

THE 39TH ANNUAL

***SOUTH
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DAIRY
SYMPOSIUM***



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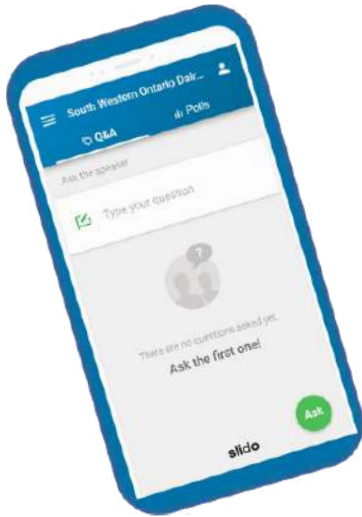
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PROGRAM

22.02.2024 | 9AM-4PM



- 9:00am** Exhibits Open - Registration and Coffee
- 10:20am** Welcome - *Steve Veldman, SWODS Chair*
- 10:30am** Economics of Transition Cow Health (pg.8)
Dr. Eduardo de Souza Ribeiro, University of Guelph
- 11:00am** Working Together For A Stronger Industry (pg.19)
Mark Taylor, President & CEO, Lactalis Canada Inc.
- 12:00am** Foods From Our Farms pg.
Jack Rodenburg, SWODS Committee
- 12:15pm** Lunch - Featuring Foods From Our Farms
- 1:30pm** Speak Your Mind - *DFO Representative*
- 1:45pm** Let's Talk About Butterfat...And What Pays Back!
Dr. Débora Santschi & Dr. Simon Jetté-Nantel, Lactanet
- 2:30pm** Dairy Non-Fat Solids From the Processing Perspective
Dr. Julien Chamberland, University of Laval
- 4:00pm** Exhibits Close

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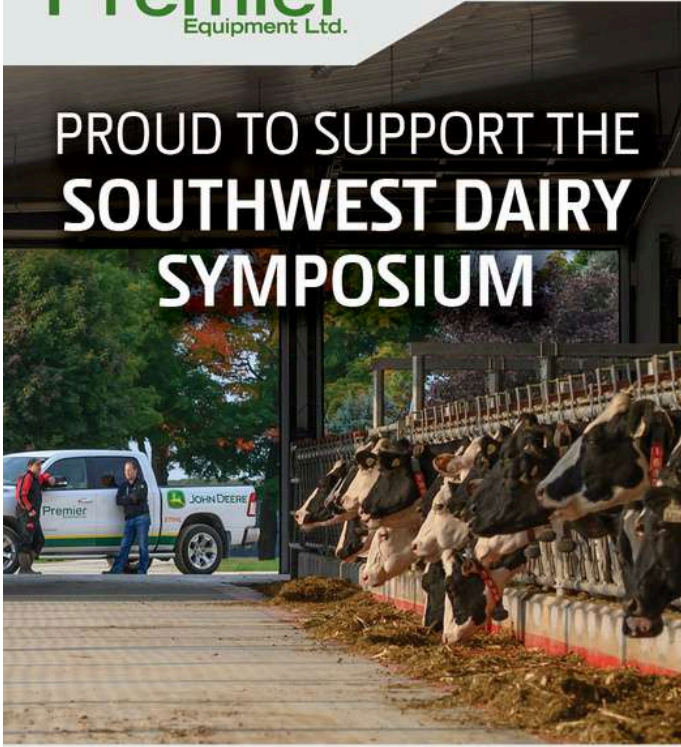
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Economics of Transition Cow Health

Eduardo de Souza Ribeiro

Department of Animal Biosciences,
University of Guelph



INTRODUCTION

Every dairyman knows how challenging the transition period is, not only for the transition cows but also for the people involved with their management and care. It is safe to assume that most dairy producers, if not all, have experienced the heartbreak of the cow that does not transition well, has one problem after another, and dies or is culled early in lactation. Although a cow leaving the herd early in lactation is likely the most severe manifestation of a bad transition period, evaluating the quality of the transition management in a herd is much more complex than simply summarizing the survival of cows by the end of it. In fact, most cows with an impaired transition remain in the herd and are managed indiscriminately after they leave the fresh pen. But how do cows perform after surviving a difficult transition? Are they as efficient as cows with a good transition? Should I manage these cows any different? To answer these questions, we first need to define what an 'optimal' and an 'impaired' transition period are.

ASSESSING THE QUALITY OF THE TRANSITION PERIOD

Although a well-established definition of an optimal transition does not exist and might not be a consensus among dairy scientists, extension agents, and farmers, some characteristics of the transition period have been described consistently as important for the success of subsequent health and performance (Table 1). Based on the literature, the length of dry period should be targeted to 40 to 50 days to avoid cows with a dry period that is too long (> 60 days) or too short (< 30 days; Santschi et al., 2011). The BCS at dry-off should be moderate (3.0 to 3.5 in a 1 to 5 scale) and be maintained through calving (Chagas et al. 2007; Chebel et al. 2018). Ideally, cows should have a normal calving of a single calf (no dystocia, no twins) and should maintain a good appetite, especially during the early postpartum period, avoiding extensive loss of BCS (≥ 1 unit in a 1 to 5 scale) during the postpartum period (Santos et al., 2009; Carvalho et al. 2014). Ultimately, transition cows should maintain good health, with no incidence of clinical diseases (i.e., retained placenta, metritis, mastitis, lameness, digestive and respiratory problems) and metabolic problems (ketosis, hypocalcemia, chronic inflammation) (McArt et al., 2011; Martinez et al. 2012; Carvalho et al. 2019). Any of these factors in isolation causes an impairment in transition quality and, when combined, they have additive negative effects on subsequent performance.

