

info Holstein

September/October 2018 issue no. 153

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



CASTING CALL OPEN FOR THE *"Leading Lady"*

NOMINATE YOUR CHOICE FOR THE
2018 COW OF THE YEAR CONTEST TODAY



**CASTING CALL CLOSES: THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 16TH, 2018 · FOR OFFICIAL
COMPETITION RULES, SELECTION CRITERIA AND NOMINATION FORMS
VISIT WWW.HOLSTEIN.CA → AWARDS-LISTS → COW OF THE YEAR**

Editor Steven Spriensma

Chief Executive Officer Ann Louise Carson

Board of Directors

President Harry Van der Linden, Atlantic
902-863-3063
Hvdl205@gmail.com

1st Vice President Gerald Schipper, ON
519-765-4614
geraldschipper@gmail.com

2nd Vice President Elyse Gendron, QC
450-265-3147
e.gendron@xittel.ca

Ben Cuthbert, BC
250-246-6517
b.cuthbert@telus.net

Orville O. Schmidt, AB
780-986-5746
southrisegen@yahoo.ca

Ron Boerchers, SK & MB
204-447-2047
rainyridge@mymts.net

Doug Peart, ON
905-768-5163
peartome@live.com

Dennis Werry, ON
905-213-8228
werrydennis@gmail.com

Nancy Beerwort, ON
613-330-0348
cherrycrest@sympatico.ca

Angus MacKinnon, QC
819-570-3891
angusmackinnon3891@gmail.com

Gilles Côté, QC
418-343-2597
lacnor@hotmail.ca



Design by Blueprint Agencies Inc.
10 Scott Ave., Paris, ON 519.442.1242

Printed in Canada by BECK'S PRINTING
75 Empey St., Brantford, ON



ABOVE: The Walker family at home. Be sure to check out our Farm Profiles starting on page 8; we talk to farmers with large herds!
ON THE COVER: Tessa MacLeod enjoys some time with her calf. Her mom, Caitlin MacLeod, took the shot; she photographs under the name "Days Like This Photography".

contents

- 4 **Message from the President**
- 5 **Young Leader Program: Q + A with Chad Crest**
- 7 **Heifer Evaluation Pilot Project Program**
- 13 **Hoof Health Series: Part 1**
- 16 **2018 Classifier Conference Recap**

A Complete Toolbox



Holstein Canada President
Harry Van der Linden


I LOVE MANY ASPECTS of farming: seeing the potential in every beautiful Holstein calf from the time it hits the ground; striving to make 'next-to-perfect' silage; hitting the goal for herd butterfat (or any production measurement) and then setting a new goal; and a favourite in our family: comparing the results of classification day to the scores we guessed for each animal the day before!

The aspect of farming that does not make my day is fixing things; I certainly can't be labelled a Mr. Fix-It! However, things break, at least at our farm, and the one thing I have come to appreciate is having a good toolbox. Not necessarily a fancy one, nor a big one, but one with the right tools that get the job done.

This is how we see genomics at Lindenright: as a great, and very affordable, tool. This is also how we see genomics at Holstein Canada: as a tool to help producers make more informed decisions earlier in animals' lives, which in turn increases profitability. Genomics is not the only tool in the toolbox: production data, pedigrees, classification and general cow sense are also important and complete genomics. The Genomic Results report is easy to read. The Performance Trends are a visual way to view your herd's genetics on the Holstein Canada website, broken down in production, fat, protein, SCC, conformation, and so many other categories.

At Lindenright, we see genomics as an investment, not an expense, especially since Holstein Canada negotiated a reduced price with the labs. We genotest every female in our herd and use the results as a management tool first (from culling decisions to mating choices) and then as a marketing tool.

Like any tool, you have to use it right, and at the right time. This can be a challenge, as herds get bigger and time to learn new things seems shorter. Give Holstein Canada's Customer Service a call and we will be glad to assist you, and send a Team member to your farm.

I look forward to attending many events across Canada in the coming months and would be more than glad to chat with you about genomics (and so much more!). My only advice: don't ask me to fix anything on your farm! 

Harry Van der Linden

Come From Away
Venez chez nous
2019 Congress National Convention PEI
April 24-27 April

Visit PEI from April 24 to 27, 2019
for the National Holstein Convention at
the Delta Prince Edward in Charlottetown
- you're going to love it here!

April 24 - Visit Charlottetown & Welcome Reception
April 25 - Farm Tours, Alternate Program & National Sale
April 26 - Holstein Show & Bootleggers Ball
April 27 - AGM & Master Breeder Gala

See you soon!
CHARLOTTETOWN


www.events.holstein.ca

CANADA POST POSTES CANADA

young LEADER PROGRAM




Chad Crest: “For the Everyday Love of the Industry”

THE ANNUAL ANDREA CROWE ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

recognizes young and enthusiastic dairy breeders who have the ability to inspire others through their positive attitude and industry involvement. The award's namesake loved to work hard with family, friends and industry peers for the betterment of the industry, the breed, and for the pure joy of being part of something that isn't just a job, but rather a way of life! Candidates are judged on their level of participation in any of the following areas: showing, exhibiting, breeding in any dairy breed, and volunteerism. Like Andrea, the individual must possess “the everyday love of the industry” through their personality, integrity and knowledge to make them well-respected in the dairy fraternity.

The 2017 recipient of this prestigious award was Chad Crest of Athabasca, Alberta. Chad farms with his parents, Rob and Sue, his sister Katelyn and his grandfather John on their home farm Skycrest Holsteins. They milk 66 cows in a tie-stall facility and have over 200 head of cattle in total. Skycrest Holsteins houses a large number of bulls, since they keep around 85% of their bulls for both reproduction and fattening. Their current herd production is of 11 070 kg of milk with BCAs of 240-276-238 and the current classification is of 24 EX, 57 VG and 10 GP, with an average score of 87. At the farm, they also crop 2300 acres of hay, wheat, canola, barley and oats.

We had the opportunity to ask Chad some questions about what being a Young Leader in the dairy industry means to him, and how he demonstrates his passion for the industry!

What is your farm involvement and what made you decide to have a career in the dairy industry?

My day-to-day tasks on the farm are feeding, making breeding decisions, and managing bulls and the bull sales. We are also pretty aggressive on the genetic side of things, flushing 2-3 cows a month, with 90% of our heifers carrying embryos. I decided to choose a career in the dairy industry because it's what I grew up with and I have always had a passion for good cows and the people in the industry.

How did you feel receiving the news that you had won the Andrea Crowe Award? What did it mean to you? Did you know her on a personal level?

I felt very honored to win such a prestigious award. I had no idea I had won until they said “a young man from Athabasca, Alberta”. I knew there weren't many of them standing ringside at the Coliseum to watch the Royal Winter Fair! So it was a total surprise. I myself did not know Andrea on a personal level but I only heard good things about her, and her passion for the dairy cow and people in the industry.

How have the Holstein Canada Young Leaders programs or opportunities helped you develop your leadership skills or further your network and involvement in the industry? I myself have been fortunate enough to attend three of the Young Leader conventions and they



get better and better each time. I really enjoyed the networking with fellow dairy farmers across Canada. It's great how we all have common interests and goals and how much we can learn from each other. The evening socializing and great camaraderie is truly the best; I liked how everyone was able to go back home with some good memories or fun stories.

