



**HOLSTEIN CANADA**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**MINUTES OF THE 140<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MEMBERS** of Holstein Canada held in person in Montreal, Quebec and via Zoom videoconference/webinar on Saturday, April 15, 2023 at 9:30 a.m. Eastern Standard Time.

With the consent of the members and no objections noted, Ben Cuthbert presided as the Chair of the meeting. All present in person and virtually were welcomed to the meeting.

**Present:**

Ben Cuthbert	-	President, British Columbia
Doug Peart	-	Vice-President, Western Ontario
Angus MacKinnon	-	3 <sup>rd</sup> Member to the Executive, Quebec
Willem Vanderlinde	-	Director, Alberta & N.W.T.
Harold Sweetnam	-	Director, Saskatchewan & Manitoba
Karen Versloot	-	Director, Atlantic Canada
Nancy Beerwort	-	Director, Eastern Ontario
Dennis Werry	-	Director, Northern & Central Ontario
Brian Slaughter	-	Director, Western Ontario
Gilles Côté	-	Director, Quebec
Sylvie Mahannah	-	Director, Western Quebec
Benoît Turmel	-	Director, Quebec

**Staff:**

Linda Markle	-	Interim General Manager, Director of Member & Customer Support
Jodi Zettler	-	Bilingual Executive Assistant and Secretary to the Board of Directors

**By Invitation:** Sue Robertson - Recording Secretary, MinuteTakers Inc.

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1. **WELCOME AND NATIONAL ANTHEM**

The Chair welcomed all in attendance, and asked everyone, if able, to stand for the singing of the National Anthem, which was performed by Melissa Marcoux. Brief housekeeping notes were delivered.

2. **CALL TO ORDER**

Notice of the 140<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting was delivered to all registered members by electronic means in accordance with the By-Laws of the Association. The Chair confirmed that quorum was duly met and the meeting was duly called to order at 9:30 a.m.

3. **MOMENT OF SILENCE**

The Chair called for a moment of silence in memory of the departed friends of the Holstein Canada family and those who are currently suffering.

4. **INTRODUCTION OF SCRUTINEERS AND PARLIAMENTARIAN**

Pascal Lemire was appointed as Head Scrutineer for the meeting, assisted by Chris Bartels, Bruno Jubinville, Willemke Binnendijk and Brad Eggink. Guy Charbonneau was introduced as the Association's Parliamentarian.

5. **APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

The Chair asked for any additions or amendments to the Agenda.

On Motion by Dennis Werry and seconded by Willem Vanderlinde it was:

**RESOLVED THAT the Agenda be approved as presented.** Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands and virtual poll.

6. **MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

Video highlights from the 2022 Annual General Meeting that was held in Saskatchewan were presented. The Chair then requested a Motion that the reading of the Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting held on April 23, 2022 be dispensed with and that same be approved.

On a Motion by Karen Versloot and seconded by Sylvie Mahannah it was:

**RESOLVED THAT the reading of the Minutes of the last Annual General Meeting of Holstein Canada held on April 23, 2022 be adopted and verified as presented.** Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands and virtual poll.

7. **INTRODUCTION OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

(a) *Current Board* - The Chair introduced the Board of Directors.

(b) *Former Board Members* – Warm appreciation was expressed for the efforts of the past Holstein Canada Board Presidents and Directors.

8. **PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS**

Ben Cuthbert delivered a report on behalf of the Association as outlined in the Annual Report.

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9. **OPERATIONAL REPORT**

Linda Markle, Interim General Manager, presented a report on the Association's Operations highlighting how staff and service adjustments were made to respond to economic and industry pressures. Members of the Senior Management Team were introduced. Linda Markle thanked staff that assisted the convention planning committee.

- (a) *Acceptance of the Report* – The Chair called for any questions on the Operational Report. There being none, the Chair asked for a Motion to accept the report as presented.

On Motion by Nancy Beerwort and seconded by Brian Slaughter it was:

**RESOLVED THAT the Operational Report be accepted as presented.** Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands and virtual poll.

10. **INTRODUCTION OF NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

Sartaj Sarkaria was introduced and welcomed as the Association's new CEO, who will start in her new role on May 1, 2023. A brief overview of her background was provided.

