

# Info Holstein



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

At the Canadian National Convention Sale in April, in support of the Western Canadian Classic, Suzanne and Ben Cuthbert purchased Wedgwood Foundations WCC Star for \$4,500. Donated by Foundation Sires, Listowel, ON, Star is by Mr Liberator and traces six VG or EX Star Brood cows on the maternal side.

The relaxing trip by ferry from Nanaimo to the mainland passes many interesting sights. Entrance Island features a working lighthouse.

## Silvermaple— Passion for Life Adventures

**Outstanding farmers Ben and Suzanne Cuthbert continue to make BC proud.**

**B**en and Suzanne Cuthbert are delighted to be members of Vancouver Island's close-knit, supportive, farming community. Originally choosing dairying because of its lifestyle, they couldn't be happier, more upbeat purebred Holstein breeders.

The Cuthberts are also thrilled with their three studious, dairy-minded children, Thomas, Erin, and Natalie. Because of their dairy interests, the couple share 4-H leadership of the Island's one dairy club. Suzanne is also dedicated to the Western Canadian Classic and Ben is seriously involved in milk marketing organizations. He and all children have played hockey, with Ben a coach.

In fact, in 1996, Ben and Suzanne received BC's Outstanding Young Farmer Award for their farm and community achievements.

While mainland producers might find the Cuthbert's daily dependence on ferries an inconvenience, everyday occurrences proceed quite smoothly. Suzanne explains, "It's all about planning ahead. In the summer, we even have to make reservations because of tourists." When possible, Ben catches a flight in Nanaimo to attend meetings in Ottawa.

Moreover, the family has a penchant for the Island, with its breathtaking mountains, lush green valleys, and majestic Western Red Cedars. It snows maybe three or four times a year, but the light sprinkle melts quickly.

With no auction facilities, the Cuthberts must dedicate an entire day to take cull cows by ferry to Abbotsford. Obviously, they attempt to work in as many activities as possible during the day away. Round trip for the truck and trailer amounts to \$360—and is increasing.

Male calves aren't even worth shipping

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to the mainland; they're given free to a neighbour.

Having both been raised and worked on family dairy farms, Ben and Suzanne decided this was something they wanted for their own young family. Twenty-one years ago, they purchased a vacant, run-down farm in Ladysmith. They worked two months straight just fixing it up to introduce 50 cows into the original barn.

To ensure the best genetic advancement of the herd, 100% AI was always practised. The original lineup consisted of 15 purebred and 35 percentage females. Although the Cuthberts couldn't always afford the cost of top sires, they endeavoured to find that best-valued bull that enhanced production and individual cow weaknesses.

One such sire, at \$15/dose, was Donnandale Skychief, resulting in 25 daughters. These offspring became the foundation of several great brood cows in the present herd. Building on this base, they expanded and, now own a purebred herd of 160 Holsteins in a free-stall operation, with an upgraded parlour.

Thirty percent of the current *Silvermaple* lineup traces to Hipower Jiff Tempo (VG-87-4yr). Just this year, the Cuthberts started ET work on some of their best, homebred cow families. Four Excellent, 35 Very Good, and 100 Good Plus cows average BCAs of 228 Milk, 220 Fat, and 228 Protein.

Ben and Suzanne credit much of their success to dedicated staff. In

particular, Brian Eagle has been with the family for 7½ years.

The herd is divided into two because of production and compatibility. Feeding the two to four-year-olds and mature groups a little differently, their veterinarian monitors animal health monthly. They also receive a visit from the hoof trimmer quarterly.

For over 15 years, the couple selectively logged their forest to become farm land, now totalling 230 acres; another 75 is rented. Tile drainage aids significantly in wet areas, with 100% of forages home-grown.

While the family can annually harvest four tested grass crops and corn for silage, no grain is grown on the Island. Ben relays the land is just too expensive and more conducive to grass and corn silage. Grain is ferried in by truck or rail cars. The grain cars are then moved by rail to Topshelf, the Island's centralized mill and storage facility.

Also shipped from Vancouver are fertilizer and milking/dairy equipment parts. With at least a day's delivery away, Ben and neighbours must always carry a large inventory of parts.

Ben says, "I am patient with the cows and believe in giving lower-producing 2-year-olds another chance. However, I predict we will have an increasing better type, longer-living herd ten years from now, with pedigrees deepening annually."

Another factor is adding to their optimism. Son Thomas has just returned home full-time, following five years of



By ferry, it takes at least 2½ hours from Nanaimo to Vancouver.



Suzanne Cuthbert shows her detailed herd records to Registrar Glenn Cherry.



In her meticulous herd records, Suzanne even includes the confirmation number received by Holstein Canada acknowledging electronic receipt of calf registrations.



Suzanne cares for all baby calves in regularly-moved, disinfected hutches. She RFID tags her healthy babies at birth and maintains detailed herd records. Suzanne thinks electronic registration is great—convenient, with photos readily accepted.

