOMING BREAKFAST ON THE FARM EVENTS

Farm & Food Care Ontario will be hosting two Breakfast on the Farm events in 2018. The first breakfast will take place on June 23 at Cranston Farms in Ancaster, Ont. Now operated by Doug and Joan Cranston and their son, James, this freestall farm has been in the Cranston family since 1955. The farm is home to around 95 milking cows, and the family also runs a large sweet corn farm in the summer. In 1995, the Cranstons were winners of the Outstanding Young Farmers of Canada award.

The second event will take place on Sept. 8 at Foster Custom Farming in North Gower. Dwight and Ruth Ann Foster and their family, who are the fifth and sixth generations to live and farm in the Ottawa area and houses around 3,000 cattle per year. The family, with help from their employees, also grows several thousand acres of crops, has a trucking business and owns North Gower Grains—a commercial grain elevator with a capacity to store 100,000 tonnes of grain.

Tickets, more information and volunteer opportunities will be available closer to the respective dates.

BREAKFAST ON THE FARM

Alberta Milk is looking for a dairy farmer to host the Breakfast on the Dairy Farm event.

The breakfast is open to the public, allowing families to visit a local farm and learn about where their milk comes from, as well as enjoy a free breakfast during one morning in the spring. Breakfast on the Dairy Farm has been held for two years, and organizers would like to continue making the event available to the public.

Farmers interested in volunteering as a host farm in the Lethbridge area can contact Jane Van Ash at breakfastonthedairyfarm@gmail.com.

DAIRY FARMERS OF NOVA SCOTIA SPRING REGIONAL MEETINGS

Dairy Farmers of Nova Scotia will be hosting several spring regional meetings in April to update producers on trade, proAction, milk production, markets, the new farm inspection process and enhancements to the New Entrant Program. Milk committee member elections will also occur. Meeting dates and locations are below.

• April 5 – 1 to 3 p.m. at the Lawrencetown Fire Hall, Lawrencetown, N.S.; 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Super 8 Motel, Windsor, N.S.;
• April 11 – 1 to 3 p.m. at the Debert Hospitality Centre, Debert, N.S.; 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at St. Bridget’s Hall, Shubenacadie, N.S.;
• April 12 – 1 to 3 p.m. at Skye Glen Hall, Mabou, N.S.; 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at Claymore Inn, Antigonish, N.S.

For more information, visit www.dfns.ca.

TASTE OF SPRING

The B.C. Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation is hosting its annual fundraising dinner, offering the public a taste of spring.

The event will take place on April 21 from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Thomas Haney Centre in Maple Ridge, B.C. The dinner will be prepared by the Red Seal chefs and culinary arts students of Take a Bite of B.C. The evening will feature a welcome reception, entertainment, prizes and more. Tickets are $80 per person or $600 for a table of eight.

For more information, visit www.bcaitc.ca.
APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED FOR STUDENT EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Agricultural students are invited to apply for an excellence award administered by Farm Management Canada (FMC) and the Canadian Association of Diploma in Agriculture Programs (CADAP).

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 2017-18 Excellence Award for Agricultural Students is designed to encourage students to improve their critical thinking, communication and leadership skills through a national competition.

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.

FARM & FOOD CARE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Farm & Food Care Ontario (FFCO) will celebrate 30 years of public outreach and industry support at its annual conference and speakers' program on April 11. The event is being held at Country Heritage Park in Milton, Ont.

One of the keynote speakers includes Simon Haley—an agricultural communications expert helping farmers in the United Kingdom create proactive and defensive outreach strategies to counter campaigns by special interest groups.

The second keynote speaker is Tamar Haspal—an American oyster farmer and veteran Washington Post journalist specializing in food issues and the need for a depolarized food discussion.

The conference will also look back at the organization’s success since its inception in 2012, as well as its predecessor organizations—the Ontario Farm Animal Council and Agriculture Groups Concerned about Resources and the Environment.

To reserve tickets or learn more, visit FFCO’s website at http://www.farmfoodcareon.org/annual-conference-speakers-program-2018/.

SASKATCHEWAN SPRING PRODUCER MEETINGS

SaskMilk is calling on dairy producers to save the following dates for its spring producer meetings. Registration begins at 9:30 a.m., and the meetings start at 10 a.m. Meeting dates and locations are below.

- April 25 – Royal Canadian Legion, Fort Qu’Appelle, Sask.;
- April 26 – Legends Centre, Warman, Sask.;

For more information, visit www.saskmilk.ca.

SASKATCHEWAN SPRING PRODUCER MEETINGS

APPLICATIONS ACCEPTED FOR STUDENT EXCELLENCE AWARDS

ALBERTA SPRING PRODUCER MEETINGS

Alberta Milk will be hosting several spring producer meetings in April to allow producers to provide input and learn about current issues. All meetings run from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. RSVP is not required.

Meeting dates and locations are below.

- April 5 – Coast Lethbridge Hotel & Conference Centre, Lethbridge, Alta.;
- April 6 – Black Knight Inn, Red Deer, Alta.;
- April 11 – Executive Royal Inn, Leduc, Alta.;
- April 12 – Neighborhood Inn, Barrhead, Alta.

For more information, visit www.albertamilk.com.

SAVE THE DATE

Progressive Dairy Operators’ triennial symposium

Managing disruptors to the dairy farm

March 4 to 6, 2019, Delta Hotels Toronto Airport & Conference Centre

wwwpdo-ontario.ca

FARM & FOOD CARE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

TENTATIVE HOLSTEIN CANADA CLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE

LATE APRIL: Perth, northern Ontario, Wellington
EARLY MAY: Perth, Prescott, Dundas, Brant, Halidmand, Norfolk, N.S., P.E.I., N.B.
MID-MAY: Glengarry, Stornont, Newfoundland, Saskatchewan
LATE MAY: Lanark, Carleton
EARLY JUNE: Renfrew, Leeds, Grenville, Russell, British Columbia

Italics indicate mid-round classifications
“W e’re looking at a long process here and a lot of uncertainty of what’s going to happen,” says Kathleen Sullivan from Sullivan Public Affairs during the 35th annual Southwestern Ontario Dairy Symposium held at the Woodstock Fairgrounds in Woodstock, Ont., in February.

