

*THE 41ST ANNUAL*

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DAIRY  
SYMPOSIUM*



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# THE 41ST ANNUAL SOUTH WESTERN ONTARIO DAIRY SYMPOSIUM

The South Western Ontario Dairy Symposium is organized by Dairy Farmers of Ontario through its Dairy Producer Committees in Essex-Kent, Lambton, Middlesex, Elgin, Huron, Perth, Oxford, Waterloo, Wellington, Brant, Norfolk, Wentworth, Haldimand, and Niagara Counties, in cooperation with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness.

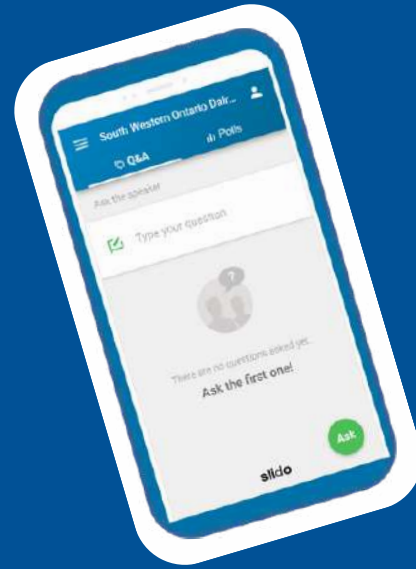
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**Dairy producer representatives from each Southwestern Ontario County are encouraged to join the SWODS committee! Want to help plan the 42nd edition for 2027? Contact the SWODS Event Coordinator and join!**

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# PROGRAM

19.02.2026 | 9AM-4PM




<b>9:00am</b>	Exhibits Open - Registration and Coffee
<b>10:00am</b>	Welcome <i>Steve Veldman, SWODS Chair</i>
<b>10:15am</b>	Using High Oleic Soybeans in Dairy Diets <i>Dr. Tom Overton, Cornell University</i>
<b>11:00am</b>	Navigating Through CUSMA Revision & Evolving Consumer Expectations <i>Vincent Cloutier, National Bank</i>
<b>11:50am</b>	Foods From Our Farms <i>Jack Rodenburg, SWODS Committee</i>
<b>12:05pm</b>	Lunch - Featuring Foods From Our Farms
<b>1:15pm</b>	Speak Your Mind <i>DFO Representative</i>
<b>1:30pm</b>	The Business of Dairy Farming: How Can You Get More From Your Advisors? <i>Dr. Chris Church, Central Dairy Solutions</i>
<b>2:15pm</b>	Past and Current Dairy Market Trends and Milk Production <i>Kristin Benke, Dairy Farmers of Ontario</i>
<b>3:00pm</b>	Closing Remarks <i>Steve Veldman, SWODS Chair</i>
<b>4:00pm</b>	Exhibits Close

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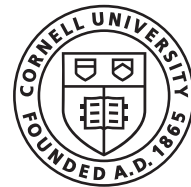
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## DR. TOM OVERTON Cornell University

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Thomas R. Overton, Ph.D., is Professor of Dairy Management and Chair of the Department of Animal Science at Cornell University. Tom is recognized widely for his research and extension efforts relating to nutritional physiology of the transition dairy cow. He was awarded the Cargill Animal Nutrition Young Scientist Award by the American Dairy Science Association in 2006, the ADSA Foundation Scholar Award in 2007, and the ADSA Nutrition Professionals Applied Dairy Research Award in 2024.



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### Using High Oleic Soybeans in Dairy Diets

#### Introduction

Monitoring Income Over Feed Cost (IOFC) for dairy herds has been a longstanding metric used to evaluate the economics of feeding programs. One of the reasons for its popularity is that it is relatively straightforward to calculate in most situations and data from the Cornell Dairy Farm Business Summary and Analysis program indicates that it consistently accounts for about 50% of the variability in overall farm profitability (Karszes, personal communication). Work that we have done within the PRO-DAIRY discussion group program to identify key factors contributing to variance in IOFC suggests that milk and milk component yields account for about 50% of the variance, feed efficiency (ECM/DMI) accounts for an additional 25% of the variance, and cost per pound of TMR dry matter accounts for only 10% of the variance. In total, these three factors account for 85% of the variance in IOFC in herds that we have studied, and milk component yields are by far the biggest influence on IOFC.

## THE 41ST ANNUAL SOUTH WESTERN ONTARIO DAIRY SYMPOSIUM

Most of the dairy industry in the U.S. has been paid using multiple component pricing for more than 20 years, with the value of fat, protein, and other solids determined on a monthly basis. During most of the early part of that time and until about 2015, milk protein was more valuable than milk fat on a per pound basis. Starting in about 2016 and continuing until today with few exceptions, the value of milk fat has been greater than milk protein. Data from the Producer Price Forecast prepared by Upstate Niagara Cooperative ([https://www.membership.upstateniagara.com/\\_membership\\_payprices.asp](https://www.membership.upstateniagara.com/_membership_payprices.asp); accessed 9/12/24) indicates that the value of fat and protein averaged \$2.96/lb and \$1.90/lb, respectively for 2023. Including projections, the values for fat and protein are expected to be \$3.41/lb and \$1.66/lb, respectively for 2024. Thus, while both fat and protein are very meaningful contributors to the milk check, there is clearly reward for strategies that boost milk fat and penalty for things that decrease milk fat percentage and yield.

### **Factors that affect milk fat production**

Research conducted over the past 25 years has dramatically enhanced our understanding of factors that affect milk fat production. Primary non-nutritional factors include genetics and seasonality (Salfer et al., 2019), but nutritional factors play a major role in modulating milk fat production (Bauman et al., 2011). Among these are unsaturated fatty acid load and biohydrogenation in the rumen, along with factors that contribute to altered biohydrogenation resulting in the production of unique bioactive fatty acids that directly downregulate genes related to lipogenesis in the mammary gland.

