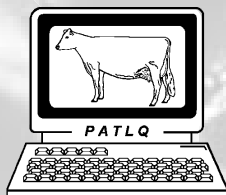


Newsletter

Pavillon John E. Moxley • 555, boul. des Anciens combattants, Ste-Anne de Bellevue Québec H9X 3R4



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ABOUT OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN 1997-98

Dear Customers,

The period from June '97 to May '98 turned out to be full of accomplishments as a result of the efforts and changes made by the organization over the last few years. The new service structure based on regions makes for a closer relationship between the organization, its employees and its customers. PATLQ demonstrates a genuine desire to continuously improve the quality of customer service. Our hourly based fee structure along with our new billing system once stabilized and explained turned out to be an excellent tool in meeting PATLQ's mission.

Meeting your demand

Our representative's efforts during our enrolment drive turned a 102-drop in customers (97-98 budgetary forecast) into an increase of 525 new ones, for a total of 7 612 as of May 30th 1998. Our softwares (**RATION'L**, **PROM-S**, and milk production planning) combined with our staff's experience also helped meet your demand for services as shown by the following figures: 85 000 hours sold by PATLQ's advisors (roughly 68 minutes per test) and more than 75 000 hours of milking supervision (roughly 120 minutes per milking). In all, 3 137 TRUDET visits (milk meters check and positive identification of first calf heifers) provided accessibility to genetic evaluation. Having a specialist run a V.M.E.M. (Verification of Milking Equipment and Methods) met the needs of 315 producers. Our laboratories analyzed 3 million samples (for herd management purposes) and more than 225 000 bulk tank and truck samples (for milk payment purposes).

New services

Development continues on a single software for all of Canada (VISION 2000). Currently

undergoing extensive testing, it will progressively be made available to all Canadian dairy producers starting this Fall through the Spring of 1999. This initiative regroups all milk recording partners in Canada and will represent significant savings to users. The Canadian Dairy Herd Management Services (CDHMS) will operate from PATLQ's head office in Ste-Anne de Bellevue at the beginning of September 1998.

An alliance made with dairies enables us to consolidate all resources available in our laboratories resulting in more savings to the users. New services like milk urea and feed analyses are more examples of PATLQ's desire to meet customers' needs.

Financial results...

PATLQ's sound management practices made it possible for revenues to beat expenses by \$257 635 even when Government's withdrawal from milk recording financing meant a cut of \$655 614 in revenues for fiscal year 1997-98. No small feat when one considers all major investments made in: VISION2000; new services; training of employee and customers; etc. This small surplus on gross revenues of \$13 738 064 respects PATLQ's strategic goal of a balance budget.

Both technical and financial results bear testimony to PATLQ's administrators' involvement, massive employees' commitment and an ever greater desire on your part to use our services.

Thank you

Bertrand Farmer
General Manager

PREAUTHORIZED PAYMENT ... WHY NOT SIGN UP?

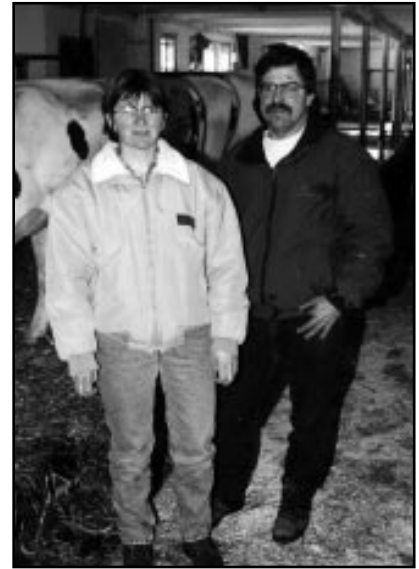
In place since July 2nd 1998, PATLQ's preauthorized payment (PAP) plan is already used by 800 producers. These lucky 800 no longer have to write a cheque each month. Some banks and credit unions charge a fee of \$0.40 to \$0.80 for this operation. At some institutions, one can avoid these charges by maintaining a minimum account balance, while others charge an annual fee. Talk to a your bank representative to find the most economical solution for you.

In the majority of cases the payment's date is as follows: if the billing date falls between the 1st and 15 of the month, the PAP will go through on the 2nd of the following month (ex.: herd invoiced July 8th = payment on August 2nd). If you test between the 16th and the end of the month, PAP will go through on the second day of the second following month (ex.: herd invoiced July 22nd = payment on September 2nd).