Sullivan gave producers an update on North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) renegotiations, painting a picture of the current trade environment in Canada.

When it comes to the Canadian dairy industry, the United States is demanding access for dairy products above the 3.25 per cent market access given to countries through the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnerships (CPTPP), as well as the elimination of over-quota tariffs over 10 years and Class 7 milk pricing.

“Just because the U.S. asks for something doesn’t mean they’re going to get it,” Sullivan says, reminding producers the Canadian government has stood firm in defending supply management during negotiations.

She said since NAFTA was signed in 1994, average annual growth in goods and services trade has expanded across all three NAFTA countries.

“That’s a big deal and NAFTA is considered to be one of the biggest trade deals in the world,” she says.

But despite this, she says U.S. President Donald Trump is focusing on addressing the country’s trade deficit with the goal of seeing the U.S. export more products than it imports.

Renegotiation rounds are ongoing and key issues include auto rules of origin, sunset clause, buy American, dispute resolution and supply management. She says any of these issues could affect the entire deal, and all five of these issues are coming from the U.S.

Sullivan says in the event the U.S. withdraws from NAFTA, Canada would revert to the Canada-U.S. Free Trade Agreement, signed in 1989 before it was replaced by NAFTA. Supply management was excluded from this agreement.

Along with NAFTA, Sullivan also gave producers an overview of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), as well as CPTPP.

DUE DILIGENCE KEY IN PLANNING FOR FARM SAFETY

S ometimes the best farm safety plans can go astray, says Craig Connell from Wicketthorn Farms in London, Ont.

Connell made a presentation to producers on farm safety, telling them about his personal story of tragedy on the farm.

“We experienced a fatal accident in February 2017,” Connell says. “We lost an employee who had been with us for 16 years as a result of drowning in a manure holding tank.”

The employee was working alone when he fell through an opening into a manure pit.

“We will never know for sure what happened, whether he slipped and fell in (the manure pit) or whether he was overcome with methane gas and fell in.”

- Craig Connell

Connell’s story is an example of how a farm can still experience farm accidents despite taking necessary precautions to ensure employees remain safe. Connell’s lesson to producers is to maintain proper documentation to be able to prove to the Ontario Ministry of Labour in the event of an accident regular safety procedures and training take place on the farm. This includes maintaining records, taking pictures and keeping appropriate documents on file.

“All the records we had unfortunately did not save our employee, but there’s no question all the written records we kept saved Wicketthorn Farms from any actions that could have been taken by the ministry,” Connell says.

Following the accident, farm operators took even more safety precautions. Farm workers are now required to wear a methane tester that will signal when there’s methane gas present, as well as follow standard operating procedures. They’re also required to continue to attend safety meetings where minutes are recorded and employees sign off indicating they understand the training.

“It’s all about due diligence,” Connell says. “Keep records of everything. Have people sign off. You need to do it and we saw that first-hand.”

LOWDOW ON LAMENESS

D r. Stephanie Croyle from the University of Guelph took producers through a background on lameness, stressing the importance of early identification. Lameness is an abnormality in how the cow walks due to trauma or illness.

Cows would need to demonstrate two out of four specific behaviours to be classified as lame. Those indicators for lameness include:

- Uneven weight – cows will favour resting on one foot more than the other, indicated by the cow raising a part or the entire foot off the ground;
- Repeated shifting of weight – cows will have regular, repeated shifting of weight from one foot to another, defined as lifting each hind foot completely off the ground at least twice. The foot has to be lifted and returned to the same location and does not include stepping forward or backward;
- Standing on edge – cows place one or more rear hooves on the edge of the stall while standing stationary;
- Uneven movement – with a light push to the side on the right hip followed by a light push on the left hip, the cow hesitates to move. She may favour one side more than the other by moving more rapidly.

Croyle says cows that are thin at calving have the greatest risk of becoming lame. Attention should be focused on improving cow comfort during calving. It’s also important to detect mildly lame cows early, she says.

For videos to help producers identify and score lameness in dairy cows, visit www.nationaldairystudy.ca/videos.
Drop flies.
In the past three issues, we examined the steps involved in creating a fully compliant health and safety program for your farm. We discussed how to draft policies for compliance, as well as reviewed responsibilities of team members, managers and supervisors under the Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA). This month, we will focus on the major component of a health and safety program, known as a job hazard analysis (JHA). A JHA is the tool a farm owner, manager or person responsible for creating a health and safety program uses to determine which hazards pose a risk to employees. Essentially, a JHA is the process of breaking down a job into its component steps and then evaluating each step while pointing out potential accidents and hazards. Covered in this article is how to conduct a JHA, as well as when to put in place a control measure and some examples of what those controls entail.

**CONDUCTING A JHA**

There are four components of a JHA that follow a chronological order. The steps are outlined below:

1. **Identify positions and related job tasks:**
   The first factor in completing a JHA is identifying all the positions on your farm and how a JHA will apply to each job. Starting with the first position, use a JHA template or grid (see Figure 1) to list all the responsibilities on the left-hand side under the column titled “job steps.” Break down all the tasks that need to be carried out in order to effectively perform this position on your farm.

   It is important to remember this is based on the position, not the person in that position. Your farm may have one team member who carries out the job tasks of multiple positions or some parts of each position. The goal is to build what each position generally entails, and then address how to assign control measures based on what a team member does in the course of his or her work.

2. **List potential hazards:**
   Now that you've listed the job steps, ask yourself “What could go wrong, or hurt someone, while performing this job?” For instance, a person in the position of feeder may be responsible for preparing feed in a total mixed ration mixer. Consider what could injure the person performing this task. Possible hazards might include silage pile collapse, getting entangled in a machine's power take-off (PTO) unit, equipment malfunctioning, falling from a tractor or loader, getting injured from a driving accident or suffering from a musculoskeletal back injury from lifting heavy feed bags. Continue listing possible hazards for all positions in the column to the right of the job step (see Figure 1).

3. **Complete the risk evaluation:**
   Now that you've listed the tasks involved in performing each job, as well as associated hazards, you can now assess the job’s overall risks using a risk matrix.