Biohydrogenation pathways under “normal” and “altered” ruminal metabolism are described in Figure 1. Key risk factors for milk fat issues include the amount and availability of linoleic acid and factors that contribute to the “isomerase shift” causing the bacteria to convert linoleic acid to the milk fat depressing *trans*-10, *cis*-12 conjugated linoleic acid (CLA) rather than the *cis*-9, *trans*-11 CLA. These risk factors include decreased rumen pH either because of diet formulation or feeding behavior factors such as slug feeding in overcrowded group situations, mycotoxins, and other undetermined factors.

# THE 41ST ANNUAL SOUTH WESTERN ONTARIO DAIRY SYMPOSIUM

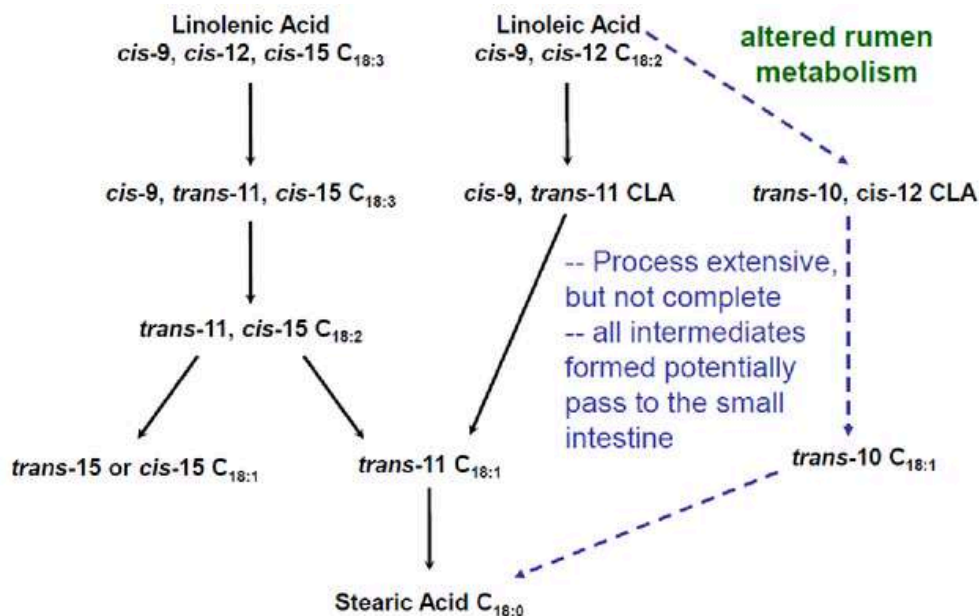


Figure 1. Biohydrogenation pathways during normal and altered ruminal fermentation. Adapted from Bauman and Griinari (2003).

Corn and conventional soybeans typically contain linoleic acid at 50 to 60% of their total fatty acid content (Cornell Net Carbohydrate and Protein System v. 6.5.5; CNCPS) and as such lactating cow diets based heavily on corn silage, other corn products, and soy products can approach or exceed 400 g/d and it only takes 2 to 3 grams of the *trans*-10, *cis*-12 CLA escaping the rumen to meaningfully decrease milk fat. Because of the concern over too much linoleic acid in the rumen affecting milk fat, nutritionists have commonly limited inclusion rates of conventional full-fat soybeans to no more than 3 to 5 lbs per cow per day.

High oleic soybeans have been produced by genetic modification (Wilson, 2012), resulting in much higher oleic acid and much lower linoleic acid content than conventional soybeans. Feed library values for conventional soybeans would be ~23% of total fatty acids as oleic acid and ~54% of total fatty acids as linoleic acid; high oleic soybeans would have ~76% of total fatty acids as oleic acid and ~7% as linoleic acid. This would mean that there is inherently less risk for negative impacts on milk fat by feeding high oleic acid soybeans compared to conventional, and I am aware of nutritionists feeding upwards of 7 to 8 lbs per cow per day of high oleic soybeans.

However, inherently less risk doesn't mean no risk. Interestingly, there are negative relationships between oleic acid intake and milk fat. McCarthy et al. (2018) reported, from data collected in a cross-sectional observational study involving 79 Holstein herds in the Northeast and Upper Midwest, that increasing oleic acid intake was associated with lower milk fat percentage whereas, also interestingly, linoleic acid intake was not. In a controlled feeding study evaluating the independent and combined effects of oleic acid and linoleic acid on milk fat, He et al. (2012) determined that linoleic acid was more potent than oleic acid at decreasing milk fat; however, there was a negative relationship between oleic acid intake and milk fat.

### **Studies feeding high oleic soybeans to lactating dairy cows**

Lopes et al. (2017) fed cows one of three soybean sources varying in FA profile and processing method in diets with forage base of mostly corn silage. Treatments were "Extruded conventional soybean meal; ether extract 8.7% with 15% of FA as oleic and 54% as linoleic"; "Extruded high oleic soybean meal; ether extract 8.4% with 73% of FA as oleic"; and "whole roasted high oleic soybeans with 20% ether extract". Total dietary ether extract averaged ~4.0% and were very similar across treatments. They reported similar DMI and milk yield across treatments, but milk fat percentage was increased for cows fed the two high oleic soy treatments compared to the conventional soybean meal control (~3.75 vs. 3.55%).