11. **2022 FINANCIAL REPORT**

- 11.1 **Audit & Finance Report** – Angus Mackinnon, Member of the Executive and Chair of the Audit and Finance Committee had pre-recorded a presentation to present the Audit and Finance report for the benefit of the meeting participants.

- (a) *Acceptance of the Report* – The Chair called for any questions on the Audit and Finance Report. There being none, the Chair asked for a Motion to accept the report as presented.

On Motion by Angus MacKinnon and seconded by Benoît Turmel it was:

**RESOLVED THAT the Audit and Finance Report be accepted as presented.** Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands and virtual poll.

11.2 **Appointment of Auditing Firm**

On a Motion by Angus MacKinnon and seconded by Gilles Côté, it was:

**RESOLVED THAT the firm of KPMG LLP be re-appointed as Auditor for Holstein Canada for the fiscal period ending December 31, 2023, and will hold office until the close of the next Annual General Meeting.** Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands and virtual poll.

- 11.3 **2023 Budget** – Angus Mackinnon presented the 2023 budget for member information. No questions were raised.

12. **CENTURY OF HOLSTEIN**

The Chair welcomed Doug Peart, Vice-President, to present the Century of Holstein Certificates to the McGriskin family of Agincourt, Ontario; the Dolson family of Atwood, Ontario; and the Poole family of Smiths Falls, Ontario. A video that encompassed and highlighted the three families was presented.

13. **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Karen Versloot introduced the Committee reports.

13.1 **Awards Committee** – The pre-recorded report from Gilles Côté was presented on behalf of the Awards Committee, with highlights as follows:

- (a) *Awards* – The following Awards remain in place: Master Breeder, Star Brood Cow, Superior Production, Long Production and All-Canadian Champion. The way points are accumulated will evolve and expand. The BCA will be maintained as well as kilograms of fat and protein, kilograms of milk only per day of life and for each 305-day lactation.
- (b) *Master Breeder Shields* – The current system for Master Breeder Shields will close effective October 31, 2024 and a new approach will be adopted as of November 1, 2024. Points for the Master Breeder 2024 Awards will be calculated until October 31, 2024 with nominations being announced in January 2025. Following this, the 12-month period will end on October 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. Following a resolution from the membership and approval by the Board of Directors, a new way of awarding Master Breeder Shields will be introduced in 2023.
- (c) *Focus Groups* – The Awards Committee will be working on implementing changes in 2023 and 2024 and will organize focus groups (one in English and one in French), with interested members. Several resolutions and recommendations from the last few years will be taken into consideration during these discussions. Members interested in participating in a focus group are asked to submit their name to Pascal Lemire.

13.2 **Classification Advisory Committee** – The pre-recorded report from Nancy Beerwort was presented on behalf of the Classification and Advisory Committee.

Recommendations were made to the Board after its 2022 meeting, as follows:

- (a) *Body Condition Score* – Two changes and adjustments to body condition score are for lactations 2+, BCS between 2.25 – 3.0 will be considered ideal. For Lactations 2+, a smaller

discrimination will be used for linear code 4, which is the linear code one less than ideal.

- (b) *Teat Placement* – To improve the health of mammary systems and to improve teat placement, this change will be made: For Rear Teats that receive a linear code 9, which represents rear teats that are nearly crossing, an automatic defect of ‘Teats too Close’ will be applied, deducting two points off the total Mammary System score.
- (c) *Trait Name Change* – Holstein Canada will change the name ‘Dairy Capacity’ to match the World Holstein Friesian Federation (WHFF) to the term ‘Rib Structure.’
- (d) *Defects* – As the breed evolves and improves, defects that were once a burden to the functionality of the cow either become extinct or occurrence is very rare. As a result, only defects related directly to the functionality of the cow will remain on the scorecard. The defects that remain are: Advanced anus, unbalanced quarter, blind quarter, web teat, shallow fore rib, weak back, weak crops, weak pasterns, abnormal claw, crampy, and rear legs back.
- (e) *Research Trait Emphasizing Fertility* – Improved fertility of the herds is a constant challenge and evolution for today’s producers. After reviewing sound research, anogenital distance trait will be added for research purposes and be collected in tie-stall facilities.
- (f) *Locomotion* – Locomotion will be an officially weighted trait in all loose-housing systems. A predicted locomotion score utilizing correlations from other feet and leg traits will be applied to tie stall facilities. The predicted locomotion in tie stalls will be evaluated as a research trait for one year to validate the prediction.