   For each group of potential hazards and each job step, ask yourself “What is the probability of an injury occurring while performing this job?” This could range from low to high occurrence with low being on a yearly basis, medium on a monthly basis, and high occurring weekly or daily. You also need to ask yourself “If an injury were to occur, what could be the potential severity?” When considering how severe a potential injury could be, minor would refer to a small abrasion, such as a cut that doesn’t require stitches or other injury not requiring medical attention, moderate would be an incident requiring first aid and a preventative trip to the doctor, such as a sprained ankle, and major would be an injury requiring medical attention and a trip to the emergency room.
Once you’ve determined the potential severity of injuries and the likelihood of them occurring, look for the intersection of these two areas to determine a risk rating of high, medium or low. See Figure 1 for how this would be noted in the grid.

4) Create and assign controls:
For the job steps classified as high or medium, you need to create a control to mitigate the risk for the person performing the applicable task(s). Controls should always include proper training on the safe and recommended way to perform a job, including using personal protective equipment and following certain safety measures. Another important control is written standard operating procedures (SOP). For example, a control for preparing feed mixture could include an SOP stating an employee is to perform a walkaround to make sure the PTO has the proper guard in place before operating it. Additional controls may include instructions for using guards and other safety features, and on-the-job training.

Though controls are needed for high and medium risks, low-risk tasks may pose threats over a long period of time. Carefully examine the potential perils for a low-risk position, and think about what could be done to prevent these hazards. For example, tripping on the ladder of a tractor may result in a low-risk injury, but it would be best practice to conduct training on slips, trips and falls for the position. This way, all potential hazards will be addressed, and the person fulfilling that position would have been properly trained on all risks. Continue to list controls for all risks for each position on your farm on the last column as seen in Figure 1.

NEXT STEPS
When conducting a JHA, it is important to remember some positions might encompass job steps for every aspect of a position, or parts of multiple positions. Once you have determined the necessary controls, you will be able to assign and conduct training on all the applicable hazards based on what a specific team member does. For example, an employee may work as a feeder and trim hooves. The task of trimming hooves may fall under a herdperson position. Therefore, the person in that role will have to complete training for the role of feeder and the job step for trimming hooves, as listed under the herdperson JHA.

It is good practice to periodically review your job hazard analysis to ensure it remains current and continues to help reduce and prevent workplace injuries and accidents. Even if none of the jobs on your farm have changed, you may identify new hazards that you did not notice during the first analysis. Also, if an employee sustains an injury on the job, you should review the job hazard analysis for the position to determine what procedures need to be changed to prevent similar incidents in the future.

By conducting a JHA on your farm, you will know exactly what hazards team members are exposed to that you might not have otherwise realized on a daily basis. You will also be able to take preventative measures to keep your team safe and healthy, and ensure your farm is one large step closer to compliance.

In next month’s article, we will examine some of the necessary controls for medium- and high-risk job tasks, how to create SOPs, and how to create and conduct training.
BRAR’S

OWNER(S): Dial Pabla
LOCATION(S): Four Ontario restaurant locations, manufacturing plant in Brampton and Mississauga
STARTED: 1986
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 350
PRODUCTS: Indian sweets, dairy desserts, samosas, specialty drinks, à la carte Indian vegetarian meals, producer and distributor of retail products across North America

Known best for its Malai paneer, an unripen soft cheese, and mouth-watering desserts, such as Rasmalai and milk cake, as well as its popular hand-made vegetarian samosas, Brar’s has become a staple name in South Asian communities across North America. The company prides itself in taking authentic flavours of India and creating unique foods and desserts for its ethnic clientele.

Over the past 30-plus years, Brar’s has set the standard for quality, flavour and culinary innovation. What began as a sweet shop in Toronto in 1986 when founder Dial Pabla decided to open a restaurant catering to the South Asian community, has grown to become a brand synonymous with quality and authentic Indian foods. Customers can dine at any one of Brar’s four restaurants in Brampton and Etobicoke, Ont., or shop its dairy and dessert products at Walmart, Sobeys, Loblaws or all the South and East Asian grocery stores across North America.

Brar’s has been ramping up its production of specialty sweets and appetizers (finger foods). It is already in the process of building a federally-licensed plant in Mississauga, Ont., to meet the growing demand of Indian delicacy around the world, says Sudhir Kumar, Brar’s sales and marketing director. The new 175,000-square-foot facility will be up and running by the third quarter of this year, and will be fully automated to service the company’s growing desserts, appetizer and samosa lines. Currently, Brar’s processes about 10 million litres of milk per year to make its paneer cheese and around five to six million litres of milk for its dairy-based desserts, including Rasmalai and milk cake.

“There has been a dire need of good-quality Malai paneer in the market, which is finally being serviced by our company,” Kumar says. “We are already working with our counterparts to create even more demand in Malai paneer by spending aggressively on marketing. Brar’s is looking into increasing its production capacity to meet the growing demand in the coming years.”

One way Brar’s is working toward its expansion goals is by participating in Dairy Farmers of Ontario’s new market development program. Kumar says Brar’s will use funding obtained from the program to hire specialists to develop new dairy products with unique and traditional flavours. Brar’s would also like to partner with other processors to expand its butter ghee and specialty cheese portfolios. Ghee is clarified butter that has most of its water content removed after cooking at certain temperature, resulting in a product containing 99.9 per cent milk fat, which is the oldest cooking oil in Indian history.

Indian mothers believe consuming butter ghee will make their kids’ bones stronger. Middle Eastern and Indian consumers often cook with butter ghee and use it for religious purposes, Kumar says.

“There is huge potential for ghee in the mainstream because of its high-fat content. We certainly want to be key players in this market,” he says, adding the company also wants to promote paneer cheese’s versatility, such as its great grilling ability, to mainstream audiences.

Today, Brar’s dairy-based retail-ready and bulk sweets are shipped to the United States, Australia, Singapore, Middle East, among other countries, all produced from the current manufacturing plants in Brampton and Mississauga.
When your livelihood looks like this, health and wellness are all that matters. Feed your herd leafy, nutritious precut crop with the MegaWide™ HC2 precutter from John Deere. Available on our Zero Series round balers, the MegaWide HC2 can eliminate the need for tub grinding, giving you cost savings and flexibility to make rations when you need them. And precut hay is easier for your animals to eat, ensuring they get the most out of their feed and you get the most out of your bale.

* Tonnage per hour estimates compared to competitive models. Mixing time estimate compared to bales that do not contain precut crop.