Weld and Armentano (2018) conducted two experiments to evaluate the role of high oleic soybeans in diets for dairy cattle. In their first experiment, they fed whole conventional vs. whole high oleic soybeans, both raw (unroasted). Total dietary ether extract was ~5.0%. In this study, there were no overall effects of treatment on outcomes, but there were some relatively minor parity interactions between primiparous and multiparous cows on milk fat percentage and yield. In a second experiment, they assigned cows to either a low-fat control diet or one of four treatments: ground raw conventional soybeans, ground raw high oleic soybeans, whole raw conventional soybeans, and whole raw high oleic soybeans. Of note is that the ether extract content of the low-fat control was 3.2%, whereas the four other treatments were between 6.3 and 7.1% ether extract.

## THE 41ST ANNUAL SOUTH WESTERN ONTARIO DAIRY SYMPOSIUM

Further, the starch content was relatively high (~30%) and particle size of the TMR was very small, particularly for the diets containing ground soybeans (~70% of the TMR was on the 4-mm screen and pan). Not surprisingly, milk fat percentage was low for the control (3.25%) and higher for ground high oleic vs. ground conventional (3.50 vs. 3.09%). Milk fat percentage was similar among the two whole soybean treatments.

Most recently, the group at Michigan State has conducted studies evaluating high oleic acid soybeans in diets for lactating dairy cattle. In the first study, Bales and Lock (2024a) fed roasted and ground high oleic soybeans at 0, 8, 16, and 24% of diet dry matter, replacing soybean meal and soyhulls as the high oleic soybeans increased. Diets were isonitrogenous, but as inclusion rate of the high oleic soybeans increased, total fatty acids increased linearly from ~2.6 to 5.7% of diet DM and NDF decreased from about 29 to 27% of diet DM. Diets contained about 45% forage, predominantly from corn silage.

As high oleic soybean inclusion rate increased, DMI decreased linearly, milk yield increased quadratically, yields of ECM increased linearly, yields of milk fat increased linearly, and yields of protein were quadratically affected such that it increased when high oleic soybeans were fed at the 8% level but plateaued thereafter. Feed efficiency (ECM/DMI) was increased linearly with greater inclusion rates of high oleic soybeans.

In a second experiment, Bales and Lock (2024b) sought to compare the effects of feeding raw versus roasted high oleic soybeans and also to determine whether adding additional ruminally undegradable protein to a diet containing raw high oleic soybeans would improve performance. They had a control without added soybeans with a total dietary fatty acid content of 2.8%. They had two treatments with high oleic soybeans added at the 16% of dietary DM level – one raw and one roasted. They had a fourth treatment in which raw high oleic soybeans were fed and in which soyhulls were replaced by expeller soybean meal. Diets were isonitrogenous but the total fatty acid content of the three treatments with high oleic soybeans added ranged from 4.9 to 5.1%. Dry matter intakes were increased in all three soybean treatments compared to the control.

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Yields of milk and milk fat were increased in the soybean treatments compared to the control, but the greatest increases occurred in the cows fed roasted high oleic soybeans. Feed efficiency was increased in cows fed the soybean treatments. From my perspective, this study clearly reinforces the need to roast high oleic soybeans for maximum feeding value.

Nicholson et al. (2024) conducted an economic analysis for inclusion of high oleic soybeans in diets for dairy cattle. They used results from the Lopes et al. (2017) study and the two studies described in Weld and Armentano (2018) and results from two unpublished studies. In general, they demonstrated positive economic responses from inclusion of high oleic soybeans, with most responses in the \$0.12 to \$0.20 per cow per day range. I believe that the methodology that these authors used was sound; however, in two of the five studies there was clearly milk fat depression that was being at least partially rescued by the inclusion of the high oleic soybeans. In surveying the available literature, I think that the only time one might expect a milk fat response is in a case where there is some milk fat depression with elevated linoleic acid supply and availability in the rumen as a risk factor.

### Summary

The availability of high oleic soybeans offers the opportunity to feed more whole soybeans than conventional with inherently (but not zero) risk for milk fat issues. One should not routinely expect increased milk fat percentage if there is not evidence of milk fat depression, so the opportunity may be to examine whether or not there are ways to decrease feed cost. Roasting high oleic soybeans greatly increases their feeding value by increasing the ruminally undegradable fraction. Until these become widely available as feed ingredients in feed mills, this is largely an opportunity for a farm to utilize "extra" acres or partner with a crop farm or purchase as a commodity.

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## VINCENT CLOUTIER National Bank

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With more than 20 years of experience in the Quebec and Canadian agri-food industry, Vincent served as Chief Economist at La Coop fédérée (now Sollio Groupe coopératif) from 2010 to 2016, before becoming Director of Economic Affairs at Les Éleveurs de porcs du Québec. He joined the Bank in 2020, where he supports the agricultural and agri-food financing teams with his expertise in global business environment analysis, agricultural policies and international trade.

A regular speaker and commentator on agri-food news, he has received two Moïse-Cossette awards for his columns on agricultural issues. A four-time participant in the prestigious Harvard Agribusiness Seminar, Vincent has been a member of the Ordre des agronomes du Québec since 2001 and holds a bachelor's degree in agronomy as well as an MBA in agri-food management from Laval University.