*Silvermaple cows are housed in comfortable free-stalls. The old wooden dividers between cattle continue to work well. Sturdy, they are made of fir and called tombstones by the Cuthberts.*



Every Monday, propane and grain rail cars are ferried by Seaplan Coastal Rail Ferry from Delta Port on the mainland to Nanaimo. Southern Railway of Vancouver Island pulls out the full rail cars and, in turn, reloads the ferry with empty rail cars.

study at the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon. Because of his keen interest in genetics and background in 4-H and the WCC, Thomas has big plans for an expansion and future herd building—focusing on udders and rumps.

Ben stresses he is very happy to give his eldest child free rein and leave the decision-making to him. Additionally, if either of his two daughters wants to farm, a few adjustments could be made to accommodate them. Erin just finished her first year at the University of Saskatchewan and Natalie is going into grade 12.

Thomas has already started a chicken business on 70 acres down the road. Under a BC initiative, he has amassed 7,000 birds. While totally automated, Suzanne is happy to turn the daily duties over to Thomas, now that he is home. She adds, “This enterprise has meshed very well with dairying, as extremely-strict, biosecurity regulations exist for chickens.”

Ben, in reality, has another part-time job. Firstly, he was a Director for the Island Milk Producers. Moreover, since 1996, he has been Vice-Chairman of the BC Milk Marketing Board.

This responsibility, as well as sitting on the Canadian Milk Supply Management Committee, takes him away from home approximately 70 days a year. Ben comments, “None of this would be possible without Suzanne’s ability to manage the operation very successfully. Her parents were great dairy farmers.

“Yes, I think the herd would be

## Cuthbert’s View on BC’s Marketing Board

Since 1996, Ben Cuthbert, Ladysmith, BC has been Vice-Chairman of the BC Milk Marketing Board. This position is the highest an individual producer can climb, as the provincial government always appoints the chairman.

Furthermore, Ben sits on the Canadian Milk Supply Management Committee.

To accomplish his duties, this Holstein breeder is away from his home farm, *Silvermaple*, approximately two months a year.

Ben states, “Canadian dairy producers can remain confident of their large, steady, economic contribution to the Canadian economy.”

British Columbia does not have producer milk marketing boards, like the rest of the provinces. They have a government-appointed chair. Increasingly, all policy development must pass the *Public Interest* and *Government Economic Plan* tests. While producers are frustrated about government interference, this is the way it operates in BC.

However, BC does share some of the same views as other provinces. It believes strongly that supply management must be maintained along with producer equitability.

BC’s Board comprises two government-appointed non-producers and four elected producers, at large. Its responsibility is to manage the dairy industry, from producer to consumer, within government regulations.

further advanced if I didn’t have these responsibilities, but it’s the price Suzanne and I agreed to pay for our involvement and payback to the dairy industry. We hope our children will become engaged in some off-farm activities down the road.

“I believe that sincere dedication and responsibility in a meaningful organization or project results in advanced learning, higher respect from peers, and greater fulfilment in life. I’ve

Ben sees his role within the Board as very widespread and objective. Representing the *whole* industry, he must help to further the interests of all stakeholders.

For future, he believes:

1. All provincial governments will become more focused on public interests, rather than producer interests.
2. Food safety will become even more critical to governments than it is today, as they must maintain the integrity of the food and marketing systems.
3. Traceability and quality control will be standard on farms—to industry’s advantage.
4. More pressure will be placed on producers to remain vigilant toward pricing.

Ben sums up, “I take my responsibilities very seriously, as they really affect the lives of producers and processors in a big way!”



certainly gained way more than I’ve lost!”

Suzanne and Ben are a delightful, energetic couple with lots on their plates. While life on a beautiful, secluded Island would appear quiet and tranquil, this is not the way it plays out for the Cuthberts. And, for whatever reason, they thrive on it.

Their passion for Holsteins and life, in general, is contagious!

## Once Upon a Time a Survey was Completed ...

by Holstein Canada President, Germain  
Lehoux, Saint-Elzéar, Qc



At the end of March, you were asked to respond to a survey either by mail or the web. Your response was fantastic!

Thank you to all 3,495 people, who took a few minutes to fill out this survey. This is more than 31% of members who expressed themselves regarding different aspects of our Association. According to the polling agency, this has never been witnessed before!

This is what makes me so proud of you, dear member. These results clearly prove the interest and sense of belonging you have in your Association—our Association.

At the time these words are penned, we are commencing the analysis of results. Your answers and comments will guide us in preparing a strategic plan for the Association's upcoming years.

Ninety-two percent of you are satisfied with Holstein Canada and its services, which is proof of your support; I thank you for this. We will continue to strengthen and improve registration and breed improvement services (noted as Holstein Canada's strengths) to meet future needs of members and clients.

Where do our youth fit in? What must we do to prepare them for future challenges?

There are many questions and, I promise you that once the survey analysis is completed, I will talk about this again; I promise!

Let me share a few reflections with you about the show season, which is well underway.