What are some accomplishments that you are most proud of within the dairy industry? One of the most recent accomplishments for the farm was at the past World Dairy Expo, in 2017, as Skycrest bred and owned the 2nd place milking yearling, Skycrest Atwood Diamond VG-87, and bred the 2nd place Sr 3 yr.-old, Skycrest Mincio Prickles EX-92 (MAX score), who is now owned by Liddleholm Holsteins of New York. That will be a day I will never forget. Also winning the Andrea Crowe Award at the Royal was very special to me because it is like the Curtis Clark Award but for the younger generation.

What plans for the future do you have with your home operation and personal development? In terms of future plans or goals, I would like to get a Master Breeder shield and either win Premier Breeder at the Royal or Madison and have an All-Canadian or All-American Breeder's Herd. It really means a lot when you can bring a great group of cows or heifers out to the ring that represent your prefix and do well. It just goes to show that you're doing something right back home and makes selling good ones easier, when your prefix is known to make good ones.

Do you have any advice for some young dairy enthusiasts who are looking to get more involved or become better leaders? I guess my advice for young dairy enthusiasts would be to attend the different programs that are available, like the convention program, and take advantage of the networking and learning opportunities. Don't be shy to ask lots of questions: that's the only way you're going to learn. Get your feet wet! And most importantly, enjoy what you do, because hard work pays off and it's easier to do that when you like what you're doing. 🐄



Education Award Applications are Now Available!

Are you an actively involved Young Leader? Want a chance to win \$1,000? Every year, Holstein Canada offers six \$1,000 scholarships and one of those winners could be you! These awards are dispersed nationwide with one each in Atlantic and Western Canada, and two in both Ontario and Quebec.

CRITERIA:

- Must be a regular or junior member of Holstein Canada; or a son/daughter of a member; or a member-farm employee that is supported by their employer.
- Must have completed at least one year of university/college (or Cégep in Quebec).
- Must be returning to school within the calendar year.
- Must fill out and complete the application form found on our website at: holstein.ca > Membership Programs > Young Leader Program > Awards & Recognition.
- Submit a 2-3 minute video OR a 500-word essay on the following topic: How can youth programs and opportunities help shape the industry of tomorrow?
- If this is something that interests you, please send your completed application to the Programs Coordinator at afrance@holstein.ca no later than **November 16th, 2018**.

Heifer Evaluation Pilot Project Development

The Holstein Canada Board of Directors has approved a one-year pilot project to further develop the viability of Heifer Evaluation as a potential service to be offered by Holstein Canada. In keeping with our tradition of improving and evolving with the changing dairy industry, Holstein Canada continues to adapt and make new services available. For this reason, Holstein Canada will be carrying out the Heifer Evaluation Pilot Project as a way to grow and become a part of our vision for the future of classification. The pilot project aims to look into the potential role of virgin heifer evaluation in profitable herd management. Initial field research done in 2014 resulted in encouraging correlations between heifer evaluations and other measures, such as cow conformation and genotyping.

Starting June 25, 2018, for the next 12 months, if a classifier is on your farm for classification, they will be evaluating one or more virgin heifers, with your consent. Heifers evaluated for this pilot project will be between 10 and 15 months of age. If your heifers are currently being genotyped, classifiers may evaluate several animals. Heifers will be chosen at random for evaluation. All heifer evaluations will be completed free-of-charge.

Holstein Canada appreciates that raising heifers represents a major investment with repercussions on farm efficiency and profitability. For this reason, we see potential in value-added services such as Heifer Evaluation to complement other important tools like genomics, helping you make crucial herd decisions to improve your profitability.

After 12 months of collecting heifer information from across the country, the heifer data will be analyzed to determine the usefulness and viability of Heifer Evaluations as a value-added service provided by Holstein Canada. We are hopeful that Heifer Evaluation could provide our members with valuable information about their animals earlier on in life, pre-mating, adding a tool to the producer's toolkit to ensure profitability and productivity on farm. Thank you for participating in this pilot project, which will assist Holstein Canada in collecting the applicable data needed to determine the viability of this potential service.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact the Classification and Animal Assessment Department at extension 244 or at classification@holstein.ca 🐄



The Heifer Evaluation Pilot Project has three goals for this 12-month period:

1

To collect data to determine the correlation between phenotypic virgin heifer data and fertility. This could provide valuable information for marketing, culling and breeding decisions by determining future cow fertility from phenotypic data from heifers.

2

The evaluations will allow us to compare phenotypic data to genomic data, effectively increasing the reliability of genomic tests on heifers.

3

To inform us on the relevance of the potential Heifer Evaluation service based on producers' reactions and their interest in the data.



FARM PROFILE

Large Herds

Donia Farms Ltd.



South Surrey, BC

By Morgan Sangster, HC Field Service Business Partner

PREFIX: Donia

PEOPLE INVOLVED: Family members (Mom, Dad and 3 brothers) as well as 20 staff (17 full-time / 3 part-time)

OF YEARS AS A HOLSTEIN CANADA MEMBER: 35 years

OF COWS MILKED: 1100

OF ACRES FARMED: 1150

FACILITY TYPE: Freestall (double 16 parabone, 40 stall rotary)

HERD PRODUCTION AVERAGE: 36 kg/day

HERD CLASSIFICATION: N/A

WHAT IS YOUR FEEDING SYSTEM? TMR

ARE THERE OTHER BREEDS IN YOUR HERD? No

HOLSTEIN CANADA SERVICES USED: Registration, Classification, Genotyping



HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN MILKING THIS MANY COWS AND HOW HAS IT BEEN AN ADJUSTMENT OVER MILKING FEWER COWS?

In October 2013, we started milking 750 head three times a day, we reorganized the groups for better efficiency (e.g. grouping slow milking cows together – saved a half hour of milking time). In late 2016, we made the commitment to go from 750 to accommodate growth up to 850 in our existing facility. As of August 1, 2017, we took on additional 300 animals from a neighbouring dairy, which is now treated as a secondary milking facility for our farm. From a milking standpoint, it didn't change anything as systems were all set up; having to manage a second facility was an adjustment, but has been working well for us. We calve out everything and do all treatments at the Donia main farm (milks 850 3x/day) and the Donia #2 farm focuses strictly on milking only (milks 260 2x/day).

WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO HAVE THE STYLE OF BARN THAT YOU HAVE?

We placed value on high ceilinged barns with good airflow, which are critical for good ventilation and keeping the barn air fresh. Freestall housing with grooved floors were installed for maximum efficiency and cleanliness. We also designed the group pens for optimal cow flow, cow comfort and movability between groups.

WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO HAVE THE MILKING SYSTEM THAT YOU HAVE?

The Parabone Milking Parlour was built in 1996 at the original home farm; at the time the rotary milking systems weren't quite there. We chose a Double 16 parabone because of cow flow and the set up for milking was ideal, and was the most efficient at the time. When we acquired the secondary facility, it came with a 40-stall rotary parlour.

WHAT IS THE HARDEST PART OF MANAGING SUCH A LARGE OPERATION?

The ability to empower our staff to accomplish the tasks that as management, you aren't always able to focus on specifically. We aim to keep the whole operation running efficiently, it's still sometimes challenging to let go of some of the daily tasks. However when you have a great team that's overall engaged, it helps the operation overall.