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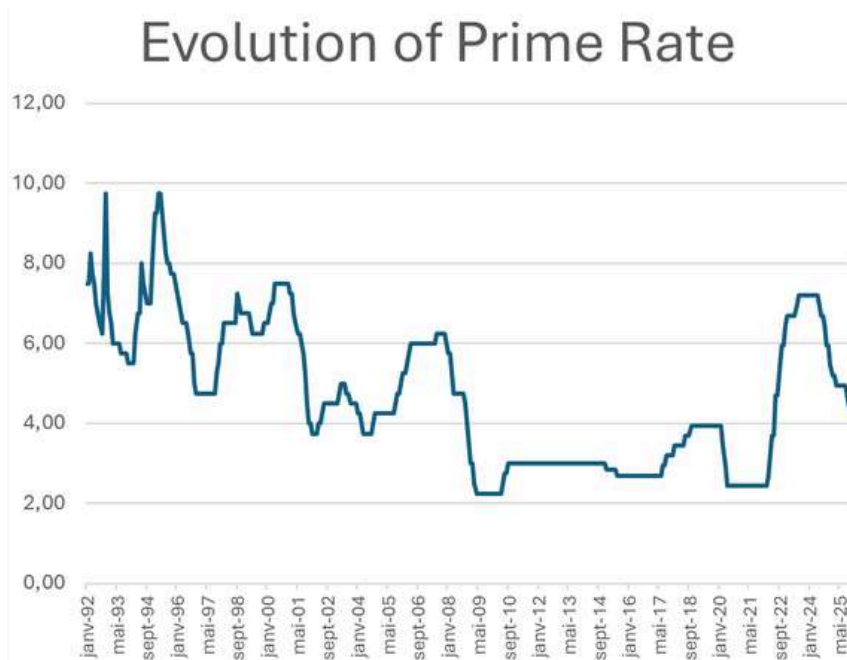
### **Navigating through CUSMA Revision & Evolving Consumer Expectations**

Despite the strength of supply management, the dairy industry evolves in a challenging and ever-changing environment. The revision of CUSMA, the evolution of interest rates and beef cattle prices are just some of the elements that will need to be looked at in 2026.

The Bank of Canada has been clear at the end of 2025: the neutral policy rate is reached and may remain at the current level for a large part of 2026.

# THE 41ST ANNUAL SOUTH WESTERN ONTARIO DAIRY SYMPOSIUM

Interest rate volatility in recent years has provided agriculture with an opportunity to rethink - if necessary - the management of risk related to interest rates. Clearly, the sharp increase of rates in 2022 and 2023 hurt some borrowers.



Source : National Bank

As the image below shows, supply management isn't very complicated: a tariff wall protects the market, but access is granted to some countries through Free Trade Agreements. The doors represent Tariff Rate Quotas (TRQ): volumes of products allowed tariff-free in Canada. Above agreed volumes, tariffs must be paid, which prevents imports.



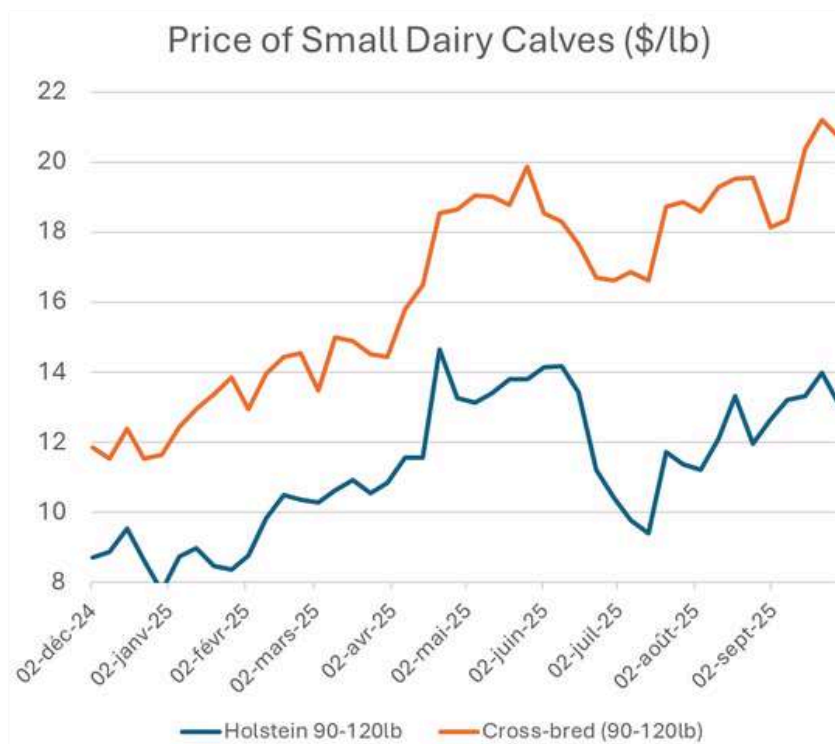
Note: WTO=World Trade Organization; CETA=Comprehensive and Economic Trade Agreement (European Union); CPTPP=Comprehensive and Progressist Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership; CUSMA=Canada United States Mexico Agreement

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Since the implementation of CUSMA, the filling rate of TRQs have been a concern for the US dairy industry. Thus, one can expect technical changes to those TRQs which would result in higher filling rates. The consequence for Canadian dairy farms: slightly additional imports that will capture a portion of the market growth.

Let's be clear: the US dairy lobby has no ask with regards to the tariff wall, nor does it ask for additional TRQs.

Meanwhile, high beef cattle and meat prices keep impacting the dairy industry. Since the North American beef cattle herd remains historically low, price of live cattle is high, which directly impacts the dairy industry, through small dairy calves and cull cattle. Those higher revenues for dairy farms impose downward pressure on the farm-gate milk price adjustments.




Source : Quebec Beef Producers, compilation National Bank

Consumer preferences evolve at an impressive pace. While SNF (Solid Non Fat) were in serious surplus a little while ago and caused concerns for the future, the protein boom drastically changed the portrait recently. This dynamic pressurises dairy farms, which now must adjust the fat vs SNF ratio of their production, to meet these consumer demands.