To me, a show is more than just a place where you can make money by selling an exceptional animal. The main purpose of showing our cattle is to mold us into the best breeders possible. After this, the goal is to become the best exhibitors—not the reverse.

Team spirit, mutual help, respect for others and of self, friendship, and honesty: these are all essential qualities in the personal and social development of our young people ... as well as older ones!

Narrow mindedness, self-centredness, and dishonesty should never be part of values passed down or shared. Notice how shows, which have applied *good principles*, have maintained and, even increased the participation of exhibitors. All others have to fall in line. The results are surprising, but steadfast.

Have a great summer! And don't forget there is more importance—to those who will one day take our place—to what we leave behind, than what we take.

See you soon!

## Tag Solutions

### Five-digit Tags

Many producers have requested **five-digit management numbers** on panel tags. Not desiring duplicate numbers, they want to ensure that all lower-numbered animals have cleared their herds.

NLID is pleased to announce that, commencing September, five-digit numbers are available for both the standard large and XL panels—at no extra cost.

Given the limited space, the width of the black numbers has been narrowed slightly. The numbers remain very legible from a distance.

NLID	National Livestock IDentification for Dairy
RFID	Radio Frequency ID
ATQ	Agri-Traçabilité Québec inc.

XL panel front with five digits

Large panel front with five digits

### New Tag Option

The RFID button set can now be issued with an **XL security panel**.

Desiring a read every time a cow passes through an automated milking parlour, producers requested the bigger tag.

This combination provides benefits. Namely, the RFID button offers best retention, while the larger XL tag is highly visible.

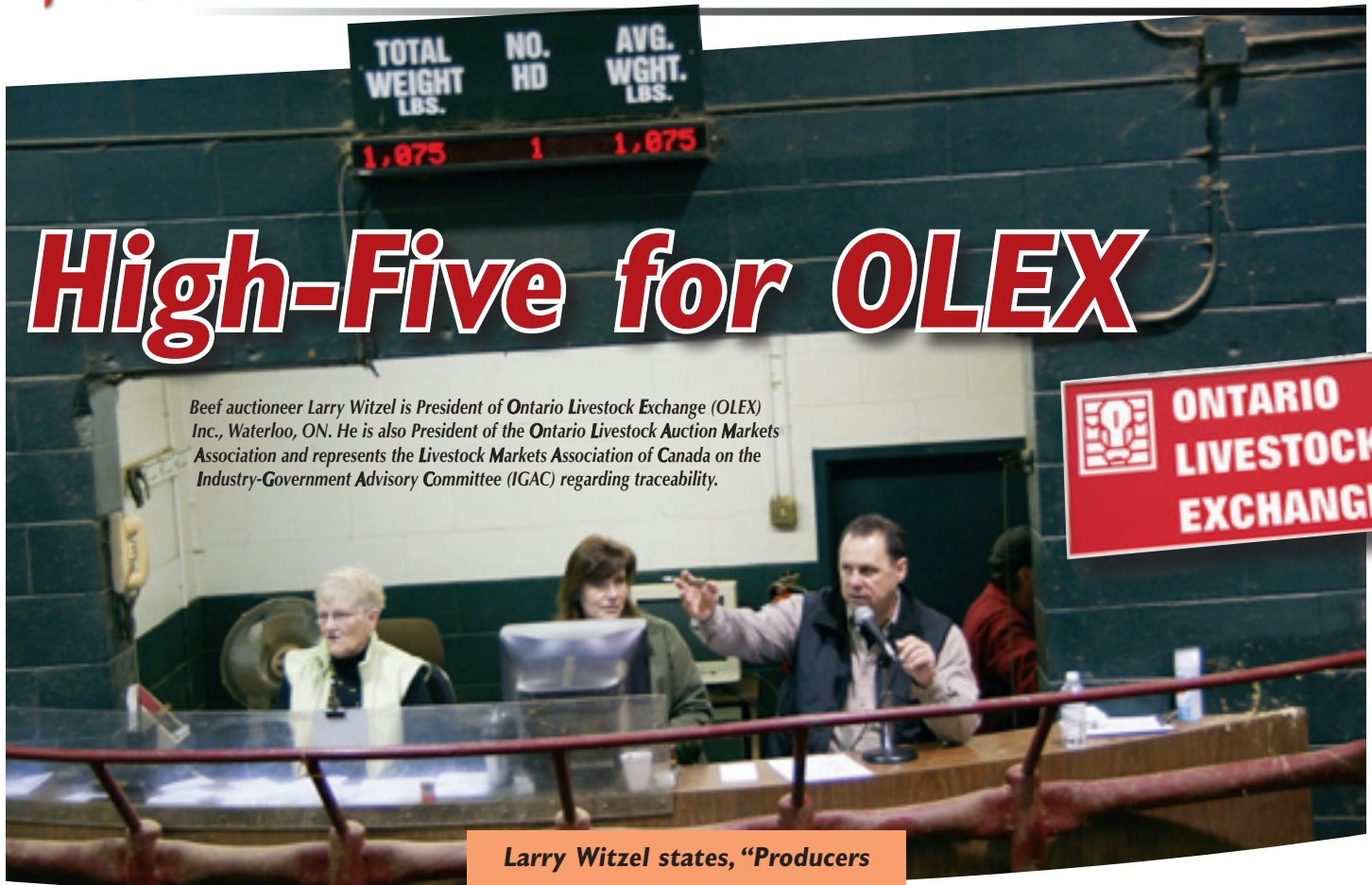
### Speedy Replacement Tags

It is very important that **RFID replacement tags**, for automated systems, be obtained as quickly as possible to avoid gaps and misreads.