WHERE DO YOU GO TO FIND INFORMATION ON MANAGING A LARGE HERD?

It's very important to recognize that whether you milk 10 or 1100 cows, the management goals remain the same: milk them, feed them, and get them bred all while maintaining high animal welfare standards. We read informative articles, and try to keep up-to-date with new technologies that are coming out. We focus on continually learning, and always striving for improvement.

WHAT HAS HELPED YOU IN YOUR MANAGEMENT (SERVICES, NETWORK...)?

Having a good reliable team of staff is the most valuable asset to managing a dairy. Our herd management software DairyPlan C21 is great for reports, lists, tracking and overall dairy management. Maintaining a good working relationship with the various service providers that understand our farm goals and support our needs is important to our day-to-day operation.

DO YOU WANT TO KEEP EXPANDING?

Yes I think it's important for us to have a growth mindset for the next generation.

FUTURE VISIONS: More and more genomic testing; we have a lot of heifer calves, so doing more targeted breeding with animals by using tools like genomics to identify genetic potential faster, e.g. embryos, etc. Improve overall herd genetics faster from within. 🐄

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN MILKING THIS MANY COWS AND HOW HAS IT BEEN AN ADJUSTMENT OVER MILKING FEWER COWS?

We're currently milking 120 cows. The increase in herd size, which started 15 years ago, was made in the old barn with 80 stalls and a pipeline milking system. We were swinging up to 40 cows from an adjacent pole barn. However, the move to the new parlour/freestall setup with the advanced technology and adequate space made it much easier to properly manage nutrition and herd health. We've been able to continue to purchase quota but maintain the same herd size due to the increases in production since moving into the new barn.

WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO HAVE THE STYLE OF BARN THAT YOU HAVE?

Our main consideration was ease of growth. We have an H-shaped barn where the parlour and freestalls run parallel to each other with a connecting breezeway. Once we fill the existing freestall barn, we can build a second one connected to the existing parlour with another breezeway.

WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO HAVE THE MILKING SYSTEM THAT YOU HAVE?

The parlour encourages a more hands-on management style which helps to maintain the level of cow sense, especially for the next generations. For us, the milking parlour gives peace of mind knowing all the cows have been milked when we leave the barn. The parlour setup also makes it easier to increase our herd size; we just have to increase the length of time the parlour is in operation each day.



WHAT IS THE HARDEST PART OF MANAGING SUCH A LARGE OPERATION?

In the old barn it was the lack of space. We were tight for room and weren't able to manage the swing cows properly and our dry cow program was lacking. Once we moved to the new barn, and the cows and people adjusted to the new system, those difficulties disappeared.

WHERE DO YOU GO TO FIND INFORMATION ON MANAGING A LARGE HERD?

The majority of our information comes from other successful operators who have been there and done it.

WHAT HAS HELPED YOU IN YOUR MANAGEMENT (SERVICES, NETWORK...)?

The AfiFarm management software provides us with production and heat detection information. We use DHIA for butterfat and SCC information. We also depend on Jones Feed Mills to provide us with balanced rations.

DO YOU WANT TO KEEP EXPANDING? Yes, absolutely. It's a three family, three generation partnership. We also have a beef herd and a turkey flock but our first love and main income is still the dairy operation.

HOW HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR BREEDING OR MANAGEMENT DECISIONS WITH A LARGER HERD?

Cattle markets have changed making milk sales an even higher priority. We place more emphasis on udders, feet and legs, and strength including width of chest. We've also increased our emphasis on production and butter fat. Also, if a cow is still open after the third service she gets bred to either an Angus or Speckle Park bull. 🐄



FARM PROFILE

Large Herds

Walkerbrae Farms



Guelph, Ontario

By Merina Johnston, GM Ontario Holsteins

PREFIX: Walkerbrae

PEOPLE INVOLVED: Jim & Donna, Brent, James & Katelyn, Scott & Deb, Cody & Kayla, Tyson, Alycia & Justin Walker & Gillian Tinney

OF YEARS AS A HOLSTEIN CANADA MEMBER: 65 years

OF COWS MILKED: 120

OF ACRES FARMED: 700

HERD PRODUCTION AVERAGE: 36 kg with a 4.2 BF

HERD CLASSIFICATION: N/A

WHAT IS YOUR FEEDING SYSTEM? TMR, incorporating corn silage, haylage, HM corn, protein supplement & either straw or hay depending on cost

ARE THERE OTHER BREEDS IN YOUR HERD? Currently have ten Jerseys and one Brown Swiss

HOLSTEIN CANADA SERVICES USED: Registration and classification





FARM PROFILE

Large Herds

Ferme Roulante

Tingwick, Quebec



By Rosalie Dubois, Holstein Québec

PREFIX: Roulante

PEOPLE INVOLVED: Yves Roux, Yolande Perreault, Maxime Roux & Caroline Roux with a team of 10 full-time employees & 4 seasonal employees

OF YEARS AS A HOLSTEIN CANADA

MEMBER: 54 years, since 1963. René Roux was the owner of Ferme Roulante at that time; Yves Roux took over the family farm in 1984 but kept the same prefix, Roulante

OF COWS MILKED: 600

OF ACRES FARMED: 2,300

FACILITY TYPE: Freestall barn with external milking parlour

HERD PRODUCTION AVERAGE: 11,500 kg

HERD CLASSIFICATION: 13 ME - 5 EX - 190 VG - 390 GP - 85 G

WHAT IS YOUR FEEDING SYSTEM? TMR

ARE THERE OTHER BREEDS IN YOUR HERD?
No

HOLSTEIN CANADA SERVICES USED:
Registration and classification



HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN MILKING THIS MANY COWS AND HOW HAS IT BEEN AN ADJUSTMENT OVER MILKING FEWER COWS?

The herd has been growing since 1984 when we only had 28 purebred Holsteins. In 1999, we bought a neighbouring farm. At that time, half of the herd was in tie-stall and the other half was in free-stall with milking done in a double-8 milking parlor. In 2001, we put the whole herd in the same barn with milking robots. In 2011, we stopped using milking robots; instead, we purchased an outdoor rotary parlor.

WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO HAVE THE STYLE OF BARN THAT YOU HAVE?

We made our decision after visiting dairy farms in Canada and in the US. We were aiming for animal comfort, but especially for a better productivity and a better longevity of the cows.

WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO HAVE THE MILKING SYSTEM THAT YOU HAVE?

We chose our rotary parlor to ensure the efficiency of our large dairy herd operation. Compared to milking robots, the rotary parlor allows some flexibility by allowing us to increase the number of cows milked while using the same equipment. This system is also easier to manage and to operate. Finally, the rotary parlor also allowed us to have regular milkings and reduced our feeding costs.

WHAT IS THE HARDEST PART OF MANAGING SUCH A LARGE OPERATION?

The human factor is a daily challenge. Communication must be taken seriously at all levels of the company. The governmental and environmental red tape also takes up much of our time and energy.

WHERE DO YOU GO TO FIND INFORMATION ON MANAGING A

LARGE HERD? For herd management decisions, we mostly rely on the expertise of veterinarian and our nutritionist. We are very critical of our performance results and we are constantly raising our production targets. Each week we monitor the performance criteria of the herd.