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## DR. CHRIS CHURCH Central Dairy Solutions



Chris practiced as a dairy veterinarian for 15 years with the Tavistock Veterinarians doing production medicine and ET. In 2015, he transitioned to Elanco Animal Health, where he focused on improving farm businesses. He recently finished his Masters in Business, where his research focused on linking production with farm profits. He is a farm business coach and the owner of Central Dairy Solutions.



.....

### The Business of Dairy Farming: How Can You Get More From Your Advisors?

Most Canadian dairy producers are technical experts. But what if it takes more than just great production to run a successful business? Adding financial understanding, people management, and succession planning to your toolbox will help your farm run more like a business.

Our surveys indicate that producers have a strong sense of their production metrics but may struggle to share financial metrics.

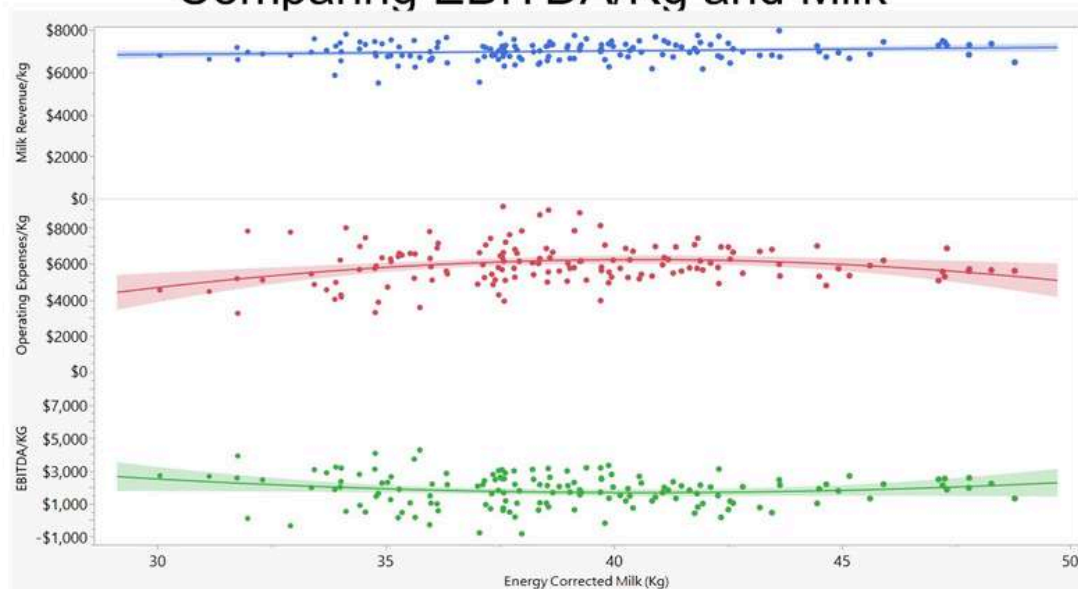
#### Results

Characteristic	Informal Meeting poll	Qualtrics survey
Participants	n=300	n=147
Operator age >50	96	40
Herd size	95%	142
Milk production knowledge	65%	97%
Reproduction knowledge	5%	74%
Costing Knowledge - Heifers	2%	62%
Costing Knowledge - Forage	5%	39%
Accounting knowledge - Operating Expense Ratio	0%	51%
Written goals		12%

# THE 41ST ANNUAL SOUTH WESTERN ONTARIO DAIRY SYMPOSIUM

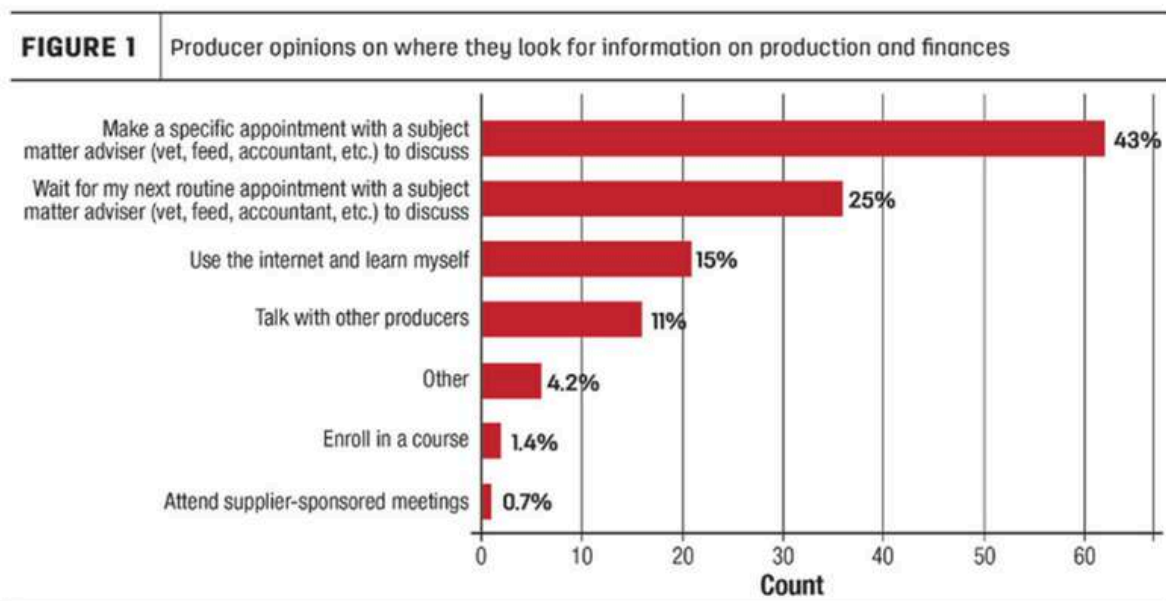
The cornerstone of global dairy farming has always been that producing more milk per cow always leads to higher profits. Coupled with Supply Management, it would be easy to assume that you don't need to know your numbers as long as you increase production. But we studied production and financial metrics across 42 farms over a five-year period (2017-2021) and found that production per cow was poorly associated with EBITDA/Kg.