NLID has made an agreement with Allflex to process replacement tag orders within three days. Furthermore, they can be shipped within two to three days by paying a courier fee—\$11 to \$24 depending on location in Canada. There is even overnight service!

ATQ advises that Québec producers have not requested tags with five-digit management numbers.





Beef auctioneer Larry Witzel is President of Ontario Livestock Exchange (OLEX) Inc., Waterloo, ON. He is also President of the Ontario Livestock Auction Markets Association and represents the Livestock Markets Association of Canada on the Industry-Government Advisory Committee (IGAC) regarding traceability.

# High-Five for OLEX

**Managing a well-oiled, high-volume, profitable auction facility necessitates a quality team and best electronic technology.**

Larry Witzel, President of the Ontario Livestock Exchange Inc., Kitchener, ON envisions the adaptation of Radio Frequency ID throughout his operation. This huge project will ultimately enhance benefits and premiums for producers, the cattle industry, and OLEX.

Incorporating RFID into existing sale clerking, livestock tracking, and data management system, aligns RFID with the seller, buyer, date, location, etc. The data replicator, using age verification data from the Canadian Cattle Identification Agency, allows birth dates to be determined instantaneously as the animals are scanned, even without a high-speed, internet connection.

Larry notes that food safety, animal health, and continued access to global markets have dictated the necessity for the most current, electronic technology.

**Larry Witzel states, "Producers want to ensure that, for whatever market cattle are intended, they be age verified as it offers sellers the best return."**

"Larry says, "I encourage producers to be proactive and ensure that their animals carry RFID tags, prior to shipping. Otherwise, they become hiccups particularly in automated systems."

OLEX is a designated-tagging site with the authority to ID untagged animals with its inventory of national CCIA tags. Consequently, some producers have off-loaded their tagging responsibilities to this operation.

OLEX, as an auction mart, is responsible by legislation to capture and report to the CCIA the national tag numbers of exported animals. Further, abattoirs and packing plants are obliged to download the retired numbers of slaughtered cattle.

Larry continues, "If staff have to stop to insert mandated RFID tags, there is a cost (\$10/head) to someone—and that someone is the seller."

At four different checkpoints in the facility, from truck to sale ring, RFID numbers are captured.

With OLEX employing 16 full-time and 60 part-time staff, while selling over 170,000 head of dairy and beef cattle a year, the business must run like a well-oiled machine.

**By mid-2010, Larry plans to have a total electronic model, which will be in sync with the National Agriculture and Food Traceability System. This strategy captures and reports the RFID identity of all animals (sightings) moving through OLEX facilities to the national database.**

## Livestock Ramps and Chutes

When livestock arrive by truck or trailer at OLEX, they are ideally unloaded at the correct entrance—

Cattle arriving by truck or trailer enter OLEX facilities.



dairy or beef. At both delivery points, each animal receives an individually-numbered hip tag (obsolete with full automation and RFID). This is an in-house tag that identifies each animal as it travels through the facility.

If being sold through the dairy ring, proof must be provided, e.g. Certificate of Registry. Otherwise, it is sold as a grade animal.

The producer is also assigned an ID number from the trucker's manifest.

## Electronic Management

All inbound, 30-inch alleyways have synchronized scanners where slaughter animals hustle, head to tail.

System designer Destron Fearing has also installed powerful, wide-alley scanners/readers. The wide alley is 5-feet wide and 35-feet long. Moving at the speed of commerce—single file, or two or three-abreast—each animal's RFID number is scanned multiple times by six, large antennae mounted in the wide-alley scanning system.

The stationary readers, all synchronized with each other, transmit the scanned numbers to the buffer in the data router. The wide-alley, scanning software sorts and removes redundant RFID numbers. The numbers of the actual tagged animals flow through the reader to the recording software.

RFID tag numbers, instantaneously uploaded into the onsite data bank,

**Larry Witzel states the payback of registered animals is huge. A producer can earn an extra 5-10 cents/pound for a slaughter animal to the US. This is an easy \$100!**

provide the backbone for OLEX's system.

Larry cautions, "The quality and robustness of tags becomes more important than ever, as we eliminate hip tags and fully move to scanning technology."