WHAT HAS HELPED YOU IN YOUR MANAGEMENT (SERVICES, NETWORK...)?

Our contacts with other producers and business people as well as the trust we built with proactive agriculture stakeholders help us in managing our dairy farm.

DO YOU WANT TO KEEP EXPANDING?

We want to continue growing the herd. However, we must respect increasingly strict environmental constraints, and herd growth depends on the evolution of the Quebec dairy market.

HOW HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR BREEDING OR MANAGEMENT DECISIONS WITH A LARGER HERD?

In order to have a large but performing herd, we need to raise cows with good feet, legs, and udders. We want good producers and cows that calve year after year. For us, herd management requires a good knowledge of the animals and also watching them, even if there are a lot of cows in the herd. Knowing your cows is a great advantage in maintaining good animal longevity. A lot of data is entered into the herd management system to allow us to make breeding decisions on a case-by-case basis and not solely based on average-based files. Weekly communication between the nutritionist, the team at the farm and the veterinarian allows us to monitor our performance by quickly adjusting feeding or management practices to minimize any negative impact that a new situation may cause.



HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN MILKING THIS MANY COWS AND HOW HAS IT BEEN AN ADJUSTMENT OVER MILKING FEWER COWS?

We have milked a herd of this size for several years. We have actually downsized recently; we have reduced the herd by 100 milking head and shut down our tie-stall location. Flexibility is important to us, as we want to be able to move with the market and be able to adapt production in relation to quota increases, production days and lease price. When it isn't profitable to boost production, we adapt and pull back, but for when it makes sense we try to ramp up production.

WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO HAVE THE STYLE OF BARN THAT YOU HAVE?

Our father built our slatted floor, mattress stall barn in 1995, and we bought the farm in Alton in 1998 and put in a new parlour in 2014.

The most recent barn that Veronica, Hans, and Oliver have established is our pack barn for our transition cows. Our goal was to have all the cows calve out in one location and to ensure cow comfort. Up until this point, we had cow calving out in two locations, at each milking barn. Now they arrive at this location 60 days prior to their calving date and stay there for a day or two before moving to the milking barn. We have found the investment in this gentle transition has added a lot of value to our herd and decreased many common problems: ketosis, retained placentas, DAs and metritis.

WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO HAVE THE MILKING SYSTEM THAT YOU HAVE?

When we purchased Alton, we decided we needed to upgrade the existing parlour, and the decision to go with the same one as our Vinegar Hill location (double 12 parallel) was the easiest for us. We have found that this has worked really well for us as the cows at the Alton location are all coming from Vinegar Hill halfway through their lactation, so they are used to that style of parlour.

WHAT IS THE HARDEST PART OF MANAGING SUCH A LARGE OPERATION?

Communication is key! We are constantly communicating with each other to let everyone know what is happening within the farm. It is very important for us to remain accountable, (even though it may not always be the most fun!) and so we have developed an extensive organizational chart that clearly

defines everyone's roles within the farm, whether you are family, or if you have common shares. It helps us work well together and know what we are responsible for.

Since it is a longer process to make decisions with five people than with one, we have simplified things by outlining what decisions can be made individually and which decisions we all have to come together and agree upon. We do try to keep each other updated on all aspects of the farm so we each know what is going on in every area, but when things get hectic, the underlying organizational structure keeps us on track.

WHERE DO YOU GO TO FIND INFORMATION ON MANAGING A LARGE HERD?

We have found it very valuable to see how other farms much larger than ours operate and so each member of the management team has gone on farm tours at several locations including Ontario, Wisconsin and California.

WHAT HAS HELPED YOU IN YOUR MANAGEMENT (SERVICES, NETWORK...)?

We have awesome people working with us to improve our operation. Our vet and our nutritionist have been invaluable resources to stay efficient and prevent problems while at the same time keeping our approach simple.

DO YOU WANT TO KEEP EXPANDING?

Eventually, we would like to build one facility that could house our entire milking herd, with the ability to expand as necessary, as we feel that would be more efficient.

HOW HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR BREEDING OR MANAGEMENT DECISIONS WITH A LARGER HERD?

We try to simplify things as much as we can, and our teams at each location have their specialization. We have separate barns for our cows in the first half of their lactation and our cows in the second half. Our cows are all bred at our Vinegar Hill location, and once confirmed pregnant, are moved to our Alton location. We have found this simplifies things for us as all heat detection, OvSynch, breeding, and pregnancy checks all happen in one location. It also simplifies cropping and feeding for us. Since all of our late lactation cows are at the Alton location, we can harvest these fields later than those at Vinegar Hill. This allows us to produce a higher quality feed for our fresh cows at Vinegar Hill. 🐾



FARM PROFILE

Large Herds

Vermeuland Farms

Milford, Nova Scotia



By *Natasha McKillop, HC Field Service Business Partner*

PREFIX: Vermeuland

PEOPLE INVOLVED: Adrian & Melanie Vermeulen and their children Hans, Oliver, and Veronica

OF YEARS AS A HOLSTEIN CANADA MEMBER: 24 years

OF COWS MILKED: 600-650

OF ACRES FARMED: 1700

FACILITY TYPE: We are unique as we have several different facilities to manage our herd. Our high production and fresh cows are in a slatted floor, mattress stall barn with a double 12 parallel DeLaval parlour in Vinegar Hill. Once they are confirmed pregnant, they are moved to our deep-bedded scrape barn with a double 12 parallel DeLaval parlour in Alton. Our transition cows are in a shavings pack barn.

HERD PRODUCTION AVERAGE: 34kg/day

WHAT IS YOUR FEEDING SYSTEM? Piles on pads with TMR mixer

ARE THERE OTHER BREEDS IN YOUR HERD? No

HOLSTEIN CANADA SERVICES USED: Registration, classification, and in the future we are hoping to incorporate genotyping





The Truth About Tariffs in Canada and the US

Al Mussell of the University of Guelph has published a new report illustrating that the American dairy industry is not “less protectionist” than Canadian dairy, focusing on cheese tariffs that are imposed after a certain import level has been reached (known as tariff-rate quotas or TRQs).

The report, published through Agri-Food Economic Systems, an independent economic research organization, concludes, “The ongoing narrative in which the US casts itself in the role of the victim to protectionist interests of Canadian dairy is highly simplistic and inaccurate.” Mussell comments that there are more “profound similarities in Canadian and US milk marketing policy” than we tend to think.

Canada imports more dairy products than the US on a per-capita basis. Canada imports about 10% of its market tariff-free, while the United-States imports only 3% of their market. Mussell notes: “In comparison with its market size, the US allows for much less cheese market access within its tariff rate quota. Canada allows in about double what the US does, on a relative production share basis.” In fact, the report found that some of their over-quota tariffs are higher than Canada’s!

From the Dairy Farmers of Canada’s Farmers’ Voice blog, here are four facts on Canada-US dairy trade to further educate people on the issue:

1. CANADA IMPORTS A HUGE AMOUNT OF US DAIRY

Canada’s dairy trade deficit with the US has fluctuated from year to year, but has grown steadily in the last ten years, reaching a ratio of 5:1 in 2016. In 2017, Canada imported a massive \$470.6 million in US dairy products, coming back to trade balance levels seen in 2014. In the same year, the US only imported \$149.5 million worth Canadian products. This type of trade deficit would usually be characterized as ‘no small feat’ in context of the disproportionate market size of the United States compared to Canada.