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Without a method to combine all these characteristics into a single index, the incidence of clinical disease is arguably the most important individual measure of transition success. Unfortunately, most farms do not have an accurate estimate of the incidence of clinical disease in their herds or do not use it routinely as a proxy to measure their success in transition management.

Table 1. Characteristics of an optimal and an impaired transition period

| Parameter | Quality of transition period | |
|------------------------|--|--|
| | Optimal | Impaired |
| Length of dry period | 40-50 days | Too short (< 30 d) or too long (> 60 d) |
| BCS at dry-off | 3.00 - 3.25 | > 3.50 |
| BCS at calving | 3.00 - 3.25 | < 3.00, > 3.50 |
| Calving | Eutocia, single calf | Dystocia, twins |
| Feed intake | Good appetite | Poor appetite |
| Postpartum loss of BCS | < 1.0 unit | ≥ 1 unit |
| Health | No clinical disease, no metabolic problems | Clinical disease, persistent hypocalcemia, ketosis |

ECONOMICS OF POSTPARTUM CLINICAL DISEASE

Although clinical diseases can develop at any time during lactation, most cases happen early in lactation. In fact, approximately one-third of dairy cows experience at least one clinical disease during the first 3 weeks of lactation, which represent 60% to 80% of all clinical cases that occur in lactating cows throughout lactation. Ribeiro and Carvalho (2017) described that 40% of the 8,268 cows on eight U.S. dairies included in the study experienced retained placenta, metritis, lameness, mastitis, digestive or respiratory problems during the first 60 days in milk (DIM). Similarly, in a prospective study that evaluated postpartum health of 11,729 cows in 16 herds located in the US, 43% of cows had at least one health problem during the first 50 DIM (Pinedo et al., 2020). In addition to the clinical diseases cited previously, the latter study also considered hyperketonemia in a single blood sample at 7 ± 3 DIM, and purulent vaginal discharge at 28 ± 7 DIM. In Canada, a recent study evaluating the postpartum health of 1,096 cows in 11 herds have reported similar incidence of clinical diseases (Macmillan et al., 2021).

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Reduced fertility at first postpartum breeding in cows that survived postpartum clinical disease has been widely reported (Santos et al., 2010; Ribeiro et al., 2013; 2016; Carvalho et al., 2019; Pinedo et al., 2020). Carvalho et al. (2019), however, demonstrated that the long-term consequences of postpartum clinical disease, after treatment and resolution, go far beyond the first breeding. For cows with a clinical disease in the first 3 postpartum weeks, although health and metabolism seem to have returned to normal by the end of the first postpartum month, reproduction and milk production were negatively affected through 305 DIM.

Carvalho et al. (2019) conducted two retrospective cohort studies. In the first study, the health, production, reproduction, and culling records of 5,085 Holstein cows were used to evaluate the effects of clinical disease diagnosed and treated during the first 21 DIM on milk production, reproduction, and culling through 305 DIM. Results showed that 45.9% of all cows were diagnosed with at least one clinical disease between calving and 305 DIM. During the first 21 DIM, 30.2% of cows developed clinical disease which represented 65.7% of all clinical diseases diagnosed in cows through 305 DIM. Pregnancy rate was reduced 17% in cows that experienced a single clinical disease during the first 21 DIM, and 29% in cows that experienced multiple clinical diseases during the first 21 DIM. Median days to pregnancy were 109, 116, and 124 for cows with 0, 1, or 2+ clinical diseases during the first 21 DIM, respectively. The proportion of cows pregnant by 305 DIM was 88.4% in healthy cows compared with 82.6%, and 72.6% for cows with one or with two or more cases, respectively. When only pregnancies that survived to term (successful pregnancy) were considered, the difference between groups became even larger because of the high risk of pregnancy loss in cows that had disease during the first 21 DIM. Pregnancy rate was reduced 29% in cows with a single disease and 46% in cows with multiple diseases. Median days to successful pregnancy were 126, 160, and 204 for cows with 0, 1, or 2+ disease during the first 21 DIM. The proportion of cows with a successful pregnancy established by 305 DIM was 82.5, 71.8, and 59.5% for cows with 0, 1, or 2+ disease during the first 21 DIM, respectively.

As for 305-day milk production, when compared with healthy herd mates, cows with a single disease produced 767 lbs less and those with multiple diseases produced 1,550 lbs less. In addition, cows diagnosed with a postpartum health problem had a lower and delayed peak in milk production. In a second study, Carvalho et al. (2019) evaluated the records of 2,415 primiparous Holstein cows with genomic testing information using the same classification criteria used in study 1.