## Beef Designations

Prior to sale, cattle are categorized to determine if they qualify for export to the premium US market. Firstly are animals 30 months of age and under (age verified or dentition). Secondly are cows less than 4½ years old (dental inspection). Thirdly, animals age-verified and, born subsequent to March 1999, also qualify for export.

Larry remains very appreciative that Holstein Canada forwards birth date information of registered animals daily to CCIA's national database in Calgary. Nightly, OLEX extracts all new information and updates, which are integrated into its internal, high-speed, computerized system.

When age information is not readily accessible electronically, as in the case of unregistered animals, then an OLEX vet must determine age by dentition.

Those qualifying for the US are identified with a floppy blue tag in one ear—visible from the beef auction ring by US buyer agents.

At the same time and station, a yellow, CCIA RFID tag is applied for animals not already electronically tagged.

While an animal cannot move ahead in OLEX's complex system if there is any lapse in information, it remains the RFID tag that enables cattle to cross the US border.

Furthermore, if the animal does not move with an RFID tag, all or either the producer, trucker, or sale's outfit could be slapped with a \$250-\$500 fine by CFIA compliance personnel, as soon as detected.

Immediately following the auction, a number of actions occur very expediently for US-destined bovines.

Each animal is scanned again through the wide-alley reader to ensure its RFID number matches the trucker's manifest. Then, the vet completes individual health charts, which are taken to the local CCIA office for quick approval and stamping.

While truckers assemble their loads, the broker at the border is notified that a shipment is on its way for inspection.

The trucker must follow an assigned route from OLEX to the border—absolutely no variation. Here, a US veterinarian visually inspects each animal and approves each CCIA chart. He has the authority to reject one



This depicts an overview of cull cattle identified for the beef ring.



Each animal receives an individually-numbered hip tag upon entry. In 2010, these will become obsolete with full automation and RFID.



Destron Fearing's Paul Laronde installed this wide-alley reader with antenna, which captures RFID numbers. This allows animals to move at the speed of commerce.



This cull Holstein has been given a blue floppy tag making her eligible for the elite US market.



A veterinarian carefully inspects each animal designated for the dairy ring.

animal or the whole load.

Larry stresses, "You can see why we must get it right the first time. There is a huge cost to the industry if procedures are not followed to the letter."

Prior to BSE, OLEX exported 45-50% of its volume to the US; now 35-45% of animals meet American regulations. While Ontario's auction mart has lost many Holstein steers, this percentage is starting to rebound.

## Inspectors

A real team approach exists at OLEX, and this includes designated, top-quality inspectors. With scanners on squeezes at every vet station, data is continuously documented and verified.

Under various sales and government acts, Larry is obligated to have the following experts on site for every sale. 1) One to two Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) inspectors check livestock for health and ensure facilities are appropriate to handle and care for cattle. 2) One provincial veterinarian, appointed by OMAFRA, conducts examinations and has the authority to put an animal down. 3) One or two Canadian Food Inspection Agency

inspectors, verify that all animals carry tags and inspect trucks to endorse humane transportation. 4) One or two inspectors from the humane society validate the proper handling and care of animals. 5) An independent, third-party veterinarian conducts age verification for export, prior to sale.

If an animal has a particular health issue, e.g. mobility, it is tagged with a pink slip and put in a segregated, *special care* area to be sent directly for beef—most humane handling practice.

## Dairy Sales

Cows consigned for the dairy ring (purebred and commercial) are housed in an attached wing.

They undergo a more detailed inspection by a designated-dairy veterinarian. A beef-categorized animal (by vet or seller) would never be put through OLEX's dairy ring as it

***A producer can earn an extra \$400-500 for a purebred animal in the dairy ring if she is accompanied by a Certificate of Registry assuring birth date, sire, and lineage.***

From the head-gate, scanning system, a vet conducts dentition on this Holstein steer to determine its age and, consequently, its status for the US market. Antennae are mounted on both sides of the squeeze.



*The auctioneer reads all veterinarian and seller notes to the crowd. If a Certificate of Registry accompanies a registered animal, it is provided to the buyer.*



could jeopardize its reputation or best management practices.

At the time of sale, the vet's logged notes are announced to the crowd. Frequently, these are accompanied by messages from the dairy seller. Moreover, Certificates of Registry may accompany the animal, which are passed to the new owner upon sale.

## Progress

Larry Witzel congratulates Holstein dairy producers for being very conscientious about animal ID and the general health of individuals to be auctioned—whether destined for the dairy or beef rings.

OLEX's emerging Livestock EXchange Management System (LEXMS) allows for more information to be communicated backward and forward among different segments of the industry.

Today's speed of commerce necessitates more factual and timely information—less paper and more electronic. This will result in producers obtaining additional information, including all RFID identification details on cheques/statements. Buyers will receive value-added data on animals, e.g. ID assurance, vaccinations, and individual herd health events.