2. TRUMP IS WRONG ABOUT TARIFFS ON DAIRY

President Trump claims that all US dairy products face a 270% tariff when entering Canada, which is false.

Dairy imports, including those coming from the United States, do not pay the tariff when they arrive on the Canadian market.

TRQs grant our farmers the ability to better plan their production and mean Canadians waste less product.

The United States uses TRQs to limit dairy products they import too – and some of their tariffs are higher than Canada’s.

3. CANADA IMPORTS MORE DAIRY THAN THE US

On a per-capita basis, Canada imports more from the US than vice versa. Although Canadian dairy farmers would be more than happy to meet all of the Canadian demand for dairy, Canada imports about 10% of its market tariff-free. This is important to note considering that the United-States imports only 3% of their market, and this is because they impose their own heavy roadblocks on exporters.

To put this into perspective, each Canadian has much greater access to imported dairy products than an American does. This is an inconvenient truth for the American administration.

4. CANADA’S DAIRY INDUSTRY SUPPORTS CANADIANS

Perhaps the most important element to consider in the trade debate is the important economic engine that is the Canadian dairy industry. It proudly contributes about \$20 billion to the national GDP. On top of this important economic contribution, the Canadian dairy sector supports 221,000 jobs at home. These are taxpayers, consumers, and families, which rely on dairy for their livelihood and, in turn, support their communities.

Hoof Health Series: Part 1

In this Hoof Health Series, Holstein Canada has compiled information from leading experts on hoof health topics ranging from current research to the economic impact of herd-level hoof health. Over the past several years, the Canadian dairy industry has seen its producers expand their herd size and shift towards more intensive housing systems, which, when properly designed, offer many advantages. However, these systems also require cows to stand on a hard, unyielding surface the majority of the time, which increases the risk of trauma and subsequent infectious and non-infectious foot lesions. Consequently, good management of walking and laying surfaces becomes increasingly important.

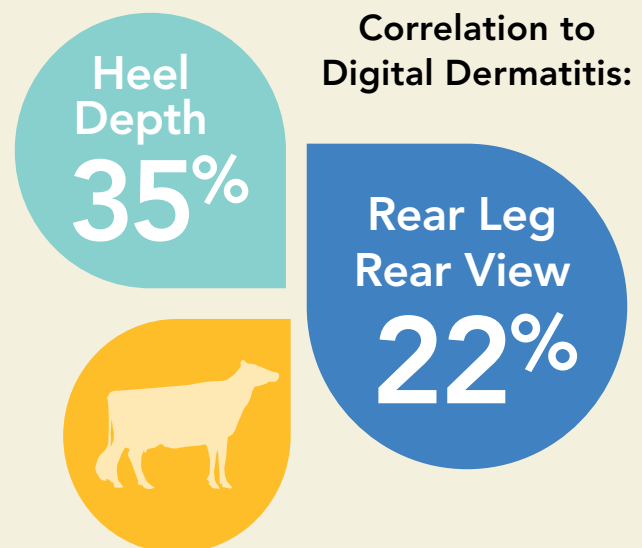
These surfaces are huge determining factors of hoof health. Hoof health is a major health and welfare issue affecting Canadian dairy producers, and it can lead to a loss of revenue from decreased milk production, reproductive and fertility issues, and an increased risk of culling. Lameness results from a combination of genetic predisposition, environment and management and it is manifested in several phenotypic outcomes. Different types of lesions can also be observed in dairy cattle hooves: hemorrhages, white line fissures, ulcers, heel horn erosion, and Digital Dermatitis. Studies show that the most common of these in Canadian dairy herds is Digital Dermatitis (DD), which has led to an increased interest in developing genetic evaluations for DD resistance.

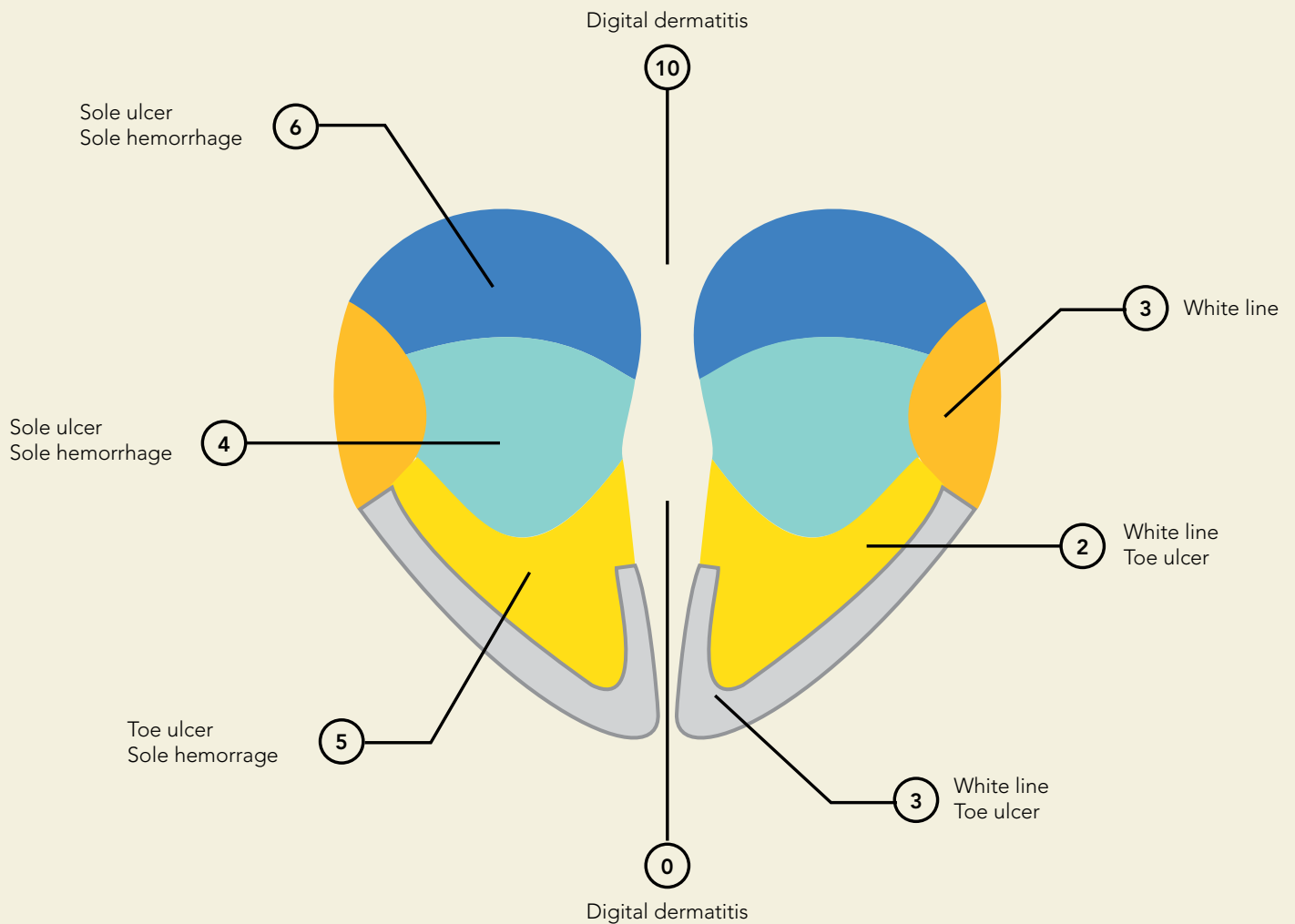
With an incidence rate of 18% among cows presented to hoof trimmers and a heritability of 8%, DD is an important health issue with a significant impact on herd economics. There is no effective vaccine or cure for DD but producers have developed their own strategies to control it, including the regular use of footbaths and diligent hoof hygiene which is also thought to mitigate Heel Horn Erosion. Non-infectious lesions like Sole Ulcers and Sole Hemorrhages are less common, at 4.7 and 7.7% respectively, and their heritability is low.