ALL THAT MATTERS

Get the industry’s first 5-ft. precut bales.

Increase tonnage per hour by 80%.*

Cut mixing times as much as 58%.*

You deserve an efficient feed system. Your herd deserves nutritious feed. Talk to your John Deere dealer and learn why you now have zero reasons to use any other baler.

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Heat Stress is detrimental

Feeding protected B vitamins can help

Heat stress can negatively impact your farm profitability this summer, resulting in a reduction in milk production, fat yield and reproductive performance.

Using a temperature humidity index (THI), we can identify the severities of heat stress and determine at what temperature and humidity we need to start cooling dairy cows to avoid any impact on performance. At a THI of 68, which is a temperature of 23 degrees Celsius with a humidity of 40 per cent, cows will produce less milk and reproduction will be affected (see Figure 1).

Dairy cows are very susceptible to heat stress and will adapt by increasing their respiration rate and modifying their nutrient priorities at the expense of milk production and reproduction. Milk production has been shown to be reduced by 2.2 kilograms per day when the THI reaches 68. The maximum impact will occur 24 to 48 hours following heat stress, and recovery will take weeks.

Heat Stress during the Dry Cow or Breeding Period

When cows are under heat stress during the close-up or entire dry cow period, milk production can be reduced by 2.2 or four kg/day. Calves born from cows experiencing heat stress during the dry period have a lower birth weight, as well as lower weight and height at 12 months old. Those heifers will become pregnant later and require more services for conception. Their first lactation yield will also be reduced by five kg per day at least for the first 245 days in milk.

Pregnancy and conception rates are lower when cows are under heat stress due to a decreased production of estradiol, lower quality oocyte and impaired early embryo development. Fertility will return to normal only 40 to 60 days following heat stress.

Feeding protected B vitamins can help

Sound management tools, along with nutritional adjustments, will alleviate the risk of reduced performance. Feeding protected B vitamins during the transition and lactation periods is also beneficial to reduce the negative impact of heat stress. B vitamins are essential nutrients and have specific functions in dairy cows’ energy and protein metabolism, as well as immune response, follicle development and early embryonic survival. Some B vitamins are also involved in glucose synthesis and liver health.

When early lactation cows were supplemented with a specific blend of protected B vitamins during the summer in California, milk and components yield increased and feed efficiency improved by 5.2 per cent. In another study conducted during the summer in the north of Mexico where reproductive performance is usually drastically reduced due to heat stress, supplementing the same blend of protected B vitamins during the lactation period improved reproductive performance by 19 per cent (see Figure 2).

Take-home message

Dairy cows are susceptible to heat stress, which reduces performance and results in a loss of profit for dairy producers. Supplementing a blend of protected B vitamins during the transition and lactation periods is an innovative tool to provide ammunition to dairy cows to counteract heat stress impact and improve performance.
Be everywhere and know everything

Get more herd health insights with CowScout™

Wherever you are, CowScout™ is here for you so you can be there for them – making the best decisions based on the best information. CowScout™ can monitor:

- **Walking time & step count** — know when she’s ready to breed or may have a lameness issue.
- **Eating & rumination time** — know if she’s off feed.
- **Standing & lying time** — know if she’s comfortable.

---

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Komoka, ON  519 666-1404

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

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

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Innovative projects are needed to discover viable alternatives to antibiotic treatments currently used on farms. The project presented in this article is built from a surprising idea developed by seasoned researchers and a motivated student born on a dairy farm. This unique team has come together to generate a promising new product.

We know proper management of the transition period from lactation to dry-off is essential to maintain overall and, more specifically, dairy cow udder health. As a result, antibiotic treatments are often employed during this time to prevent mastitis from developing. Are there ways to reduce the risks of developing a mammary gland infection without using antibiotics? This question is pertinent to the Canadian dairy industry since there are debates about reducing antibiotic use as prophylactics and the potential for new legislation.

Research performed by Samuel Lanctôt, under the supervision of researchers Pierre Lacasse from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) and Xin Zhao from McGill University, aims to tackle this question. As the son of a dairy farmer and student-researcher, Lanctôt bridges the divide from laboratory to farm as he searches for solutions to problems encountered by his fellow dairy farmers. He has developed an innovative treatment that can be used during the lactation to dry-off transition period that may allow him to improve Canadian dairy cow health.

**THE DRY-OFF PERIOD IS Fraught WITH RISK**

A major problem encountered during dry-off is new mastitis development. This risk decreases once involution—when the udder shrinks to its original size prior to lactation—is complete. The process is the result of shrinking mammary tissue and cellular reorganization while the udder prepares itself for a dormant period. Immune cells accelerate this process by migrating into the udder where they facilitate digestion and mammary tissue reorganization.

Dairy cows, especially those with high milk production, are at increased risk of developing mastitis at the beginning of the dry-off period. Milk accumulation causes pressure to build in the udder and can cause leakage, force the teat open, or displace the waxy keratin plug formed in the teat. A displaced plug removes the first line of defence against infection since the plug forms a physical barrier that normally prevents micro-organisms from entering the teat. This is particularly dangerous because there are few immune cells to form the next line of defense, and those that are present are already busy with the involution process, which reduces their anti-infective ability.

Researchers can then hypothesize dry-off techniques that speed up involution and increase a cow's immune system, which will reduce the risk of developing mastitis or other infections during this period.

**A NATURAL PRODUCT FROM THE SEA**

With this knowledge, the research group at AAFC’s Sherbrooke Research and Development Centre sought to develop products that speed up involution and increase a cow’s immune response. In collaboration with Dr. Patrick Fustier’s group at Saint-Hyacinthe Research and Development Centre, researchers developed a hydrogel mainly composed of chitosan that can be inserted directly into the teat to recruit more immune cells to speed up involution. Chitosan is a polysaccharide derived from naturally-occurring chitin that forms part of the shell structure of crustaceans and shellfish, and which contains purported antifungal and antibacterial properties.

**WHAT IS A HYDROGEL?**

Hydrogel is water-insoluble polymers that can form a gel with large absorptive ability. Their flexibility is comparable with that of living tissues, and because they are mostly made up of water, they are naturally compatible with these

FROM SHELLFISH TO UDDER HEALTH

Researchers develop product dairy farmers can use to improve cow health during dry-off while decreasing antibiotic use
tissues. Researchers are interested in hydrogels because they could potentially be used as long-term implants able to release therapeutic compounds over an extended period of time.