13.3 **Governance Committee** – The pre-recorded report from Sylvie Mahannah was presented on behalf of the Governance Committee with highlights noted as follows:

- (a) *Committees* – The Committee undertook a review of the nine existing Committees to determine if any of them should be merged or disbanded. As a result of this work, the Cow of the Year Committee has been moved to a sub-committee of the Awards Committee. A new Human Resources Committee was created that will help the Board in filling external positions for each of the Committees. The Committees were categorized as Primary, Member Experience and Advisory.

Sylvie Mahannah welcomed any questions.

- (b) *External Committee Membership* – A member recommended that HC utilize the Clubs and Branches to put forward nominations as part of the external Committee membership search. **Response:** Sylvie Mahannah noted that HC encourages the Branches to be involved and support the nominations for external membership on Committees.

13.4 **Show and Judging Committee** – The pre-recorded report from Brian Slaughter was presented on behalf of the Show and Judging Committee with highlights noted as follows:

(a) *Committee Mandate* – The Committee meets three times annually and its mandate includes reviewing best practices for conducting Shows to ensure that regulations, Code of Conduct and ethics are current. Additional responsibilities include the selection of Judges via ballot for various National Shows.

(b) *Judges* – The Committee completed its Judges' selections for 2023 and also conducted a review of the All-Canadian Contest to ensure fair and equitable judging from coast to coast. Judges from all regions who have judged any Regional, Provincial, or major Show will be considered for this list. HC hosted a National Judging school in June 2022. Guest Judges from Canada and the United States participated in the two-day school.

Brian Slaughter welcomed any questions.

(c) *Cow Classes* – A member queried whether there are too many classes for young cows as a result of the changes made last year to the Royal Winter Fair Show. **Response:** Brian Slaughter noted that the Committee is satisfied with the changes for the time being.

(d) *Judges' Attire* – A query was raised regarding the requirement for Judges to wear white pants, as they are difficult to find for purchase and to keep clean. **Response:** Brian Slaughter noted that the Committee has discussed this and concluded that white pants are preferred and acknowledged that they can be difficult to find.

14. **DAIRY FARMERS OF CANADA (DFC) MESSAGE**

A brief overview of the role and partnership of Dairy Farmers of Canada was provided, and Pierre Lampron, the president of DFC, was introduced and addressed the membership.

15. **JERSEY CANADA MESSAGE**

A brief overview of the support and collaboration of Jersey Canada was provided, and Josh Barter, their new president, was introduced and addressed the membership.

16. **MESSAGE FROM THE HONOURABLE MARIE-CLAUDE BIBEAU**

A video message from Canada's Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food, Marie-Claude Bibeau, was presented.

17. **HOLSTEIN U.S.A. MESSAGE**

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A brief overview of the relationship and collaboration with Holstein U.S.A. was provided, and Jonathan Lamb, Holstein USA's President, was introduced and provided remarks.

18. **HOLSTEIN MEXICO MESSAGE**

A brief overview of the close collaboration with Holstein Mexico was provided, and Dr. Felipe Ruiz Lopez, Holstein Mexico's outgoing CEO, was introduced and addressed the membership.

*At this point in the meeting, a 15-minute break was taken.*

19. **UNVEILING OF 2022 COW OF THE YEAR**

Dennis Werry, Director, presented the 2022 Cow of the Year. The 2022 Cow of the Year was awarded to Comestar Lamadona Doorman and family members joined the stage to accept and celebrate the award.

20. **2022 MEMBER RESOLUTIONS**

Sylvie Mahannah, Director, and Chair of the Governance Committee, presented the 2022 Member Resolutions. The final resolution results will be posted on the HC website after the meeting.

20.1 **REPORTS-CLASSIFICATION [ACCEPTED]**

Submitted by NS/NL Branch

**Whereas, Classification is an educational service Holstein Canada Members pay for;**  
**Whereas, an explanation of the classification report is included in this service;**  
**Whereas, reports are no longer printed on the farm;**

On Motion by Harry Van der Linden and seconded by Chris MacKenzie it was:

**RESOLVED THAT, before leaving the farm, members receive a copy of their report via email or view the report on the classifier's tablet so they can have the full benefit of the Classification service.** Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands and virtual poll.