## Comparing EBITDA/Kg and Milk



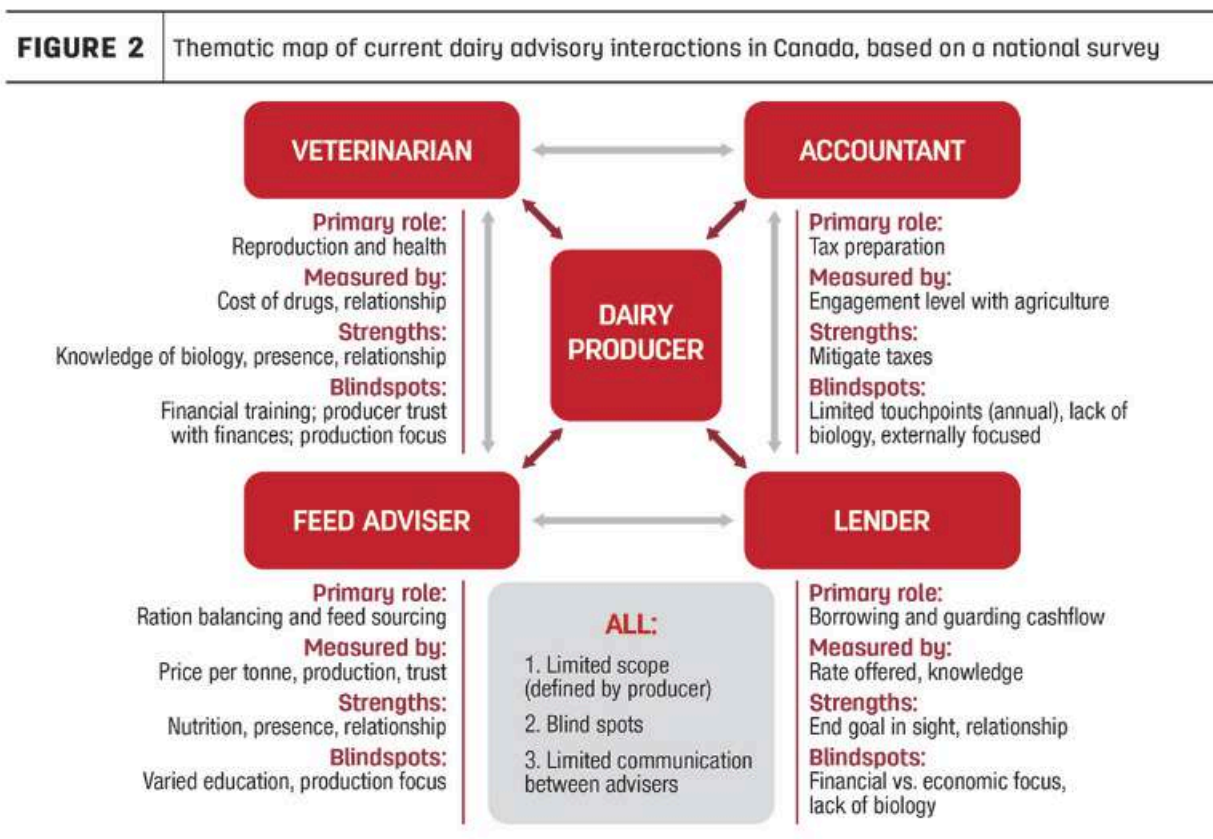
## Where can you go for help?

In a national survey, producers were asked where they would look for information on production and financial performance. The majority would work with their existing advisors to discuss options.



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## KRISTIN BENKE Dairy Farmers of Ontario

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Kristin Benke joined Dairy Farmers of Ontario in 2008 and has worked in a variety of areas of the organization during her time with DFO. She was promoted to the position of Chief Business Officer at Dairy Farmers of Ontario in December 2021, and is currently responsible for economics and policy, quota, and billing and payment. She obtained her Bachelor's degree at Queen's University in Economics and has a Masters degree in Economics from the University of Guelph.



.....

## Past and Current Dairy Market Trends and Milk Production

### Market Trends

- Strong growth in the butterfat market; however, the growth in butterfat is being outpaced by growth from the protein market
- Significant growth in high protein dairy products and protein enriched products. Given changes in diets and demographic changes, seems to be a change that will continue
- High butter and cheese stock levels limit the need for additional butterfat production
- The changes in market occurred at the same time as there has been a more significant increase in the butterfat test on farm.

# THE 41ST ANNUAL SOUTH WESTERN ONTARIO DAIRY SYMPOSIUM

## SNF Ratio Policy

- There have been two changes made to the P5 payment policy (SNF ratio policy). The changes were intended to slow or stop the increase in the butterfat test. The change May 1, 2025 increased the value of protein in the second tier, the change January 1, 2026 was further increase in the value of protein in the second tier. Combined, these changes bring revenue between a SNF ratio of 2.0 and 2.2 back to a similar level as what was paid prior to August 2023.