Researchers performed two experiments on seven and eight cows, respectively, from the Sherbrooke Centre herd to test the effect of a chitosan-based intramammary treatment on involution and immune function. They measured compound levels in milk and mammary secretions to monitor treatment outcome. The first study compared three formulations that differed in their viscosity and volume with a control treatment comprising just water. Incredibly, all three chitosan formulations significantly increased the number of immune cells in the udder and levels of compounds associated with involution, while stimulating local immune response.

Based on these promising results, researchers designed a second experiment to compare a pre-formulated chitosan-based treatment with three other treatments. The first treatment tried was a conventional teat sealant used alone, the second treatment was a conventional sealant combined with the pre-formulated chitosan treatment, and the third treatment was a control made up of water. This allowed researchers to clearly demonstrate the benefit of their chitosan treatment because only the cows treated with chitosan alone, or treated with chitosan in combination with a teat seallant, had faster involution and increased immune cell recruitment to the mammary gland in the early stages of the dry-off period. This effect is not achieved when using conventional teat sealant alone and, remarkably, the hydrogel function is not affected by the teat sealant when used together.

**PREVENTION LEADS TO REDUCED ANTIBIOTIC USE**

This study demonstrates a hydrogel made up of chitosan can be used in combination with existing mastitis-preventing tools during dry-off. In addition, the use of a chitosan-based hydrogel in combination with teat sealant may combine the benefits of stimulating the immune response while generating a physical barrier between the teat and outside environment. This method could potentially decrease prophylactic antibiotics while decreasing the risk of developing new mastitis infections during the dry-off period.

Researchers are in the process of patenting the use of a chitosan-based hydrogel, and future research projects will be performed in collaboration with partners in the industry. The objective of this project is to develop a safe and effective product that can be used by dairy farmers to improve cow health during dry-off while simultaneously decreasing the need for prophylactic antibiotic treatment. This approach will serve the needs of the dairy industry while satisfying consumers concerned about antibiotic use on Canadian dairy farms.

This research was primarily financed by AAFC, with additional contributions from Dairy Farmers of Canada, the Canadian Dairy Network and Canadian Dairy Commission through the Canadian Agri-Science Clusters Initiative.
Many people think tiestall barns do not have a long-term future because they will no longer be deemed acceptable by consumers or because of cows’ limited ability to express their natural behaviours. Farmers transitioning to newer facilities are increasingly turning to a niche barn type in Canada known as compost bedded pack. This barn concept is quite appealing for several reasons, one of which is cow comfort, which sits at the top of the list of benefits provided by this housing system.

A workshop series this winter put on by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs’s (OMAFRA) dairy team attracted more than 135 farmers who were interested in learning more about this kind of barn. Over the last decade, several authors reported a compost bedded pack barn provides animals with better freedom of movement and added comfort to lie in a natural way. In a comparison study investigating conventional freestall and compost bedded pack barns, lower prevalence of lameness and hock injuries was reported in compost bedded pack barns.

A 2015 national dairy study of health and management, which investigated 5,000 dairy cows, reported lameness prevalence, including mild cases, by barn type was greater in tiestalls at 32 per cent than pack barns at 12.5 per cent. Lameness prevalence in freestall barns was reported at 27.5 per cent. The study also revealed hock injuries were more prevalent in tiestall and freestall barns than in pack barns where only two per cent of cases were observed. Although the number of pack barns included in this study was rather limited, the significant difference of injury prevalence in pack barns is quite striking.

Studies done in the United States indicate 89 per cent of farms had significant milk production increases when switching cows to compost bedded pack barns. The average increase was 956 kilograms per cow per year. Obviously, several other changes were made when the cows were moved to the new barn, which contributed to the production increase. Further, 57 per cent of farms reported significant improvements in heat detection rates. Higher pregnancy rates were reported on 71 per cent of farms. An average five per cent reduction in herd turnover rate was also reported following changes in housing systems. Two-thirds of the farms noted reduced mastitis infection rates, which was defined as a percentage of cows with a somatic cell count greater than 200,000.

The layout of a compost bedded pack barn closely resembles the conventional freestall barn where stalls are replaced by a compost bedded pack. Milking is usually performed in a parlour or by robots. The recommended bedding material to promote optimal composting is fine and dry sawdust. About 120 square feet of usable pack per cow is required for proper composting of the pack, optimal cow cleanliness, and animal comfort and health. This amount is also listed as the space.
required in the current Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle. Studies have shown cow cleanliness in compost bedding pack barns deteriorates when pack moisture content increases. If animal density gets too high, moisture builds up in the pack and managing it can become problematic.

Pack management is a balancing act. Twice a day, pack tilling is performed using a rototiller or other deep-tillage equipment, such as a cultivator. Cultivation or rototilling the pack twice daily allows manure, urine and sawdust to mix together along with oxygen to optimize composting throughout the pack. The biological activity within the pack generates substantial heat. As it escapes from the compost, the heat evaporates a considerable amount of water from the pack. Half a litre of water per square foot of pack per day can evaporate. This represents 55 to 60 litres of water evaporating on a 120-square-foot area daily. This evaporation process is critical since bedding cannot absorb all the water from urine and manure.

Where needed, sawdust is added and incorporated to maintain the ideal carbon to nitrogen (30:1) ratio of the pack and manage the pack’s moisture content. The more animals per surface area, the more moisture in the form of urine and manure will be deposited on the pack.

Animal density is a critical factor to achieve pack management success. In order for the pack to compost properly, the right amount of moisture needs to be maintained. When the pack becomes too wet, biological activity slows down. As air (oxygen) is displaced by moisture, less heat gets produced and less water evaporates, exacerbating the initial problem.

It is nearly impossible to establish compost bedded pack during the cold season. The composting process within the pack needs to be well underway, ideally, before the onset of winter. A composted pack is typically cleaned out once or twice per year. Most farmers retain some of the composting material from a portion of the pack after cleaning it out to help restart the composting process.