In December 2017, CDN released a national genetic evaluation for DD in Holsteins. Sires with a higher Relative Breeding Value (RBV) for the DD evaluation will have a higher percentage of healthier

daughters. Despite the low heritability of hoof lesions, there is enough genetic variation between sires that direct selection for better DD bulls will lead to the improvement of hoof health in the Canadian Holstein population. In an ongoing project, CDN hopes to create a genomic index for hoof health based on a female reference population to make selection for hoof health possible.

Genetically, hoof health can be managed through selection for certain traits. Holstein Canada's classification program currently sets Feet & Legs contribution to the final conformation score at 28%. **All traits evaluated in this section are correlated with DD resistance, with Rear Leg Rear View and Heel Depth correlation at 22% and 35%, respectively.** High conformation scores were also associated with fewer non-infectious horn lesions. Improvement in conformation and the increased selection for better Feet & Leg traits in the Holstein breed have contributed to a reduced incidence of hoof lesions in the past few years. As of June 25th, 2018, a new research trait called Foot Composite has been added to the Feet & Legs section. It is





measured based on existing traits and will be a combined score made up of 75% Heel Depth and 25% Foot Angle. The purpose of this research trait is to collect data on a composite evaluation that provides appropriate emphasis on the traits with the greatest correlation with hoof lesions. The Foot Composite score will not impact the final Feet & Legs score of the animal.

When considering health and production, it is also important to understand how hoof health issues can affect overall herd profitability. LPI and Pro\$ both have a significant correlation (over 40%) with DD resistance, meaning that by selecting for higher index bulls over the years, breeders have been improving hoof health indirectly. Fat Yield, Protein Yield, Milk Yield and Herd Life all have a correlation of more than 25% with DD resistance. At the time of classification, cows were housed in different housing systems (i.e., cubicles, straw yards, slatted or loafing yards) find the opposite results about non-infectious hoof lesions and their correlations to productivity traits. Several studies have shown that high producing cows are more susceptible to Sole Ulcers, Hemorrhages and Heel Horn Erosion. This is evidence of the complexity of the lameness issue and its potential relationship with body condition score and as well as all the other cow comfort

management issues. Therefore, increasing profitability through improvements in hoof health will undoubtedly involve improvements in both genetic and non-genetic factors.

Management factors such as time spent standing, barn design and type of flooring, as well as the use of footbaths and sprays can have a significant effect on hoof lesions. Now that Canadian herds are growing and more cows are being housed in free-stall barns and intensive management systems, special attention must be paid to standing time, laying time, flooring surface, and cow mobility. Studies¹ show that cows prefer and are more mobile on rubber flooring. Additionally, the reduced inflammatory and immune response brought on by cows walking on rubber floors could have an effect on many aspects of cow health and production, including earlier onset of oestrous,² higher milk components,³ but chronic pain's influence on immune responses is still poorly understood. Therefore, the objective of this research was to determine chronic effects of flooring on immune responses and production in freestall housing for dairy cows. Thirty heifers were studied from before calving as first-calf heifers until day 180 of their second lactation. Treatments were rubber (Kraiburg; Agromatic Inc., Fond du Lac, W) and improved locomotion

scores than cows in concrete flooring. However, consideration must also be given to the impact rubber has on hoof wear and the potential creation of slippery surfaces when rubber is used under alley scrapers.

Lameness also reduces the amount of time cows spend lying down during a day. Moderately or slightly lame cows will have fewer laying bouts and spend less time lying down compared to non-lame cows. Similarly, the type of bedding influences laying time: cows in sand-bedded barns averaged more hours of lying down, compared to cows in mattress barns. Lameness did not affect lying time in sand barns, but it did in mattress barns, where non-lame animals lie down two hours longer than lame cows on average. In mattress and sand barns, lame cows will generally spend less time eating, less time standing in alleys and lie down less often.

In free-stall barns, time spent standing in the holding pen on the way to the milking parlour can have a large effect on lameness

prevalence. Milking systems and barn designs need to minimize the time required for cows to walk to the parlor, wait in the holding area, be milked, and return to their pen. The size of milking groups significantly influences a cow's daily milking time. Lame cows tend to be in the last third of a group milked, increasing the time they spend in holding areas. This results in a vicious circle: more time spent waiting to be milked can mean increased lameness and vice-versa. Specialists recommend two hours a day as the maximum milking time for a cow. With robots, similarly, if cows spend too much time waiting in line or the flow of cows to and from the robots is interrupted, cows may end up standing longer than they should. More research is needed to determine the effect of excessive standing on production and health. However, it has been shown that lame cows will spend less time eating if they spend more time being milked, which directly leads to a loss of production.

1. Telezhenko, E., Lidfors, L. & Bergsten, C. Dairy cow preferences for soft or hard flooring when standing or walking. *J. Dairy Sci.* 90, 3716–24 (2007).
2. Kremer, P. V, Scholz, A. M., Nüske, S. & Förster, M. Do mats matter? – Comparison of fertility traits and milk yield in dairy cows on rubber or concrete flooring. (2012).
3. Eicher, S. D., Lay, D. C., Arthington, J. D. & Schutz, M. M. Effects of rubber flooring during the first 2 lactations on production, locomotion, hoof health, immune functions, and stress¹. *J. Dairy Sci.* 96, 3639–3651 (2013).

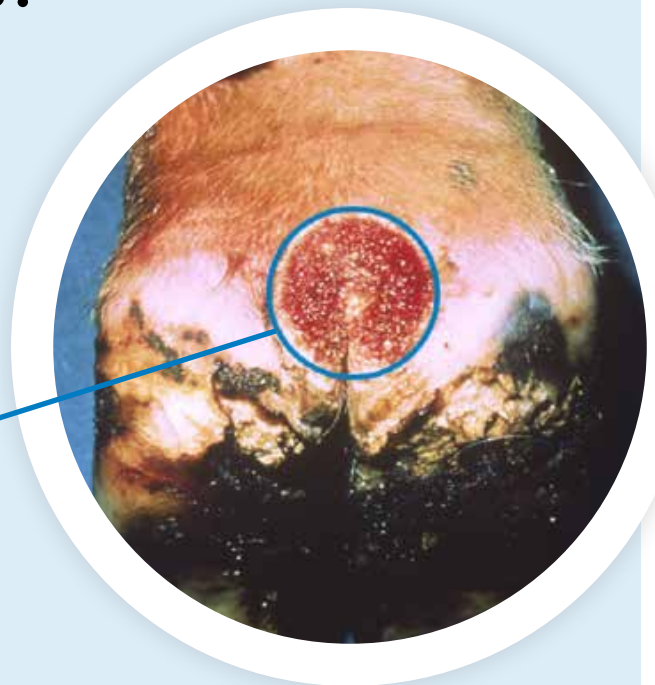
What is Digital Dermatitis?