20.2 **REPORTS-CLASSIFICATION [ACCEPTED]**

Submitted by QC Branch

**Whereas some producers seem to have noticed that some classifiers favour certain styles of cows for classification, rather than the criteria established by Holstein Canada;**  
**Whereas currently, the way to judge the accuracy of a classifier is to compare their average classification score to the breed average, rather than by reconciliation with the actual score of the classified animals;**  
**Whereas with the process of classification regionalization, some producers have mentioned their concern in relation to a regionalization of the conformation;**

Whereas currently, classification is still very subjective since many traits are not measured and only visually assessed;

Whereas the evolution of the typical cow model is not yet well understood by all producers;

Whereas presenting classification as a linear score may not be the best visual representation to allow for a good judgment of the classifier's work and to allow producers who are less comfortable with classification to relate the classification to the cow's actual appearance.

On Motion by Pascal Martin and seconded by Louis St-Aubin it was:

**RESOLVED THAT the following be added to the Classification reports: a profile, a front view and a back view according to the Classification received for each cow for training purposes and Classification assessment. The generated cow profile should also be superimposed on the model cow profile to better identify major defects.** Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands and virtual poll.

#### 20.3 **SEARCH FUNCTION – TAG REPLACEMENT ORDERS [ACCEPTED]**

Submitted by NS/NL Branch

**Whereas, sometimes errors and typos are easy to make;**

On Motion by Chris MacKenzie and seconded by Harry Van der Linden it was:

**RESOLVED THAT Holstein Canada add an animal inquiry option to serve as a search function within the tag replacement orders to make it more user-friendly and avoid mistakes.** Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands and virtual poll.

#### 20.4 **NATIONAL SHOW-DESIGNATION [ACCEPTED]**

Co-submitted by BC, AB, SK and MB Branches

**Whereas, due to the vast geographical size of Canada, the existence of a national show in eastern Canada limits western provinces from participating;**

**Whereas, for reference, the distance from Charlottetown, PEI to Toronto is about 2600 km and again, for reference, it is about 2600 km west to Brandon, Manitoba and an additional 2100 km to Abbotsford, British Columbia;**

**Whereas, the health and welfare of all animals is of top priority and long-distance trips are especially difficult on an animal's well-being;**

**Whereas, the trip to participate in the yearly national show requires around 12 stops to milk the cattle on the trip;**



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Whereas, a national show is once every 4 years in Western Canada. Western exhibitors must travel extremely long distances with unpredictable winter weather to the Royal in Toronto to participate at a yearly national show;  
Whereas, the cost of transport and expenses is at or higher than \$50,000 for a round trip from Chilliwack, BC to Toronto, ON;  
Whereas, the Westerner Dairy Showcase is already running therefore there will be no additional costs to Holstein Canada;  
Whereas, the western provinces have high-quality animals and a national show would recognize these animals on a national stage;  
Whereas, the show in Western Canada be held in the same regard as a national show in eastern Canada (i.e., points to All-Canadian nominations);  
Whereas, there is opportunity to encourage western participation in more shows and also in promoting the Holstein breed throughout Canada.

On Motion by Michael Lovich and seconded by Tim Hummel it was:

**RESOLVED THAT Holstein Canada designate the Westerner Dairy Showcase in Red Deer a National Show.** Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands and virtual poll.

20.5 **HC CONVENTION – ROTATION [ACCEPTED]**

Submitted by NB, PEI, NS/NL Branches

Whereas, the National Holstein Canada Convention rotates turns from regions; Western Canada, Ontario, Quebec, and the Atlantic provinces, having the opportunity to host once every fourth year giving each of the Atlantic branches a twelve-year rotation;  
Whereas, historically participation at the Atlantic conventions have been well attended and received by all those who have attended;  
Whereas, the hosting province and other Atlantic provinces have an opportunity for marketing cattle, networking, and making contact with fellow members;

On Motion by John Raymond Dykstra (PEI) and seconded by Matthew Clarke it was:

**RESOLVED THAT the National Holstein Canada Convention rotation remains the same with the Atlantic Branches having an opportunity to host once every four years.** Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands and virtual poll.

20.6 **WEB SERVICES – LIST [ACCEPTED]**

Submitted by ON Branch

Whereas, the number and percent of animals genomically tested in Canadian Holsteins is low;  
Whereas, Holstein Canada members need to see more value in having their animals genomically tested;  
Whereas, young animals, especially heifers, often have the highest genetic merit and the

most revenue generating potential in a herd;

Whereas, Holstein Canada members doing genomic testing need Holstein Canada to provide more value for their animals, similar to what is done for members whose animals are show winners; and

Whereas, potential domestic and foreign buyers need to have a source for being aware of top genetic Canadian Holstein animals.