OLEX becomes a pivotal link in ensuring healthy animals, food safety,

and a gateway to global markets with quality Canadian products. Recently, OnTrace Agri-Traceability assigned and verified a Premises Location Identifier to OLEX. This is necessary to report the ID of all animals moving through the sale's facility to the CCIA database.

Ultimately, this progressive initiative will result in benefits and premiums for the producer, cattle industry, and auction mart.

Holstein Canada extends a *high-five* to OLEX on its timely, progressive initiative!

## OLEX Mission Statement

***OLEX is a reliable gateway to North American markets for livestock customers and global product resale.***

***OLEX provides access to a large volume of packer buyers, both in Canada and the US.***

***OLEX presents a highly-competitive atmosphere, supported by full disclosure and vigorous bidding.***

***OLEX offers quality service by a competent, dedicated team of employees adaptive to current, electronic systems.***



*Relevant data on every animal is captured from RFID tags or keyed into an interactive computer program.*



*Young dairy calves are kept clean in a separate pen.*



*(l-r) OLEX's Barn Foreman Dave Hackcart and OMAFRA Inspector Corey Campbell are two of many competent multi-taskers who ensure that operations run smoothly in the barn.*



# Canada's Zoning Capabilities

**Zoning serves to mitigate risks, market loss, and the economic impact of disease.**

Over the last five years, Canada has witnessed some significant negative impacts from animal diseases.

The industry suffered huge financial losses following the discovery of BSE in 2003 and AI (Avian Influenza) in 2004.

While these diseases have been devastating for the livestock industry, they would pale in comparison to the ramifications of the highly-contagious, spreading Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). A 2002 report, prepared for the Canadian Animal Health Coalition

provides a choke point for all livestock movements.

The crossing point can be easily secured, in a state of emergency, preventing all movement and stopping infected animals from entering the clean zone. There are few, if any, countries that could claim this natural phenomenon.

Furthermore, this WHL Zone Control site is located at and, in conjunction with, an existing scale operated by Manitoba Infrastructure and



## The OIE recognizes three types of zones—free zones, surveillance zones, and infected zones.

(CAHC), prices FMD at \$46 billion.

However, findings indicate that zoning would serve as a mitigating activity to reduce losses and the resulting economic impact by 50%.

### Zoning Canada Works

The CAHC, through the Canadian Zoning Committee–West Hawk Lake (CZC-WHL), has demonstrated that Canada can be zoned into two geographical expanses. This would potentially limit the duration and breadth of any export ban placed on Canadian livestock.

West Hawk Lake, at the Manitoba-Ontario border, is the first Canadian step to test this level of zoning. It is the ideal location because of its unique geographic location, which

Transportation (MIT).

Easily zoning Canada into western and eastern regions would allow the CFIA to declare a large zone to be disease-free. A specific outbreak could then be isolated and confined to a smaller area.

### Disease Zoning

Zoning allows countries to have a specific geographical area assigned a defined status regarding a particular disease. Subsequently, only the infected zone is ultimately placed under movement restrictions.

Therefore, despite a disease incursion in a specific area, trade activities could continue because specified zones have been identified disease-free.

When a country suffers a disease

incursion in a particular farm or area, an effective zoning scheme would allow the rest of the country or other free zones to continue trade.

### Zoning Complements Traceability

Canada must look at foreign animal disease prevention and control measures as a series of firewalls—none 100% effective.

The first line of defence is to prevent the introduction of disease through import controls and border security.

Second is early detection of an introduced disease through active and passive surveillance systems.

Third is control and eradication.

All three are accomplished by 1) introducing movement controls (especially for rapid-spreading disease); 2) determining where the disease is and, is not located; 3) quarantining the area, which contains the disease and introducing disease control, eradication, and surveillance measures within the zone.

West Hawk Lake adds the ability to very rapidly trace animals, which have crossed the Manitoba–Ontario surveillance site. Officials can systematically declare one part of the country free-of-disease, while the trace-out process of the infected premises continues.

Additionally, having WHL recognized by trading partners should aid in ensuring that partial trade is re-established quickly.

**Crossings at West Hawk Lake (Aug. 1, '06 - Jan. 31, '09)**

Species	Crossings	Head
Dairy	236	8,854
Beef	5,982	410,791
Hogs	713	179,461
Sheep	378	123,947
Goats	130	5,849
Equine	413	4,778
Bison	28	1,458
Feathers	11	51,532
Other	25	262

# Producers Convey Expectations

**While significant data exists throughout the dairy industry, producers want to know how this specifically helps them in their individual operations. One-to-one, they must be shown a product or service's value and, how it works for them immediately!**

**H**olstein Canada's annual workshop attracted over 50 branch and dairy sector representatives for discussions on expanding dairy markets.

At the constructive conference, attendees eager to embrace the future discussed numerous opportunities for producer success.

The highlight of the day included feedback from three, active dairymen. It was heartening to note that their *wants* and *desires* for success coincided with discussions taking place during the day-long meeting.