Digital Dermatitis is an infectious disease caused by ***Treponema bacteria***. It forms raw, bright-red or black circular growths above the heel bulbs, with edges forming a white opaque ring or hard, thin, hairy, wart-like growths or sores. Affected cattle are reluctant to walk or are lame, and this can affect the quantity of milk they give.

Preventing it requires high biosecurity standards to avoid introduction and transmission through your herd.

TO TREAT DIGITAL DERMATITIS:

- Clean and dry the hoof
- Apply antibacterial product like copper gel, salicylic acid
- Return animals to a clean, dry environment
- Repeat daily until healed



Classifier Conference Recap 2018

BI-ANNUALLY, the Classification team comes together as a whole to discuss changes made to the program, work on team consistency and learn about different aspects of the industry. This year's June Classifier Conference was held in Drummondville, Quebec, and included visits to farms in the local area. Thanks to the amazing organization of Carole Morgan, Manager Brad Eggink, and National Coordinators Carolin Turner and Bruno Jubinville, the conference went off without a hitch!

future service. The team spent time on farm evaluating heifers, before starting the pilot project on June 25, 2018.

Another point of interest during the conference was speaking to Pierre Boulet (Pierstein) and Simon Lalande (Blondin). The two discussed the incredible value of classification while maintaining the need for the team to be consistent. The team, along with Boulet and Lalande, discussed the need for functional conformation and the use of range in the field identifying that too many first lactation animals



The Classification team spent a balance of their time on-farm and in class highlighting topics relevant to the classification program. Some of these topics included the recent HC Board approved changes to ideal codes for chest width and stature as well as other new program changes which include the introduction of the two new research traits: foot composite and front leg view. Awareness of producer's reality in a difficult and trying industry and acknowledging the challenges our neighbours to the south face, the team also participated in a mental health awareness session presented by Jocelyn Cote and Vicki Beaudoin.

The classification changes were highlighted in the May/June 2018 issue of *Info Holstein*. Throughout the week at Class Con, the team learned how to score the new research traits, which promote functional conformation, looking at extremes and ideals of front leg, front view, and foot composite. The Classifiers participated in many different exercises, including classifying cows with full udders, then empty to identify the needed range spread in high-classifying cattle. By working together, the classifiers were able to discuss new and old traits in detail, increasing their knowledge and learning from each other.

One of the highlights of this year's conference was the start of the Heifer Evaluation Pilot Project (see page fill in when put together for more details). The Heifer Evaluation Pilot Project, which will run for 12 consecutive months, aims to look at one (or more) heifer on each farm that is involved in the classification program. By participating in these evaluations, our members will be providing crucial data to Holstein Canada to aid in identifying Heifer Evaluation as a potential

were classifying with high scores. The two reminded the team to give good reasons and ensure the producer understands why a cow was classified the way she was. Boulet and Lalande commended the team on their success and reminded them to include the on-farm youth during the classification visit, as they are the next generation.

As our industry changes, our classification program does as well. Holstein Canada is currently under a complete Classification Software and Program rewrite; as a result, the team discussed the future of the classification program providing instrumental ideas on how this new and evolutionary program will benefit our producers, maintain the Canadian kind and reflect the needs of functional conformation. The rewrite aims at providing new reports, expanded data collection and a more all-encompassing program. Though there is no expected date on when the rewrite will be complete, the team is excited about the program's potential.

Late 2017 and early 2018 has been a big year for Classification, seeing increasing numbers of classifications while also completing proAction Cattle Assessments. It is always exciting to watch our program grow, and the last year has welcomed six new team members to the classification team, bringing our total number of classifiers to 25. 2018 marks the beginning of the development of many new and exciting management tools right to the producer level. Without the hard work of the classification team and supporting staff, none of this would be possible!

The Holstein Canada Classification team would like to thank the host farms for their hospitality:

Boisvert | Madystar | Gilperro | Valrick 🇨🇦



Dear Customer Service Team



Answering the question in this issue is one of the newest bilingual members of the Customer Service team, **Mackayla Kiers**.

YOU ASKED:

What is a Holstein Canada web account and how do I get one?

Having a Holstein Canada web account login provides you easy access to a variety of services and information, such as:

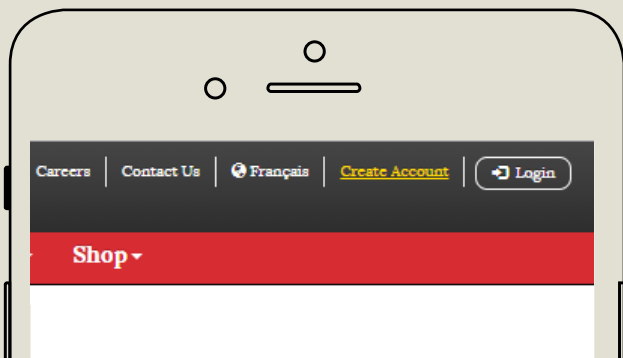
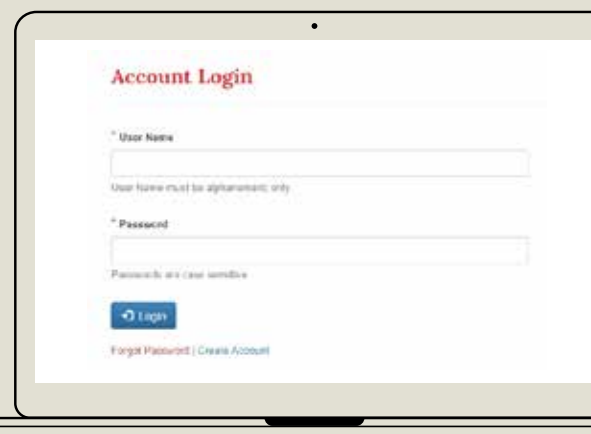
- Transactions, invoice, and statements are available to view and print
- Make credit card payments and see your account balance
- Set and view your documentary delivery methods for Certificates of Registry, Pedigrees, Awards, etc.
- Use online services to submit registrations, order pedigrees, NLID tags, or transfer animal ownership
- Check to see when the classifier will be in your area. If you are on milk recording, your active milking female listing is also available
- Read available trend reports to help you benchmark your herd, e.g. Activity Report, Performance Trends, etc.
- View your herd inventory under 'My Herd'
- Update your basic contact information on your web account, e.g. address, email
- Check your genomic results

Don't have a web account?

Create your web account to take advantage of the great features available – visit www.holstein.ca

To create your Holstein Canada web account go to top right hand corner click 'Create Account', input the required information and you are all set! Be sure to have your account number ready; it can be found on your statement or invoice.

Already have an account? Click 'Login' on top right hand corner. Log In!



If you need assistance or have any questions, call Customer Service at 1-855-756-8300 ext. 410 (English), ext. 420 (French).