The compost bedded pack barn demonstrates great potential to provide a comfortable environment conducive to dairy cow welfare and productivity. As with any system, optimal management will go a long way in making compost bedding pack barn work. Pack moisture control is the most important management factor. Trying to cut costs by not using enough sawdust or skipping tillage of the pack will lead to poor system performance.
The Canadian butterfat market is finally being filled by domestic butterfat production, with no supplementary imports of butterfat coming into Canada since September 2017, says Patrice Dubé, Dairy Farmers of Ontario economics director.

Another indicator demand is being met is the level of butter stocks reaching 35,894 tonnes at the end of February, which is five months ahead of the July 2018 target level. Butter is being sold to the Canadian Dairy Commission (CDC) into plan A stocks (last resort sale) for the first time in many years. All these observations indicate the industry has successfully filled domestic butterfat demand at the same time as investments in production and processing infrastructures continue to take place.

Between 2013 and 2017, P5 production and demand increased by 13 per cent and quota issued to producers increased by 24.9 per cent, all while the Canadian population increased by only 4.4 per cent. Such an overall demand growth rate would be the envy of any economic sector, Dubé says, adding everyone knew this was not sustainable in the longer term.

Production is increasing faster than projected market growth, with Ontario currently at maximum skimming capacity. Going forward, the large number of underproduction credits held by P5 producers could further increase the production and market imbalance, Dubé says.

The CDC predicts butter stocks will exceed 41,000 tonnes by July 2018, and could even go as high as 45,000 tonnes. Cream requirements are currently being met and any surplus cream leads to increased butter stocks. While the goal in the past two years has been to increase butter stocks and domestic butterfat production to reduce the need to rely on supplementary imports for butter, as well as prepare for new investments in the next 18 to 24 months, the additional milk now coming online has resulted in an imbalance of supply and demand, at least for the short term, Dubé says.

### CDC’S NEW CALCULATION

So, how did the industry get from a shortage of cream to an almost excess cream situation? CDC’s previous model for calculating re-

### P5 UTILIZATION BY CLASS*

For January 2018 (kg of butterfat/kg of solids non-fat)

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>% Butterfat</th>
<th>% Solids Non-Fat</th>
<th>% Revenue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1(a)</td>
<td>Homo, 2%, 1%, skim, chocolate milk, flavoured milks, buttermilk</td>
<td>10.85%</td>
<td>23.90%</td>
<td>*26.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1(b)</td>
<td>Fluid creams</td>
<td>1.93%</td>
<td>9.29%</td>
<td>*5.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2(a)</td>
<td>Yogurt, yogurt beverages, Kefir and Lassi</td>
<td>3.28%</td>
<td>5.50%</td>
<td>*5.45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2(b)</td>
<td>Ice cream, sour cream, frozen yogurt</td>
<td>3.68%</td>
<td>5.83%</td>
<td>*2.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3(a)</td>
<td>Fresh cheese, specialty cheese</td>
<td>5.33%</td>
<td>5.31%</td>
<td>*5.89%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3(b)</td>
<td>Yogurt, yogurt beverages, Kefir and Lassi</td>
<td>5.33%</td>
<td>5.31%</td>
<td>*14.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3(c1)</td>
<td>Asiago, Munster Canadian style (muenster), Feta, Gouda, Havarti, Parmesan, Swiss</td>
<td>3.90%</td>
<td>12.34%</td>
<td>*4.55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3(c2)</td>
<td>Cheddar cheese</td>
<td>7.59%</td>
<td>8.28%</td>
<td>*9.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3(d)</td>
<td>All types of mozzarella except those declared in class 3d, Brick, Colby, Farmer, Jack, Monterey Jack</td>
<td>3.32%</td>
<td>3.97%</td>
<td>*2.94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3(e)</td>
<td>Mozzarella used strictly on fresh pizzas by establishments registered with the CDC</td>
<td>4.08%</td>
<td>26.93%</td>
<td>*14.23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Butter and powders</td>
<td>4.40%</td>
<td>26.93%</td>
<td>*14.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5(a)</td>
<td>New products</td>
<td>2.25%</td>
<td>2.04%</td>
<td>*1.53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5(b)</td>
<td>Cheese for further processing</td>
<td>0.88%</td>
<td>5.58%</td>
<td>*2.34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5(c)</td>
<td>Non-cheese products for further processing</td>
<td>1.14%</td>
<td>0.24%</td>
<td>*0.47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5(d)</td>
<td>Confectionery products</td>
<td>0.38%</td>
<td>0.37%</td>
<td>*0.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7(d)</td>
<td>Planned exports</td>
<td>1.03%</td>
<td>26.94%</td>
<td>*3.64%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

P5 producers asked to slow production, which is currently outpacing processing capacity and is expected to continue until new processing plants start operating

The CDC predicts butter stocks will exceed 41,000 tonnes by July 2018, and could even go as high as 45,000 tonnes. Cream requirements are currently being met and any surplus cream leads to increased butter stocks. While the goal in the past two years has been to increase butter stocks and domestic butterfat production to reduce the need to rely on supplementary imports for butter, as well as prepare for new investments in the next 18 to 24 months, the additional milk now coming online has resulted in an imbalance of supply and demand, at least for the short term, Dubé says.

**Class 1a** Homo, 2%, 1%, skim, chocolate milk, flavoured milks, buttermilk

**Class 1b** Fluid creams

**Class 2a** Yogurt, yogurt beverages, Kefir and Lassi

**Class 2b** Ice cream, sour cream, frozen yogurt

**Class 3a** Fresh cheese, specialty cheese

**Class 3b** Cheddar cheese

**Class 3ci** Asiago, Munster Canadian style (muenster), Feta, Gouda, Havarti, Parmesan, Swiss

**Class 3ci** All types of mozzarella except those declared in class 3d, Brick, Colby, Farmer, Jack, Monterey Jack

**Class 3d** Mozzarella used strictly on fresh pizzas by establishments registered with the CDC

**Class 4a** Butter and powders

**Class 4b** Condensed and evaporated milk for retail sale

**Class 4c** New products

**Class 4d** Inventory, animal feed

**Class 4m** Domestic surplus

**Class 5a** Cheese for further processing

**Class 5b** Non-cheese products for further processing

**Class 5c** Confectionery products

**Class 5d** Planned exports

(Class 4m is grouped with 5d)

**Class 7** Milk used to process milk ingredients
requirements and quota allocated to provinces had been underestimating demand, a situation that was further exacerbated by illicit imports displacing the market while, at the same time, a major shift in consumers’ preferences for butterfat was taking place. Milk production was playing catch up to be able to fill the domestic butterfat market with domestic butterfat production, rebuild butter stocks and replace markets being filled with supplementary imports.