Service providers must be seen as knowledgeable advisors in their specific fields. Furthermore, they must be capable of tailoring their advice to individual herds. The *one-size-fits-all* concept no longer serves breeder needs as progressive farmers want specialized attention.

**Ben Loewith**, Lynden, ON (*Summitholm*) stated, "I want someone who takes it to the next level. I don't want more data; I want personalized information that ties into my overall management program on-farm."

"A salesman must know my goals and have studied my operation—including analysis of various management reports. He must then make it painfully obvious to me that I will receive those benefits tomorrow."

"Because I don't have the time and want to use my energies dealing with the cows, competent extensionists have a real role to play. They must be able



Alain Lajeunesse is Holstein Canada's new Manager of Business Development and Communication Services.

to sit down with me and recommend solutions and enhanced ways of doing things."

**Chris Buchner**, Brownsville, ON (*Elmwold*) also calls for more specialists, as his farm expands to include interested, young family members.

Chris states, "Loyalty to a particular person or organization is no longer the norm as I am more price-sensitive. If a knowledgeable professional can show me a better and cheaper way to do something, I am willing to listen; in fact, I have changed banks four times. I want that person to be part of our management's on-farm team."

"Most farmers aren't experts and, even if capable, they don't have the time. I like number comparisons among herds of the same size and type, so I can see how my business fits into the overall scheme."

"My goal is to be in the top 30% of dairy herds in Canada. I also want to keep the operation interesting for my progressive family."

**Chris Brown**, Shelburne, ON (*Beslea*) was encouraged to work off-farm to determine whether he actually wanted to farm. Now, passionate about livestock and the industry, he aims to get as much milk from his cows as possible to finance a new barn. He breeds for type, but feeds for production, while aiming for a Master Breeder herd.

Chris is a keen businessman. He comments, "I gather a lot of information about suppliers before using them. They must be able to visually show my wife and me how their proposals will benefit our farm now, and into the future. I also want follow-ups on products."

"I want to know how my money is being used and where it is going. There is lots of data out there, but I want it broken down and applied to my individual operation."

"I believe that the dairy industry will have to continuously and proactively adjust and change to meet the needs of producers."

"I don't want to see a salesperson during milking and peak cropping periods. And, a salesperson should never tell my wife that he wants to see or speak to the boss! Like many couples today, we are a team."

**Future challenges will relate to profitability, time, labour, quality of life—not a lack of data.**

Richard Cantin, CanWest DHI

## Worth Repeating

Richard Cantin relayed that **CanWest DHI** has several services, which aim to improve profit, save time, and make things more convenient and easier for producers. These include Dairy Comp 305, Profit Profiler, Feed Watch, and Value-Added Lab Analysis. DHI is also arming advisors with more information to serve the specific needs of farmers.

In future, DHI will use the individual milk sample to test the quality of milk for human health, udder and animal health, and milk urea nitrogen (MUN).

While Canada will not follow, it will be influenced by dairy industries in the US and Europe, reflects Barry

Sutherland of Purina. Going forward, he believes that **national herd health** will be critical, with animal ID at the core.

Barry commented that the industry must keep up with what producers want and provide world-class solutions. Following its *segmentation-of-one* theory, Purina knows that to remain successful, it must be aware of what is happening on every farm, including goals, behaviours, and succession plans.

Complacency will lead to disaster, Barry cautioned!

Brian Van Doormaal, CDN cited that the adoption of on-farm technology will increase with herd size.

Advancement will be made with semen from **cloned bulls**, but consumer

score, disease resistance, milk urea nitrogen, milk lactose content, milk content of CLA and/or fatty acids, and feed efficiency.

Valacta has been successful in **uniting industry stakeholders** to improve the efficiency and profitability of farms in Québec and eastern Canada. Partnerships have been established to tackle pertinent, on-farm, health issues.

For example, Jean Durocher pulled a team of bovine health advisors and Valacta field staff together to tackle reproduction. This initiative was very successful with each breeder developing a strategy to meet his particular goals. Producer satisfaction

## Keeping An Ear to the Ground

by Secretary-Manager Keith Flaman

Recently, I had an opportunity to hear three dairymen address a group of service providers on the future of the dairy industry in Canada. Ages ranged from '30-ish to mid-'50s, with the latter bringing the next generation into the business.

They represent a cross-section in herd size, management systems, and breeding goals. The most obvious common thread among them is that they all intend to be in the milk-producing business for the long haul.

All believe margins between direct cost and price of producing milk will decrease. Also, more emphasis will be required on the business side rather than the production side of the industry. Feeling more data is not required, they expect more analysis and interpretation. Furthermore, dairymen need advice and input to assist in making timely and profitable decisions.

And while every step along the way to meeting their goals may not be clear, standing still is not an option! Simple survival is not acceptable; success must be vibrant to stimulate current and future generations.

Dynamic thought and action will power the industry to another level in dairying. The evolution continues as it does in other areas of agriculture, as well as other types of companies.

As you are aware, the news is full of stories where industries are changing their business models to meet current challenges. Service providers in the dairy industry will be expected to adopt the same aggressive approach.