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When the researchers compared the actual 305-day milk production with the predicted 305-day milk production based on the genomic test, they observed that both measurements were similar in cows without clinical disease during the first 21 DIM but were substantially different in cows with clinical disease. In the latter group, the actual production was 900 lbs less than the genetically predicted production, indicating that postpartum disease limits the genetic potential of cows to produce milk.

The researchers also examined culling data. Of all cows enrolled in the study, 27.4% left the herd before completing 305 DIM. Both the proportion of cows culled and the risk of culling were influenced by clinical disease occurring by 21 DIM. Culling risk for healthy cows through 305 DIM was 22.6% compared with 35.7% and 53.8% for cows with one or with two or more cases of clinical disease during the first 21 DIM. There was also an important difference in mortality risk. Death risk in healthy cows was 3.5% through 305 DIM compared with 8.1% and 16% for cows with one or with two or more cases of clinical disease occurring by 21 DIM.

Using the data compiled by Carvalho et al. (2019), Antonacci et al. (2021) estimated the cost of clinical disease during the first 21 DIM, calculating revenues, expenses, and the residual cow value for each of the 5,085 cows enrolled in the study. Milk revenue was calculated based on the volume of milk produced through 300 DIM and an average milk price of \$0.44/kg. Feed cost was estimated based on energy requirements for maintenance and lactation through 300 DIM, and a feed price of \$0.26/kg of DM. Treatment costs included drugs, supplies, and labor associated with all clinical cases that occurred through 300 DIM. Breeding costs included semen or embryo, supplies, and labor associated with all breeding performed through 300 DIM. Unrealized revenues included discarded milk and salvage value of dead cows. Profit in the lactation cycle was calculated by subtracting all expenses and unrealized revenues from the milk revenue. Residual cow value (RCV) was calculated as cumulative cash flow projections for each cow and her replacements until 4,000 days according to Lima et al. (2018). Total value of each cow was calculated as the lactation profit plus the RCV. The number of diseases reduced milk revenue as result of lower milk yield and increased rate of culling. Similarly, expenses with feed and breeding were reduced with the number of diseases. Postpartum disease increased treatment costs, especially during the first 21 DIM, and the amount of unrealized revenues. The RCV was greater for cows with multiple diseases, followed by those with a single disease, and then those without disease, which reflected the financial value of replacement heifers. The profit and total value per cow, however, were drastically affected by disease.

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The profit for the lactation cycle was reduced by \$536 with a single disease during the first 21 DIM and by \$1163 with two or more diseases. The total cost of clinical disease was estimated at US\$467 for a single case and US\$934 for multiple cases. The translation of these costs to the current scenario of the dairy industry in Ontario would represent a cost of approximately \$1000 CAD per case of postpartum clinical disease, which is similar to estimations performed in Quebec (Puerto et al, 2021ab).

Knowing the cost of clinical disease is important for planning and decision making, especially regarding investments in transition cow management and facilities aimed to prevent peripartum health problems. With an estimated cost of disease, the return of investment can be easily calculated based on the expected reduction in the incidence of postpartum clinical disease. Investments in transition cow diets and retrofitting of transition cow facilities are good examples of management decisions that can reduce the incidence of postpartum health problems and generate a good return on investment. The cost of implementation should be subtracted from the estimated gain in revenues, which in turn can be calculated based on the expected reduction in postpartum disease after implementation and the estimated cost of postpartum disease.

Given the importance of transition cow health to subsequent performance, prevention of postpartum problems continues to be the best way to avoid economic losses related to transition cow management inefficiencies. For many years, multiple research groups and industry companies have devoted resources to understand the risk factors of postpartum diseases and to develop management strategies focused on prevention. Our understanding of transition cow management has improved substantially in recent years, and some of the current recommendations include:

- Invest in transition cow facilities to provide comfort and cleanliness, and minimize environmental, social, and biological stresses.
- Monitor BCS at dry-off, at calving, and at approximately 6 weeks after calving evaluate the percentage of cows with suboptimal BCS at dry-off, and suboptimal BCS changes from dry-off to calving and from calving to ~6 weeks , and make decisions to improve those numbers over time.
- Provide the best prepartum and fresh cow diets to optimize nutrient intake and immune cell function, using high-quality forage and supplements that are supported by peer-reviewed literature.
- Optimize consistency of TMR mixing and feed bunk management to stimulate feed intake, reduce feed bunk displacement, and minimize feed sorting.
- Include health, fertility, and longevity traits into the genetic selection program of the herd to improve the overall health of the herd in the long term.

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Unfortunately, even in herds with excellent transition management, not all postpartum problems will be prevented and, therefore, a robust health program needs to be in place to work with cows that become sick. The main goals of a postpartum health program should be: (1) early diagnosis of health events and (2) fast and effective intervention when needed. These two features are important because they shorten the duration of the health event and reduce the chances of complications. Among cows treated for postpartum disease, factors such as time in the hospital, number of health events, and severity of health events are all negatively associated with the subsequent lactation and reproductive performances and, therefore, are positively associated with the long-term negative consequences of disease. Thus, hastening the recovery of sick cows is a good way to minimize the consequences of disease.