On Motion by James Cranston and seconded by Cole Verburg it was:

**RESOLVED THAT Holstein Canada allocate resources in 2023 to develop a service whereby at the time of registration and genomic testing of animals (females and males) a list be created and published monthly, on it's website, for at least the top 1% of tested animal listing by LPI, Pro\$ and other traits that Holstein Canada sees as key to the future success of Canadian Holsteins. Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands and virtual poll.**

20.7 **PEDIGREES – BREEDERS' CUP [DEFEATED]**

Submitted by ON Branch

Whereas, Breeders' Cups are becoming increasingly popular and help to promote the Holstein breed and encourage social interaction of members;

Whereas, Breeders' Cups are judged by official judges;

Whereas, County shows are increasingly struggling with relevancy and sustainability.

On Motion by Cole Verburg and seconded by James Cranston it was:

**RESOLVED THAT the top two (2) cows of each Breeders' Cup Competition (as decided by the judge) be recognized on their pedigrees. This should be possible regardless of each County's individual rules and classes as long as the judge chooses the top two (2) at the end of the day. Motion defeated.**

20.8 **COMMUNICATION – INBREEDING [ACCEPTED]**

Submitted by Holstein Quebec

Whereas the advent of genomics has accelerated genetic progress, however it has also increased the level of inbreeding more rapidly than in the past;

Whereas the increased use of sexed semen or beef semen has the impact of reducing the number of different pedigrees;

Considering that insemination centres naturally favour crossbreeds with ever higher indexes, which leads to an increase in the concentration of inbreeding;

Whereas there is already extensive research on inbreeding issues being done by the Genetic Evaluation Board (GEB), but few producers are aware of these efforts.

On Motion by Louis St-Aubin and seconded by Stéphane Alary it was:

**RESOLVED THAT information regarding the increase in inbreeding goes directly to the**

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producers in concrete ways (e.g.: infoHolstein, social media posts, etc.) in order to effectively raise awareness on this issue of concern to the industry. Motion carried as evidenced by a show of hands and virtual poll.

21. **YOUNG LEADERS ADVISORY VIDEO REPORT**

Willem Vanderlinde introduced the Young Leaders Advisory Committee Report. Cynthia Campbell, President of the Young Leaders Advisory Committee, was welcomed to the meeting to deliver a video report.

22. **2022 EDUCATION SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS**

Karen Versloot introduced the education scholarship awards, announced the six recipients of the educational scholarships, and presented the awards to those in attendance.

23. **MEMBERS' INPUT SESSION**

The Chair opened the floor for questions and member input.

- (a) *Bull Calf Registration* – A member commented that while bull calves registered must be genomic tested, there is an issue that in the animal inquiry, the parent average is available but not the genomic parent average. **Response:** The Chair thanked the member for bringing this to the Board's attention.
- (b) *Acknowledgements* – Several members expressed their appreciation to HC and all the staff for their exceptional service to the members.
- (c) *Ear Tags* – The Quebec branches have asked for larger ear tags. **Response:** Linda Markle noted that larger ear tags are available and HC staff will follow up on this.
- (d) *Financial* – A member expressed concern regarding the financial trends and requested that the Board do a forward review and move the trends to a more positive position. **Response:** The Chair noted that this is also a concern of the Board and is being considered.

24. **2024 CONVENTION IN ONTARIO**

On behalf of the Organizing Committee, the members were invited to the 2024 National Convention in Hamilton, Ontario being held on April 24-27, 2024.

25. **CLOSING REMARKS**

The Chair acknowledged and thanked the Organizing Committee and Sponsors, as well as the members for their continued commitment to the Association. On behalf of the Board of Directors, Harold Sweetnam acknowledged and thanked Ben Cuthbert's exemplary leadership of HC over the

preceding year.

26. **TERMINATION OF MEETING**

There being no further business brought before the meeting, the Chair requested a Motion to conclude the meeting.

On a Motion duly made it was:

**RESOLVED THAT the 140<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of Holstein Canada be concluded.**

Motion carried.

The meeting was concluded at 1:17 p.m.