#FrameTheHerd Photo Contest Winners

Great photos have been rolling in for the #FrameTheHerd Theme #17 Photo Contest! Thank you to everyone for your submissions! Check out our top four finalists from Theme #16 – Funny Bovines:



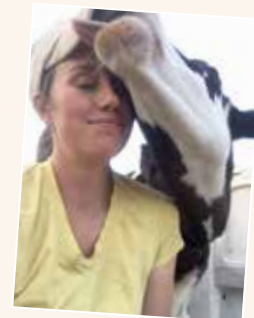
Cows at Smokylake Dairy goofing around on pasture. Submitted by: Joshua Hofer of Smoky Lake, AB



Cute orange cat being whispered big secrets to by Vanmaarvue Rambo Lilac. Submitted by: Annie VanMaar of Goderich, ON.



Andy May and Mayhaven Vanilla Sympatico. Submitted by: Andy May of Guelph, ON



Logan Orser receiving wet calf kisses at Orserdale Farms. Submitted by: Logan Orser of Sydenham, ON

THEME #18: WORKING HARD OR HARDLY WORKING?

For this Frame the Herd theme, we want to see your funniest pictures of people (or animals!) sleeping on the job! It happens to the best of us! We don't always have a camera handy when we see a funny picture, but if you've been lucky enough to capture something good, now's the time to share with the contest! As always, bonus points if you can sneak a Holstein Canada logo into the photo somehow (hats, jackets, farm sign, etc.). Also, we appreciate every type of cow, so send us those all-breed photos as well!

THE DETAILS:

- Photos should be high-res digital images (300 dpi is preferred)
- There is no limit to the number of entries per person
- Any visible animals MUST be properly tagged to be considered

Entries are to be emailed to socialmedia@holstein.ca and should include the names of any people and animals, as well as the prefix when possible. *If you do not have access to email, but wish to participate, call Ariane at 519-865-4385 to make alternate arrangements.

DEADLINE : **ON SOCIAL MEDIA? SHARE YOUR ENTRY WITH THE WORLD! EMAIL YOUR**
OCTOBER 31, 2018 : **ENTRY TO US AND THEN SHARE IT ON SOCIAL MEDIA USING #FRAMETHEHERD**

WE GAVE OUR AWARDS AN UPGRADE!

Now you'll get high-quality copies of the following awards with a new look, perfect for hanging everywhere from the home office to the barn:

- Star Brood Cow
- Longtime Production
- Supers
- Superior Production

Congratulations to all winners!



Call for National Director Nominations



THERE IS AN OPEN CALL for nominations for National Directors in the Electoral Districts listed to the right. Clubs located in these districts will receive official notification of the call in September, and nominations will close December 7th, 2018. Ballots will be mailed out to all voting members in the districts with more than one candidate by January 7th, 2019 and voting closes on February 7th, 2019. The criteria for the National Director Eligibility can be found in the Association's By-laws on Holstein.ca and nomination forms can be obtained from your local Holstein Club, Provincial Branch, or by contacting Suzanne Jalbert at sjalbert@holstein.ca or 1-855-756-8300 ext. 241. 🇨🇦

Electoral Districts 2019

Alberta and Northwest Territories

Quebec at Large

North Central Ontario

CLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE

MID-ROUND **MR** FIELD SERVICE **FS**

SEPTEMBER

- ON Wellington, Timiskaming-Cochrane, Thunder Bay, Nipissing & Algoma
- QC Lapointe & Dubuc & Charlevoix, Vaudreuil & Soulanges, Chateauguay, Beauharnois
- FS BC, NB
- ON Dundas, Stormont
- ON **MR** Perth
- QC Labelle, Temiscamingue
- QC Huntingdon, La Prairie & Napierville, St. Jean, Iberville, Shefford, Richmond, Missisquoi, Sherbrooke
- SK Regina, Saskatoon, Yorkton & Prince Albert
- FS AB, NL, PEI
- ON Glengarry
- ON Brome
- FS NS

EARLY
MID
LATE

OCTOBER

- QC Compton, Sherbrooke, Stanstead
- QC **MR** Riviere-du-Loup & Temiscouata, Rimouski & Matane, Matapedia & Bonaventure
- ON Niagara, Wentworth, Brant, Haldimand & Norfolk, Prescott, Russell, Carleton
- FS NB, PEI, AB, SK
- QC **MR** Arthabaska & Megantic, Arthabaska & Wolfe, Lotbiniere
- ON **MR** Leeds & Grenville, Lanark & Renfrew
- BC **MR** Lower & Central Fraser, Okanagan, Agassiz & Abbotsford & Chilliwack, Vancouver
- FS SK, AB, PEI, NS
- QC **MR** Nicolet, Yamaska, Drummond
- ON **MR** Lanark & Renfrew
- FS NB, PEI, MB

EARLY
MID
LATE

Note: Classifier conference is in June. *This schedule is subject to change within a 1-2 week period. *For the full Field Service schedule, see the Field Services section under Services on our website.

TOP SIRES ACCORDING TO AVERAGE FINAL SCORE OF 1ST LACTATION DAUGHTERS

Based on 1st Lactation Classifications from May/June 2018

Top 10 Sires with 100+ Daughters Classified in Two-Month Period

Top 10 Sires with 30-100 Daughters Classified in Two-Month Period

Sire	Daughters Classified	Avg. Daus Score	Avg. Dam Score	Sire	Daughters Classified	Avg. Daus Score	Avg. Dam Score
SOLOMON	116	82.67	82.90	LUMINEER	72	82.08	81.76
BRADNICK	141	82.55	82.33	SEAVER	93	82.03	81.82
HIGH OCTANE	178	82.36	82.08	TONKA	45	82.02	81.84
GOLD CHIP	179	82.31	82.83	AFTERSHOCK	93	81.62	81.85
BEEMER	122	82.20	82.49	KINGBOY	58	81.48	81.50
DEMPSEY	202	82.05	81.70	ALTAHOTROD	37	81.43	81.05
KINGPIN	132	81.48	81.35	EPIC	67	81.30	80.43
ENDURE	125	81.46	81.51	COLLATERAL	34	81.29	80.38
MEGAWATT	120	81.19	81.20	SMOKIN	79	81.28	81.15
IMPRESSION	361	81.08	81.03	CHELIOS	50	81.26	80.82

NOTE: 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. Sires listed must have ≥ 50% of daughters that improve in score over the dam.

Come see our
new merchandise!

The
Royal[™]

AGRICULTURAL
WINTER FAIR



Come see us near the Ring of Excellence at the
Royal Winter Fair! November 2 – 11, 2018.

Free gift with all purchases over \$75! Mastercard, VISA, Debit
and Cash accepted.



info **Holstein** 

Independent expression by contributors is welcomed, but is not necessarily that of the Association. Reproduction and use is encouraged for research, education, personal, and other non-commercial use, provided that the author and source are clearly identified.

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:

HOLSTEIN CANADA
P.O. BOX 610, BRANTFORD, ON N3T 5R4

Tel: 519-756-8300 Fax: 519-756-3502

Toll Free: 1-855-756-8300

www.holstein.ca

Editor: Steven Spriensma
sspriensma@holstein.ca

Published six times annually
Subscription: \$18 outside Canada

Publications Mail
Agreement 40008691