The urge to diagnose health problems in postpartum cows must take into consideration the time that cows remain locked-up or being handled. Prolonged lock-up time and excessive handling might counterbalance the positive effects of early diagnosis of health problems, possibly causing more problems and halting recovery. The use of technology such as wearable sensors to measure rumination and physical activity, and in-line milk testing can provide helpful information for monitoring the health status of cows and anticipating the diagnosis of some postpartum diseases. Thus, some of these technologies can possibly minimize the consequences of clinical diseases by helping with early diagnosis of disease and reducing lock-up time.


Selective management based on transition history can also help to minimize the consequences of postpartum disease. The selective management strategy takes into consideration the consequences of disease. For instance, cows that survive postpartum clinical disease take longer to resume estrous cyclicity and are less likely to show estrus during the voluntary waiting period and during early phases of the breeding period. Thus, if the objective is to maximize reproductive efficiency, management of cows that had clinical disease should not rely solely on estrus detection. Moreover, because the effect of clinical disease on milk production, the first breeding of these cows should not be delayed considering that the optimal time to pregnancy in this situation is anticipated and cows will take longer to become pregnant. Nonetheless, depending on the number and severity of postpartum health problems and the anticipated cost of disease, an immediate culling or a 'do not breed' strategy might be the most economical in some situations.

CONCLUSIONS


The quality of the transition period is decisive for the success of the subsequent lactation cycle. Cows with a poor transition produce less milk, take longer to become pregnant, and are more likely to lose an established pregnancy and be culled from the herd, causing substantial economic losses. Investments in infrastructure, personnel, and nutrition focused on prevention and treatment of postpartum health problems, when effective, often result in an excellent return on investment because it minimizes the economic losses related to long-term effects of postpartum disease. In addition, early diagnosis of postpartum health problems and effective treatment shorten the duration of sickness, reduce chances of complications, and minimize the consequences of disease. Selective management of cows that survive postpartum disease can also help to minimize the economic losses by taking into consideration the consequences of disease on lactation and reproductive performances.

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Mark Taylor is President & CEO of Lactalis Canada Inc., the Canadian dairy leader behind iconic brands like Cracker Barrel, Black Diamond, Balderson, Astro and Lactantia and a subsidiary of the world's leading dairy group, headquartered in Laval, France.

Since assuming the role of President & CEO in 2018, Mark has been instrumental in driving the company's growth and transformation including leading the CDN\$1.62 billion acquisition of Kraft Heinz's natural cheese business in Canada in 2019, the biggest of

its kind in Canadian dairy history. This transaction was followed by the acquisitions of Ultima Foods Inc. from Agropur, the Kraft Heinz grated cheese business in Canada in 2021 and Marie Morin Canada in 2023. Today, Lactalis Canada is the third largest country turnover in Lactalis Group, third largest branded retailer manufacturer in Canada and consistently named on Forbes' list of Canada's Best Employers. Within the industry, Mark has played an instrumental role in the advocacy and creation of a Grocery Code of Conduct for Canada. In 2023, Mark was named Most Influential CEO 2023 – Toronto Food & Beverage Manufacturing by international publication CEO Monthly Magazine. Mark brings over 30 years of experience in CPG, specifically in the dairy category across the supply chain from farm to consumer. Before locating to Canada, Mark was Group Managing Director of Lactalis U.K. and Ireland from 2015 to 2018 and has previously held various senior leadership roles at Express Dairy PLC, Northern Foods PLC, Unigate PLC and Dairy Crest PLC. He formerly served as Chair of the Board of Directors of U.K.-based Muddy Boots Software Limited, Zenith International Consulting in the U.K. and Wexford Creamery, Ireland. Mark is currently a Board Director of Dairy Processors Association Canada (DPAC), Food, Health & Consumer Products of Canada (FHCP) and The Grocery Foundation where he also Chairs the Donations Committee. Mark has also been appointed as cabinet member of the Feel Out Loud with Kids Help Phone campaign, the largest youth mental health movement in Canada. Mark holds an MBA and resides in Toronto with his wife, Angela, and two sons.