Producer panel (l-r) Chris Buchner, Chris Brown, and Ben Loewith

perception will be critical to its success.

Once conception rates increase and costs of production decrease, **sexed semen** will become the standard for all sires. Young sires will only produce daughters, translating into more efficient young-sire testing programs. Bulls may only be produced by an AI company.

More research must be done on what **recipients** are selected for donor cows. Studies indicate that recipients have an influence on offspring.

Brian believes that within the next 10 years, all animals will be genotyped in Canada. **Genomics** will drastically change the way AI does business. He also *crystal-balls* that the breakout for LPI, in 2018, will be 40% milk, 30% longevity, and 30% health, fertility, etc.

New traits on the horizon for **genetic evaluation** include body condition

for training sessions topped 90%.

Future initiatives include udder health, heifer management, and Johnes control.

George McNaughton of Dairy Farmers of Ontario reported that there are export opportunities for milk products, but these are limited through the **World Trade Organization**, and at reduced prices. The greatest potential to increase market share at domestic prices is **ethnic markets**—now 1% of total. Regarding organic milk, the supply has outstripped demand.

Dairy Farmers of Canada has introduced a new logo to be used in advertising. The goal of the symbol is to entice Canadian consumers to recognize and purchase products that are 100% real Canadian milk.



### Top Sires Making Improvement on Dam Based on 1st Lactation Classifications from May/June 2009

Top 10 Sires with 100+ Daughters Classified in Two-Month Period	Sire	Daughters Classified <sup>▲</sup>	% Higher than Dam	Daus/Dam Avg. Scores	Top 10 Sires with 20-100 Daughters Classified in Two-Month Period	Sire	Daughters Classified <sup>▲</sup>	% Higher than Dam	Daus/Dam Avg. Scores	Note: <sup>▲</sup> Daughters are included in the statistics only if both the daughter and her dam calved for the first time before 30 months and were both first classified within the first six months of lactation.
	Lheros	194	65.5	80.8/80.6		Talent	92	66.3	80.5/80.1	
	Spirte	146	64.4	80.7/80.0		Frosty	70	62.9	79.4/78.4	
	Samuelo	355	62.8	80.1/79.8		Gibson	54	61.1	81.6/81.8	
	Lucky Star	176	59.1	79.6/79.6		Dolman	113	61.1	79.6/79.1	
	Salto-Rdc	120	58.3	79.7/79.2		Boss Iron	72	58.3	80.7/80.6	
	Goldwyn	601	57.6	81.4/81.4		Charge	55	58.2	78.4/79.3	
	Fbi	163	55.2	79.7/79.9		Derek	63	57.1	78.6/78.9	
	Stormatic	258	55.0	80.6/80.8		Cutler	51	56.9	79.3/79.3	
	Fortune	193	54.9	80.4/80.6		Manager	41	56.1	79.5/78.9	
September Storm	391	54.5	80.1/80.5	Instinct	41	56.1	79.9/79.4			

## Classification Schedule mid-round

August		September		October	
Early	Mid	Early	Mid	Early	Late
<b>ON</b> – Brant, Prescott, Russell, Carleton <b>Qc</b> – Bellechasse	<b>ON</b> –  Leeds, Grenville, Lanark, Renfrew <b>Qc</b> – Montmagny, Kamouraska <b>Qc</b> –  L'Assomption, Montcalm, Joliette, Berthier, Maskinongé	<b>ON</b> –  Halton, York, Peel, Simcoe, Dufferin <b>Qc</b> – Rivière du Loup, Rimouski <b>Qc</b> –  Portneuf, Lac Saint-Jean, Roberval <b>AB</b> – South/Central	<b>Qc</b> – Témiscouata <b>Qc</b> –  Lapointe, Dubuc, Charlevoix, Chicoutimi <b>AB</b> – Northern <b>MB</b>	<b>ON</b> – Elgin <b>Qc</b> – Matapédia, Bonaventure, Matane	<b>ON</b> –  Northumberland, Victoria, Durham, Waterloo <b>Qc</b> – Arthabaska, Wolfe <b>Qc</b> –  Vaudreuil, Soulanges, Huntingdon, Châteauguay, Beauharnois, Laprairie, Napierville, Saint-Jean, Iberville, Shefford, Richmond, Missisquoi <b>PE, NS, NB, NL</b> –
<b>ON</b> –  Grey, Huron, Bruce <b>Qc</b> –  Saint-Maurice, Champlain, Laviolette	<b>ON</b> –  Lambton, Middlesex, Essex, Kent <b>ON</b> –  Peterborough, Ontario <b>Qc</b> – Témiscouata	<b>ON</b> – Oxford <b>ON</b> –  Lennox & Addington, Frontenac, Hastings, Prince Edward <b>Qc</b> – Mégantic <b>Qc</b> –  Brome, Compton, Sherbrooke, Stanstead <b>SK</b> –			



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