“We are now at a point where we need to realign production with forecasted demand in the short term before continuing to chase butterfat growth after 2019, when we’ll be in a better environment where processing capacity will not be as much of a constraint as it is today,” Dubé says.

The CDC’s newly developed and more robust total quota and requirements forecasting model will also help economists better forecast pool demand going forward, he adds.

“We don’t want to tell producers to stop the production momentum entirely. We just need to realign production to match the anticipated demand,” Dubé says. “We need to find the right balance between keeping the production momentum in the short term to fill expected demand, meet new investments requirements for 2019 and be ready to continue to meet growing demand in the medium and long term.”

Summary: If P5 production does not realign with forecasted demand, P5 boards may need to consider production reduction measures in the short term. The P5 quota committee is meeting on April 19 and 20 to further discuss the current production and market situation.

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

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

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

**British Columbia information not available at time of publication

MONTHLY QUOTA PRICES ($/kg)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROVINCE</th>
<th>PRICE/kg</th>
<th>AMOUNT WANTED/kg</th>
<th>AMOUNT FOR SALE/ kg</th>
<th>AMOUNT PURCHASED/kg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>$38,130</td>
<td>393.80</td>
<td>58.09</td>
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<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>$30,100</td>
<td>161.00</td>
<td>86.60</td>
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<td>$26,100</td>
<td>358.41</td>
<td>388.72</td>
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<td>Ontario</td>
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<td>Quebec</td>
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<td>$20,000</td>
<td>52.40</td>
<td>148.20</td>
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</table>

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

U.S. CLASS PRICES

The February 2018 Class III Price, US$13.40 per hundredweight, is equivalent to C$38.67 per hectolitre. This equivalent is based on the exchange rate of US$1 = C$1.27130 the exchange rate when the USDA announced the Class III Price.

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

Source: USDA
JAYLOR INTRODUCES CONSTRUCTION DUMP WAGONS

Jaylors’s dump wagons are engineered to be simple and robust, providing years of trouble-free performance in demanding commercial continuous-run applications.

The model lineup consists of three sizes—C118, C124 and C130—with a carrying capacity of 37,600 pounds, 60,400 lbs and 73,100 lbs respectively. Shorter cycle times and high maneuverability mean operators are able to be more productive, transporting larger amounts of material in a shorter time frame. Rough terrain and wet conditions are no match for the wide footprint, low pressure tires, which provide excellent stability and low compaction while reducing damage to hauling roads and allowing operation where trucks can’t travel.

A unique dual double-acting cylinder configuration provides exceptional stability and rigidity while requiring less oil volume than conventional multistage cylinders. Material easily flows out due to the aggressive body taper, often emptying the wagon in less than 20 seconds. The box of the larger two units is constructed from AR400 steel, fully welded and reinforced through the engineered monocoque body, putting Jaylors in a class of its own when it comes to durability without compromising the payload-to-weight ratio.

From the fatigue-beating tongue suspension to the unsurpassed visibility of shallow tapered side walls, Jaylors can help operations keep material and profits flowing.

Greater productivity and lower capital investment translates to reduced operating costs. Construction operations can now take advantage of the greater operator comfort of modern tractor cabs, with speeds up to 45 miles per hour (72 kilometres per hour). Visit www.jaylors.com for more information.

JAYLOR’S LINEUP of dump wagons offer greater productivity and lower capital investment.
**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.) Note: Descriptions of products and services are for the information of our readers only. Publication of this information does not constitute endorsement by *Milk Producer*.

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**EASY SWING COW BRUSHES**

Dairy Lane Systems Ltd. (DLS) has partnered with Easy Swing of Finland to bring its cow brushes to the Canadian market. Easy Swing cow brushes are unique in today’s increasingly automated dairy industry. The brushes are simple, operating with no motors or electricity. The cows do all the work by rubbing against the brush and swinging it side to side, allowing the brush to sweep across the cow’s back.

Easy Swing brushes are available in three sizes for calves, heifers and cows. At a fraction of the price of an electric brush, these brushes can be just as effective and without the maintenance of an electric brush.

Producers can purchase Easy Swing brushes directly from DLS, as well as the DLS dealer network located at www.dlsbarnsolutions.ca.

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**Milking cows made simple!**

Are you frustrated with slow milking quarters, udders that do not milk out, mastitis and slow milking? CoPulsation™ provides a unique milking action with a full teat massage for superior milking.

**CoPulsation™ Milking System**

Krynenhill Holsteins LTD  Rob Krijnen  519-617-1100  CoPulsation.com  www.Facebook.com/CoPulsation

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**Supplying ALL Your Silage Covering Needs**

- **Megaplast Power®**
  - Premium silage covers
  - Widths from 20 to 92 ft.

- **Mega Barrier®**
  - Low OTR oxygen barrier

- **Sidewall plastic**

- **Filled pea stone bags**

- **Mesh protection covers**

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Follow Dairy Farmers of Ontario on Twitter (@OntarioMilk and @DairyOntario), Facebook (OntarioDairy) and Instagram (dairy_farmersont)
PROTEIN INDUSTRIES CANADA SUPERCLUSTER INCLUDES DOW AGROSCIENCES AND DUPONT PIONEER

Dow AgroSciences and DuPont Pioneer are pleased to be part of the Protein Industries Canada (PIC) supercluster, selected by the federal government to receive funding under the federal Innovation Superclusters Initiative (ISI).

Protein Industries Canada is an industry-led alliance of private sector companies, academic institutions and other stakeholders across Western Canada aimed at fully developing the potential of plant-based proteins from crops, such as canola, pulses, grains, hemp and flax.

The Innovation Superclusters Initiative will accelerate the growth and development of business-led innovation superclusters in Canada, translating the strengths of Canada’s innovation ecosystems into new commercial and global opportunities for growth and competitiveness. Through an investment of up to $950 million over five years, which will be matched dollar for dollar by the private sector, the federal government will offer contributions to the five selected superclusters.