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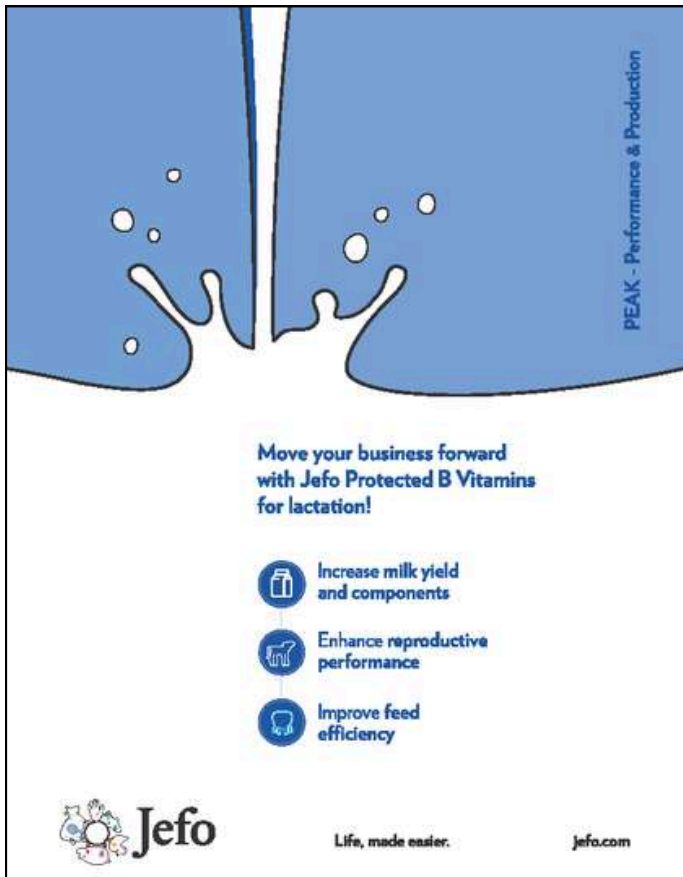
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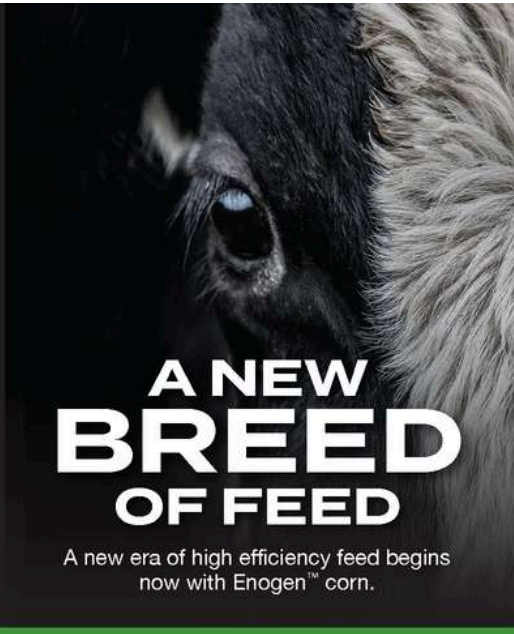
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LET'S TALK ABOUT BUTTERFAT... AND WHAT PAYS BACK!

Simon Jetté-Nantel, Ph.D., Economist

Débora Santschi, Ph.D., Director of Innovation and Development



Producing more butter fat has been a key message to dairy producers in the last years as market is demanding more of it than other components. The new pricing policies reflect that market reality. But how should a producer interpret those messages, and how much changes do they need to make on the farm.

First of all, the impact on having a different SNF ratio on milk revenues is fairly small. The difference in revenue (net of marketing fees) for a herd producing 100kgbf per day between an SNF ratio of 2 and 2.2 is about 325\$/month or 0.5% of its revenues. Does a ratio at 2.2 generate more revenue per kgbf delivered, yes. Will you lose money because of extra transportation and marketing fees on unpaid components if your ratio is above 2.2, yes. But it may not be the right question to ask. The impact of reducing your SNF ratio on your cost of production is likely more important. To the extent that producing more butterfat per cow means less cows for the same quota, it's very likely to be a profitable move.

Think at the margin. At an SNF ratio of 2.2, about 9% of the protein produced is paid only 1.8\$/kg and 9% of the LOS is paid only 0.63\$/kg. How much does it cost to produce those components? We usually estimate it to cost above 2\$/kg to produce protein and maybe closer to 3\$/kg, just in feed. If that is the case on your farm, then in the long run we are better off targeting a ratio closer to 2 to limit the production of underpaid components. They represent a loss.

As with any changes, trying to do too much too quickly can be costly. So there is no point turning your barn upside down because your ratio is around 2.2 or above. But it is worth looking at the opportunities to make incremental changes and start saving.

A short-run solution might lie in quality forages and feeding strategies which can provide multiple benefits and opportunities to reduce your SNF ratio profitably. It's worth considering how nutrition and management affect your fat test itself.

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Looking at fatty acids making up the total fat, understanding the variation, and working on maximizing rumen health are very promising tools to troubleshoot and improve on-farm performance. Feeding strategies always work best in an optimal rumen, rather than as compensation solutions.

Another key solution to consider is ventilation, cooling, and overall animal comfort. In southern Ontario there is around 90 days per year of heat stress. The immediate impact of ventilation on milk yield and/or butterfat production can be sizeable (~ +0.1kgbf/hl or +5% of milk yield). And the impact on the upcoming lactation of dry cows is also significant (+10% in milk yield). Just accounting for these benefits can make investment in ventilation highly profitable, even at interest rates of 6 or 7%. And that's without accounting for other benefits in terms of reproduction and health that can come from that ventilation investment.

And finally, genetic selection of bulls and cows might be the easier way, although with delayed benefits, of increasing butterfat production profitably. It should be easy to improve butterfat content by around 0.2kgbf/hl within one generation, and that without having to compromise much on other selection traits. As with the aforementioned solutions, an increase in fat test means a lower SNF ratio, but mainly it means less cows for the same quota and therefore lower cost!