		Current Policy 2024-25 Dairy Year (\$/kg)	New Policy Effective Jan 1, 2026 (\$/kg)	Difference (\$/kg)
<b>Tier 1 Price</b>	Butterfat	\$13.93	\$13.93	\$0.00
	Protein	\$11.24	\$11.06	-\$0.18
	Other Solids	\$0.90	\$0.90	+\$0.00
<b>Tier 2 Price</b>	Protein	\$3.04	\$6.04	+\$3.00
	Other Solids	\$0.90	\$0.90	+\$0.00

- With the increase in demand for protein, the butterfat test on farm needs to decrease so there is volume available to respond to processor orders
- Current estimates are the 2023/24 Butterfat level for P5 would better respond to the market
- Further adjustments to the payment policy are likely in order to encourage the decrease in butterfat test

## Revenue Impact for Producers

SNF Ratio	% of Ontario Producers	Current Policy	Jan 1, 2026 Policy (4a + \$3.00/kg of PT)
<=2.0	6.7	\$22.45	\$22.33
>2.0 to <=2.05	6.0	\$23.14	\$23.01
>2.05 to <=2.1	13.9	\$23.23	\$23.15
>2.1 to <=2.15	25.0	\$23.31	\$23.29
>2.15 to <=2.2	25.4	\$23.39	\$23.42
>2.2 to <=2.25	15.6	\$23.48	\$23.57
>2.25	7.5	\$23.48	\$23.57







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# FOOD FROM OUR FARMS

## AND FOOD FOR THOUGHT ABOUT MARKETING

2026 marks the 20<sup>th</sup> year of featuring dairy products selected to help us “learn from lunch” and, no doubt, there are new things to think about in 2026. After many years of dealing with a surplus of “solids not fat” in the system, perhaps the biggest cause for celebration is the growth in the market for healthy milk protein, which has re-balanced component demand so that protein rather than butterfat is now driving the market. When we can balance the demand for fat and protein, we minimize waste and maximize components going into high value products. Producers, processors and consumers all benefit from the efficiencies found in that kind of market.

Consumers are expressing a strong and growing interest in health, especially with respect to protein nutrition and this is great news for dairy. Three years ago, when we featured fairlife “double the protein half the sugar” beverages, who would have thought this category would expand the way it has? This year **fairlife** has donated samples of their **Core Power Protein Shakes**, a very popular sports and fitness beverage providing muscle building protein and electrolytes after a work out. We acknowledge Coca-Cola/fairlife for the investment they have made in Ontario dairy and in their very successful product development and launch for their high protein dairy beverages.

Milk protein and health is also growing markets for cultured products. For example, Kefir, first introduced by M-C Dairy in 1991 is scientifically credited with boosting our immune systems, and it is currently one of the fastest growing dairy categories. We thank **M-C Dairy** for developing this market and for donating **Kefir** as one of our beverages this year.

One of our popular local processors, **Mountainoak Cheese** is also exploring demand for cultured milk, with farm store sales of tasty and healthy **Raspberry and Strawberry Buttermilk** sold in single serve and 1.9-litre containers. Mountainoak is continuously expanding its product line in their on-farm store with quark, fluid milk, and butter along with their award winning gouda cheeses.

## THE 41ST ANNUAL SOUTH WESTERN ONTARIO DAIRY SYMPOSIUM

Of course, fluid milk itself is still the leading dairy beverage, and this year we feature **Summit Station Dairy and Creamery** as our artisan fluid processor. More choices for consumers grow markets and Summit Station is breaking new ground with a home delivery program in the Hamilton area. They also sell white, chocolate and flavoured milk in glass bottles in specialty stores and in their very popular on-farm store. The Loewith Family are great dairy promoters and help create a positive image for the industry, as they develop Summitholm into a destination farm, open to visitors. We salute them for that role, and thank them for their donation of **white and chocolate milk** for our enjoyment today.

As a different kind of “food for thought” you may notice a different approach to product packaging this year. For many years we have encouraged processors to provide attractive, convenient, hygienic, single-serve packaging when it is available. The benefits, especially in terms of convenience, have been obvious to us as we serve them here as well. But we sense that there is growing concern about **sustainability, waste reduction and reducing environmental impact. Bigger multi-serving packaging** reduces cost, offers more flexibility in serving size and reduces packaging waste and perhaps product waste as well. We apologize for asking you to pour the amount you want in a glass and leaving the rest of the bottle for someone else to enjoy, but we wonder how concerns about waste will influence product development and especially packaging in the future?

As mentioned above, the surplus component in the system is now butterfat, so promoting market growth for high value markets for this component will be important to keeping the market balanced going forward. There is no better market for butterfat than high quality ice cream and Kawartha Dairy is one of the market leaders enjoying growth as they expand into new grocery store markets here in our region. For many consumers, this brand evokes memories of “Life by the Lake” and there is no better place than cottage country to build an image for ice cream. In recent years, they have expanded their own stores and scoop shops well beyond their base with 16 locations, including major centres like Toronto and Ottawa as well as two outlets in British Columbia. Thank you **Kawartha Dairy** for your donation of high quality **Blue Cow, all Canadian, ice cream** for our event.

## THE 41ST ANNUAL SOUTH WESTERN ONTARIO DAIRY SYMPOSIUM

Butter is the big volume market for butterfat and it too has been in the news. Some customers in the bakery sector express concern about hardness, packaging and water content and it is likely that gourmet chefs of both the restaurant and homemaker variety also have special needs. So...is butter a commodity or gourmet food? We salute **Gay Lea Foods** for working with further processors to address issues and for introducing and expanding a line of **specialty butter** like **Garlic Parsley, Sea Salted, Grass Fed, Bakers Gold and other varieties**. We hope these products will elevate the image of butter and make **"butter boards"** the next hot item in the world of charcuterie. We thank them for donating the butter we are sampling today.