“Research conducted through the Protein Industries Canada supercluster will produce solid economic benefits for farmers and value-added processors across Western Canada,” says David Dziak, commercial leader of grains and oils at Dow AgroSciences and DuPont Pioneer Canada. “We are pleased to be part of this effort to bring a value chain-wide focus of Canadian private and public resources to enhance the production of high-yielding Canadian plant protein crops and promote a data-driven approach to farming.” More information can be found at www.dow-dupont.com.
NEW CATTLE FEED SUPPLEMENT HAS METHANE FALLING AND OPTIMISM RISING

Beef and dairy farmers around the world are looking for ways to decrease methane emissions from their herds to reduce greenhouse gas emissions—a global priority.

To help meet this goal, researchers from Canada and Australia teamed up for a comprehensive three-year study to find the best feeding practices that reduce methane emissions while supporting profitable dairy and beef cattle production.

Researchers are feeding beef cattle different supplements to see if they can reduce methane produced by the animals.

“We need to know how feed affects methane production, but we also need to know how it affects other aspects of the farm operation, such as daily gains in animals, milk production and feed efficiency,” says Dr. Karen Beauchemin, beef researcher from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC). “Farmers want to help the environment, and they need to know what the trade-offs will be, which is why we took a holistic approach looking at the overall impacts.”

Researchers and farm system modellers from AAFC, Agriculture Victoria (Australia) and the University of Melbourne worked together to examine three feed supplements.


For more information or to set up an interview, contact AAFC at 1-866-345-7972 or media.relations@agr.gc.ca.

PARTNERING TO IMPROVE SILAGE SAFETY

Lallemand Animal Nutrition and the Progressive Agriculture Foundation are teaming up to offer silage safety education for up to 100,000 children and adult volunteers through Progressive Agriculture Safety Days, held in rural communities across North America in 2018.

“Safety days are a great opportunity for kids to receive age-appropriate, hands-on safety education while having a lot of fun. We are happy to contribute our expertise in silage safety to the program,” says Bob Charley, forage products manager at Lallemand Animal Nutrition in North America. “There is nothing more important than protecting our children. Learning the basics of on-farm safety today will undoubtedly benefit future generations of farmers and ranchers.”

Safety information, as well as details about hosting, donating, volunteering and attending a Progressive Agriculture Safety Day, are available at progressiveag.org.

WECOVER WELCOMES NEW DESIGN SPECIALIST

WeCover Structures has announced it recently hired Colin Cavell as WeCover’s new design specialist. Based out of Belwood, Ont., Cavell will cover a geographic territory that extends north-east of Highway 86.

“We are extremely pleased to welcome Colin to our team,” says John E. Weaver, president and co-owner of WeCover Structures Inc. “Colin brings a vast amount of farming experience, along with a solid knowledge of farming communities across Ontario. He will be a great addition to WeCover, especially as we continue to grow across North America.”

Cavell comes to WeCover with more than 20 years of experience in the beef industry. Growing up on his family’s beef farm in Harrison, Ont., and running his own smaller farm in Belwood gives him a strong foundation for understanding his customer’s requirements when deciding on a WeCover barn. For more information, visit www.wecover.net.

COLIN CAVELL
joins WeCover as design specialist.
Derek Klingenberg might be a cattle farmer by trade, but in his spare time, he moonlights as a “cow artist.”

The Kansas farmer found a way to combine his cows, creativity and a little mathematical configuring to create what he calls “cow art.”

In a video he posted on his YouTube channel, Klingenberg walks viewers through his latest attempt at sending a simple message to space.

By strategically herding 300 of his cows, he was able to form the word “Hi” on his field for satellites to capture from space. And sure enough, his efforts paid off when he was able to nab an image of his creation, but this feat didn’t come by out of luck. Klingenberg intricately planned the mission right from the beginning.

Because there are nearly 200 of these satellites orbiting the planet 260 miles away, the farmer didn’t know exactly when or what satellite would come along to snap the picture. But by teaming up with Farmers Edge, which uses these satellites to monitor crop production, the farmer was able to study old satellite images of his farm.

In a creative bid to narrow down the perfect time to forge his cow art, he used his farm’s grain silo as a makeshift sundial and figured out satellites usually visit his farm at around 10:30 a.m. every day.

With that tidbit in mind, he set off to work, positioning his cows on a light grassy area on his field using a drone to help form the cow patterns. It was a success for the cattle herder who was able to grab a picture of his work from a satellite, proving his creation could be seen from space.

This was his first attempt at getting satellites to notice his masterpiece, but he’s become somewhat of a pro at herding his cows into fun shapes for his drone to capture. His other cow art includes crafting a heart for Valentine’s Day, a smiley face, Olympic rings and a mathematical pi symbol.

The farmer is also known on his YouTube channel for serenading his herd with his trombone, as well as showing viewers other fun aspects of farming life. He’s built quite the following with more than 74,000 viewers tuning in to watch his cow antics.

To watch videos of Klingenberg herding his cows into cow art, search “Farmer Derek Klingenberg” on YouTube.

Jennifer Nevans
is assistant editor of Milk Producer.
The BouMatic Cow Brush will improve your cow’s health and well-being and consequently her productivity.

Provide your cows with a treat that improves their health.
- **High Quality Nylon Brush** – Provides a comfortable scratch with the right length and firmness of bristles
- **Energy Saving** – Automatic on/off control
- **Steady and Even Brushing** – Every 200 starts, the brush reverses direction of rotation
- **Improves Cow Health** – Provides a safe way for cows to scratch and get rid of parasites
- **Improves Milk Production** – Promoting blood circulation can result in an increase in milk production
- **Durable and Robust** – Single brushes with stainless steel core in a cabinet
- **Safe** – Built-in inductive sensor turns motor off when brushes are blocked for more than 0.6 seconds
Comestar Lautrust is as solid as ever, heavily used in today’s breeding strategies.

With $2276 Pro$, 3226 GLPI and rock-solid Conformation (+12), Comestar Lautrust is as solid as ever, heavily used in today’s breeding strategies.

- +1626 Milk
- +12 Conformation
- +11 Mammary System
- +12 Feet & Legs
- Herd Life (105)
- Metabolic Disease Resistance (106)

The Calving Ease™ & A2A2 designated Lautrust is sure to sire well-balanced cows with impressive udders, great feet & legs and health trait improvement. It’s time to put Lautrust to work in your herd!

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