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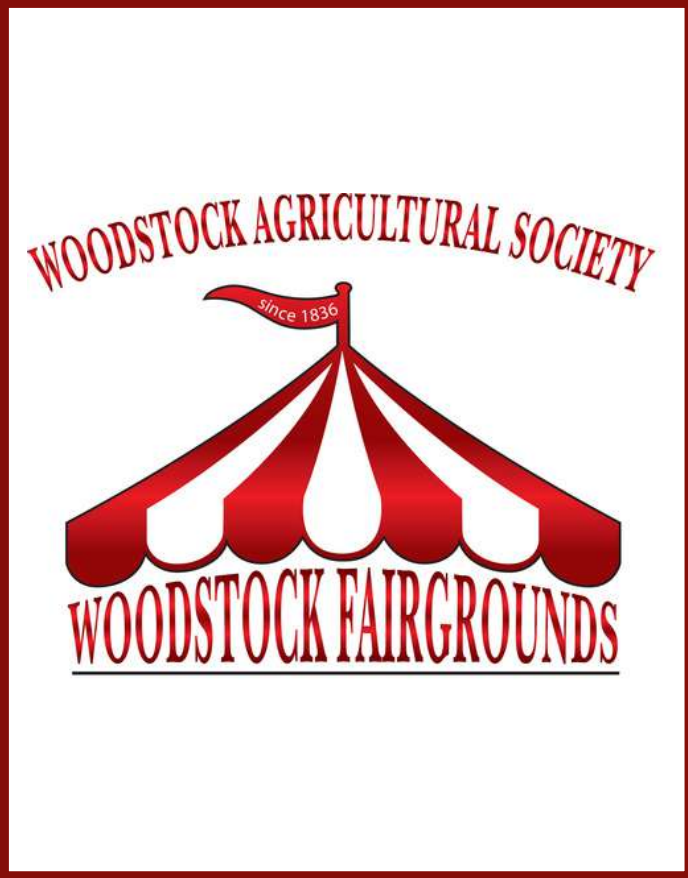


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Dairy farmers play an important role in the veal supply chain. The veal sector continues to strive for responsible antimicrobial stewardship and reducing use, so we rely on dairy farmers to provide calves that are strong and healthy on arrival. While pricing can sometimes be influenced by external factors, there are key areas to focus on that will maximize the quality and value of male dairy calves leaving the farm.

Historically, pricing for veal has been cyclical. September to December is typically the strongest market for finished grain-fed veal cattle, which means greater demand for male dairy calves seven to eight months ahead of that time as veal producers fill barns to target that market, and softer demand with diminished pricing for animals that will be marketed through the spring holidays, when processing capacity is diverted to other proteins.

Knowing those are two key markets for veal production, dairy calf producers should look ahead at the time of breeding for an idea of which market the animals will be ready in – different markets have different needs, and there is opportunity in breeding specifically for the veal market. Holstein male calves are leaner, streamlined, taller animals, but veal producers need blockier, stockier builds which is what helps put finish on the animal. Genetics play a part in this, not just their feeding program, and packers appreciate the consistent conformation of the Holstein male animals arriving for veal processing.

The veal sector is also striving for responsible antimicrobial stewardship and reducing use, which means calves must be stronger and healthier when they arrive at the veal farm. Ensuring all calves on the farm receive four litres of high-quality colostrum within six hours of birth, and their first feeding as soon as possible, will improve passive transfer of immunity. Male dairy calves leaving the farm are commingled at a young age before their immunity kicks in. Stress from transport can also reduce immunity and leave the calves more susceptible to disease, making excellent colostrum management essential for every calf on the farm.

Learn more at calfcare.ca and watch for exciting speaker and location announcements for the 2024 Healthy Calf Conference. As your calf care partners, Veal Farmers of Ontario takes pride in this important industry initiative that helps progressive calf managers find even more efficient ways to raise calves and increase profitability in Canada's dairy and veal industries.

FOOD FROM OUR FARMS . . . AND FOOD FOR THOUGHT ABOUT MARKETING

2024 marks the 18th year of featuring dairy products selected to help us “learn from lunch”. The dairy products featured this year focus on the theme of “local food” and what it means to our market and the consumers who drive it. Dairy is a major contributor to the economy in the 13-county region that plans this program. This region produces more milk than any other part of Ontario, and there are more than 50 processors receiving raw milk from your farms, transforming it into consumer products. As illustrated below, “local” can mean many different things.

We salute **Walker Farms Dairy** for venturing into processing and retail two years ago with their “bottled on the farm” A2 milk. Their herd has been tested and selected to produce milk with this “more digestible” form of beta casein protein. It is sold in grocery and specialty stores in the region, and in their own retail outlet in Aylmer. For customers of Walker Dairy, “local” means quality assurance in knowing where it comes from, a smaller carbon footprint with less transportation and a stronger more sustainable community with dependable local employment. Walker Dairy has donated white and chocolate milk in “single serve” packaging. This is convenient for us, and it is also an important market segment for all those meals and snacks consumed “on the go” and outside the home.