Speaking of charcuterie, to keep things simple, we have limited our cheese selection this year, to three local processors that have a great reputation for quality. We congratulate the Weber Family at **Stonetown Cheese** for their **Grand Trunk**, awarded Overall Grand Champion Artisan Cheese at the 2025 Royal Winter Fair. The Zeldenrijk Family, at **New Galma Cheese and Creamery**, is making a name for themselves with interesting flavours and varieties of **Gouda** style cheeses in mini wheels. Their popular **"Farmers Secret"** variety is just one example of great marketing with a name that guarantees to be unique and mysterious as well. Much of the growing local artisan cheese sector is new, but one valued local processor probably has more experience than all the rest combined. **Bright Cheese and Butter Company** was founded in 1874 and has been in continuous production making high quality **cheddar and other traditional cheeses** for 152 years. We thank these three companies for their contribution to the diverse and growing local cheese industry and we thank them for donating cheese for us to sample.

As is our custom, your Dairy Symposium team wants to thank our speakers with a gift, and we always choose to give dairy. The six cheese baskets used as speaker gifts and for the early bird draw are sponsored by **Scotiabank** and are provided by the three processors featured at our event. As dairy farmers who **take pride in our industry, we need to "give dairy" as gifts at every opportunity.**

## THE 41ST ANNUAL SOUTH WESTERN ONTARIO DAIRY SYMPOSIUM

We are especially pleased to welcome two unique ladies to our event this year. Polly and Sarah, sisters who started life in Yorkshire, England and learned to appreciate the merits of good food, good company, and a good laugh. They went on to have successful careers, Sarah in media and Polly in food development and production. When Sarah moved to Tillsonburg, she quickly realized something was missing—a truly indulgent, **high-quality, chilled chocolate dessert**. During a Thanksgiving visit from Polly, the idea of GoodPud was born! Today, they manufacture three delicious flavours; **GoodPud Belgian Milk Chocolate Dessert, Belgian Dark Chocolate Dessert, and Salted Caramel & Belgian Dark Chocolate Dessert**. Since this is a very new business venture, they have teamed up with a cost-sharing sponsorship from **DeDell Seeds**. So, what do **DeDell and GoodPud have in common??** GoodPud is an amazing dessert that is truly unique. **DeDell** also sells an amazing dessert, but their high sugar “Dessert” corn silage variety is meant to increase feed and energy intake in your dairy cows. We thank both GoodPud and DeDell for the opportunity to sample this amazing dessert made with Canadian dairy.

As a final note about balancing milk component markets, the growing market for milk protein does not always help us with marketing the other part of “SNF”, the lactose or milk sugar. A lot of that ends up in a low value byproduct called milk permeate. **Vodkow**, distilled in Almonte, Ontario is the only “Canadian” dairy-based product in our liquor stores, and it is a unique phenomenon for our industry. Vodkow is distilled from milk permeate, thereby turning low value surplus lactose into high value vodka. With Vodkow as the base, this company also makes a wide variety of excellent quality **Vodkow Cream Liqueurs** using all Canadian cream. The makers of Vodkow also work with dairy processors to turn large volumes of permeate into fuel ethanol and they have recently started work on a major project with Gay Lea Foods.

It is our hope that these products and the information presented about them will increase awareness and stimulate interest among producers in the marketing side of the industry. We salute these products, and the companies behind them, as opportunities to expand markets, add value and strengthen the industry.

- **Jack Rodenburg, on behalf of the Planning Committee.**

MORE ON OUR 2026 FOOD FROM OUR FARMS CONTRIBUTORS

Thank you to **Farm Credit Canada** for sponsoring coffee at the dairy symposium!



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After you work out, you can feel worn out. Core Power fights post-workout fatigue and dehydration with high-quality protein and electrolytes. Made from fairlife ultra-filtered milk, Core Power is a delicious way to maximize your recovery and get the nutrition you need to power on!

**M-C Dairy's**

kefir has become an important functional dairy food due to its scientifically supported physiological effects associated with good health and performance. This includes stimulation of the immune system by boosting nonspecific immune responses.



**Mountainoak Cheese**

has added fluid milk and butter to their farm store product line; and in response to the growing demand for healthy dairy protein beverages, they are also offering raspberry and strawberry buttermilk in single serve and 1.89 litre containers. We salute this local processor for their innovative marketing approach and their efforts to grow markets for Canadian Dairy.



**Agriculture Services**

**Summit Station Dairy** offers home delivery, on-farm sales, and sales in specialty stores. Today's milk is graciously sponsored by TD Bank.



**Kawartha Dairy** is family-owned and sold in grocery stores across the province. Their retail stores and scoop shops now include 10 locations in cottage country and 6 more in major urban centers.



**Gay Lea's** specialty butter . . . turning a commodity into gourmet food.



# THE 41ST ANNUAL SOUTH WESTERN ONTARIO DAIRY SYMPOSIUM



**GoodPud** crafts small-batch, deeply indulgent chocolate desserts that are rich, creamy, and utterly irresistible.



GoodPud sampling is partially sponsored by DeDell Seeds. GoodPud - a great dessert for you; and DeDell "Dessert" seed corn - a high sugar variety for your cows!

**Vodkow** believes a better future comes from improving traditions of the past. That's why we make our award winning Vodkow vodka from milk sugars that would once have been thrown away; helping dairy farmers and taking stress off the environment.

## VODKOW



We also make our cream liquors from scratch at our distillery in Almonte, Ontario. They're the first lactose-free dairy creams in North America and the first spirit products to ever sport the Dairy Farmers of Canada's Blue Cow logo.

Thank you to these local artisan cheese makers for their product donations.



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# THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!

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JOIN US IN  
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FOR OUR  
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