Several other local fluid processors, who we will feature in future years, have also started up recently but, we should not forget the “pioneers” who first developed this market a dozen years ago. **Eby Manor Dairy** in Waterloo was the first in our region, starting in 2012 with A2 rich Guernsey milk in glass bottles. The brand preference for Guernsey milk they built still resonates with consumers today. We thank Eby Manor for donating coffee cream for our event and we acknowledge the support of **Farm Credit Canada** as our coffee sponsor. Turning coffee white is a multi million dollar undertaking and we need to offer consumers and the restaurant trade the products and relationships that will ensure most of that revenue goes to real dairy cream and milk.

Large processors often claim that developing new products is too expensive. But “local” “family run” businesses have a passion for what they do, and that stimulates innovation despite these costs. **Mountainoak Cheese** in New Hamburg was among the first to tackle on-farm cheese making eleven years ago. Today their Farmstead Mild Gouda is the reigning Grand Champion Cheese of the Royal Winter Fair, and their wide range of flavoured Gouda style cheeses are sold across the province in specialty cheese shops, grocery stores, and in their on-farm store.

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They keep innovating with more cheese varieties and Quark, which we are sampling at the symposium. This creamy fresh cheese, available in Plain, Maple Syrup, Blueberry & Strawberry flavours, is low in sugar and gaining in popularity as a healthy dessert. Dairy desserts have not seen a lot of innovation or growth, so Quark is a welcome healthy, local addition to this category.

One goal of “Food From Our Farms” is to remind us that we need to work with these processors and retailers to grow markets. While the dairies that receive our milk are easy to identify, secondary processors can be easily overlooked. **Schep’s Bakeries** in Norwich is an innovative and entrepreneurial local company in that category. They have seen phenomenal market growth for their Dutch syrup waffles or “Stroopwafels” sold under their own “DoubleDutch” brand and co-packed under many other labels and sold in stores across North America. Once just a familiar snack for local Dutch immigrants, these waffles have gained a big following as an energy food for athletes. But what does all this have to do with dairy? Schep’s Bakery has developed a new ice cream novelty by combining their waffles with high quality Canadian sourced ice cream into “ice cream waffles”. Currently these are sold locally and co-packed for special events. They are working on market development in both Canada and the US, making this a rare example of a high value Canadian dairy product exported south of the border. **DeDell Seeds**, who offer high sugar silage varieties they call “dessert for cows” offer a co-packed version of the ice cream waffle at our symposium and have subsidized the donation from Schep’s. Both co-packing and secondary processing illustrate some of the complexities of our supply chain. As a single serve ice cream novelty, ice cream waffles have potential for convenience and out of home consumption but no doubt distribution of a new frozen product into that market comes with huge challenges.

“Made within 100 miles” is a common definition of “local” and if we apply that to cheese, there are more than 20 processors making a wide variety of cheeses local to Woodstock. Specialty cheeses, especially those produced by smaller family run companies, add variety and ethnic and cultural interest, along with all the other plusses ascribed to “local”. Seven local processors have donated cheese to our event. **Quality Cheese** in Vaughn, is a long established family owned business on the edge of our 100 mile limit. The Borgo family has made cheese in Canada since 1999 and in Italy for many years before that. Their high quality Italian cheeses have had a big impact, especially in the Toronto area. **Udder Way Artisan Cheese** in Stoney Creek makes their unique cheeses by hand, based on old world recipes and a focus on excellent ingredients, patience and attention to detail.

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While new customers usually connect with local processors on a personal level, on-line shopping offers the convenience of home delivery on future purchases. Two totally new cheese processors located right in Oxford County have also chosen to donate. **New Galma Dairy** can barely keep up with demand for their Gouda style cheeses since opening in December 2023 and they are well on their way to establishing a reputation for great quality. **Golspie Dairy** also opened in 2023 and until now they have focussed on fluid milk, which visitors to the farm can take home in their own containers from an automatic dispenser. Check their website to see their story about commitment to local, and sustainability of the family farm. Both of these on-farm processors are featured on the “Oxford County Cheese Trail” which is a great example of agritourism creating connections with the consumers we serve. Another cheese trail participant, Shep Ysselstein at **Gunn’s Hill Artisan Cheese** was among the first to venture into processing and we thank him for his continued support of our event. **Jensen Cheese** in Simcoe has been making traditional Canadian cheese “locally” for 99 years and they have been strong supporters of our symposium. An even more established brand is **Bright Cheese and Butter Company**, celebrating 150 years in business this year and we salute them for reaching this milestone. **Stonetown Artisan Cheese** is celebrating an international win for their “Wildwood”, a handcrafted Alpine Cheese. Cheese as a gift is gaining a following and for Valentine’s Day, they have come up with heart shaped cheeses in a variety of gift boxes and baskets.

On the subject of cheese as a gift, your Dairy Symposium team wants to thank our speakers with a gift and we choose to give dairy. The 8 cheese baskets used as speaker gifts and for early bird draws are sponsored by **Scotiabank** and are provided by the cheesemakers listed above. As dairy farmers who take pride in our industry, we need to give dairy as gifts at every opportunity.

VodKow, distilled in Almonte, Ontario is not local to the area but as the only “Canadian” dairy based product in the liquor stores, it is no doubt special to our industry. VodKow is distilled from milk permeate, a low value byproduct that would otherwise go into animal feed. With VodKow as the base, this company also makes a wide variety of excellent quality cream liqueurs using all Canadian cream.

Last but not least, we want to remind you that our farms produce other foods in addition to dairy products. This year we are serving veal on a bun to acknowledge the local veal producers, who we rely on to market bull calves and surplus heifer calves as premium quality veal products. Our veal purchase for lunch was subsidized by **Highland Meats**, a local family-owned supplier of quality meat products in Stoney Creek, and very much part of the “local food” tradition. We thank them for their contribution.

THE 39TH ANNUAL SOUTH WESTERN ONTARIO DAIRY SYMPOSIUM

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. One important aspect of “local” is that promotion of these products happens in a different way than mainstream brands. Consumers interested in “local” respond to personal stories and word of mouth endorsements so as dairy producers we all have a big role to play in promoting the people and brands that are making this happen in Southwestern Ontario today.

Jack Rodenburg, on behalf of the Planning Committee.

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be topped with maple syrup, fresh fruit, jam or just enjoyed plain. It is

great in everything from lasagna to cheesecake. Our Quark has no

preservatives, no thickeners, no food dyes and no added sugar. We

sweeten our Blueberry & Strawberry Quark with locally produced

maple syrup. Plain Quark has three simple ingredients: pasteurized whole milk,

bacterial culture and rennet. A great source of protein, calcium, and a variety of

vitamins and minerals. Available in Plain, Maple Syrup, Blueberry & Strawberry.



813185 Baseline Road, Norwich, ON N0J 1P0, 519-468-3759

Arie Schep, the president of Schep's Bakeries had always dreamed of coming to Canada. After visiting Canada in 1983 he fell in love with the country on the spot and decided to move his family to Canada.

He did not want to lose his Dutch touch and after much thought, decided to start baking stroopwafels (Syrup Waffle Cookies). In doing this, he could stay in touch with his Dutch roots by importing the best ingredients from Holland and at the same time bring this wonderful product to the North American people.



What started out to be a small business of baking syrup waffles for small specialty stores, has over the years blossomed to the point of the waffle cookies being available in many of the larger retail stores in Canada and the exporting of hundreds of thousands of syrup waffles to the United States of America every year. Over the years, two of his sons (Peter and Jacco) have joined the business. Arie, with his wife and two sons, strives in delivering only the best waffle cookies to the Canadian and American people.



Combining the popular waffle with real Canadian ice cream to make a delicious ice cream waffle is a recent innovation that is gaining attention in the marketplace. Schep's co-packs a lot of products for special events and fundraisers. The ice cream waffles featured at the symposium, "a great dessert for dairy farmers", are labelled for DeDell Seeds "Dessert" corn hybrids, "a great dessert for dairy cows".

Thank You to Farm Credit Canada for sponsoring our coffee



. . . and to Eby Manor for their 10% coffee cream.

Weeby Place, Waterloo, 519-664-2560 info@ebymanor.ca
Open 10am-6pm, Monday-Saturday

Eby Manor A2 Golden Guernsey milk is produced on our local family farm in Waterloo, by 60 registered milking Guernsey cows. Our Guernsey milk and dairy products are 100% A2 which is non-inflammatory, allowing many people with milk sensitivities to consume our products without any adverse effects. In order to keep up with demand, we also receive milk contributions from Mar-Ley Farms. Both our cows and Mar-Ley Farms cows have all tested 100% A2. Our products are available directly from our farm at Eby's Dairy Market, as well as over 200 stores throughout the Tri-City, GTA and surrounding areas. We also supply many local restaurants and cafés.

34 Industrial Dr, Almonte, ON K0A 1A0, 613-256-6136



VODKOW is a distillery located in Almonte ON. We make an award winning triple distilled vodka by repurposing unused milk sugars from the dairy process. Our carbon neutral vodka is used to power a line of "lactose free" cream liquors in the following flavours: coffee, maple, chocolate, classic cream, eggnog, London fog, mango sunrise, key lime and strawberry social. Less sugar, Canadian cream and better ingredients for a better tasting product than other cream liquors.



Thank you to **Highland Packers** for their support in providing partial sponsorship of the veal on a bun served for lunch. Started by the DeJonge family in 1958,

Highland Packers includes meat packing, as well as retail; with a strong focus on local foods including the freshest meats and deli, cheeses, various dairy products, as well as fruits, vegetables, and baked goods.

Scotiabank®

CHEESE BASKET SPONSOR

Thank you to Scotiabank for sponsoring our Speaker Gift Baskets and for helping the South Western Ontario Dairy Symposium support local cheese suppliers! Scotiabank has been providing financial services to Canadian farms and agri-businesses for more than 185 years. From small family farms to large-scale producers and processors, they have responded to customers' changing needs. But one thing remains constant – their commitment to serve those that feed our nation. Their Agricultural Specialists come from agriculture and farming backgrounds to better understand & serve your business.



**Show your support for dairy farmers and agribusiness,
GIVE THE GIFT OF DAIRY!**

Thank you for attending!

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FEBRUARY 2025
FOR OUR
40TH
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