"Can you still enroll?" Sure, it's easy. Make sure your account is paid in full (PAP can't be retroactive). When you have paid your current invoice, let us know you want to join our PAP plan. Leave a message on our toll free line 1 800 266 5248. We will send you an enrollment form. You can also talk to your PATLQ advisor on the next visit. PAP's simplicity will amaze you.

PROM-S - REALLY GETS YOU GOING...

With 40 cows, Ferme Artis inc. from Cap-Santé (Portneuf County) maintains an average of 8 662 kg of milk and BCA's projections of 189-201-191. Even though heifers calve at 27 months with an average weight of 560 kg, Huguette Naud and Serge Gagné want to improve these figures which are already above the provincial average. The owner's recipe is simple: from birth to weaning (at around six week) heifer calves stay outside in hutches. They receive milk, a commercial feed, lukewarm water at will but no dry hay. Once weaned, they move inside to stay in pens up to six month of age. At this stage dry hay, high-moisture corn or barley, and a commercial protein supplement with a mineral containing rumensin make up the ration. From six month to calving, they will receive the same ration but they are moved to stanchions. At pasture during the summer they are kept close to the barn to follow up on feeding and because "it makes it easier to breed them at the right time".



"After only one year with **PROM-S** the results are impressive"

Taking their cues from Richard Pellerin (PATLQ's advisor), they decided to use **PROM-S** to "tightened up" their replacement heifer's management and feeding. Soon after adopting **PROM-S** they realized that heifers over 20 months lagged behind the average growth for that age. Richard suggested some modifications to the ration and it did not take long to see positive results. In one year, the projected calving age is down to 26 months at a weight of 685 kg. At this point, to improve growth, Huguette and Serge want to turn their attention to the period between birth to four month.

PROM-S meets the owners requirements both in the ease of follow-up on heifers and in the little time required to do so. It takes only 40 minutes to measure and weigh 30 heifers to obtain a general overview of replacement stock. These are the "tools" used to detect weaknesses which require work. They appreciate the percentile ranking (individual and per group) as well as the growth curves. Furthermore, individual recommendations allow for a closer follow-up of each subject. This makes it possible to match each heifer's grain ration with its weight gain. Thanks to **PROM-S**, Richard can provide them with each heifer's individual report. Serge and Huguette want to reduce even further the calving age while improving both height and weight at calving. With the improvements seen so far, no doubt that with **PROM-S** they are on the right path to reach their goals.

ABC OPTION FOR OWNER SAMPLER, A REMINDER

PATLQ strives to rapidly process your herd's data. We ask you to please pay particular attention to the following: attach Form 3 to herd data (Form 4); write the test date and condition codes even if they are the same as last month; if the condition code differs from last test write down the date that applies to this new code. Finally, write all information in the spaces provided.

Missing information requires phone calls to get the data and causes delays. We thank you for your cooperation.

FEED ANALYSIS IN 24 HOURS IS HERE... ALMOST

Since August 10th 1998, PATLQ analyzes forages samples at its laboratories in Sainte-Anne de Bellevue. We count on analyzing samples within 24 hours of their arrival at the laboratory. More often than not, the analysis will be done and the results will be returned on the very day the samples are received. A bright yellow sticker will clearly indicate PATLQ's commitment to provide the service within 24 hours of the samples' arrival at our lab.

YOUR EVALUATION OF TRAINING

Training is at the core of PATLQ's mission and its realization. Since the Fall of 1997, close to 1 000 producers have profited from the theory and pragmatic counsel received during the introductory (I) level or advanced (A) sessions of dairy cattle nutrition courses. The following table shows participants' appreciation of the course. The data was collected after each session.

	# of sessions evaluated	# of respondents	Contenu %	Présentation %	Documents %	Meet my expectations %	Message clarity %	Recommend the course %
I	28	557	86	92	93	77	85	87
A	11	255	90	91	95	78	81	90

In PATLQ's view, these figures are the best way to launch the new series of courses for Fall '98 and Winter '99 (see the article «Your training, a profitable investment!»).

THANKS FOR YOUR INVOLVEMENT

In the Fall of 1997, PATLQ introduced an innovative performance evaluation method for all its employees. Based on the organization's strategic plan (itself developed from customers' needs with industry's constraints and opportunities in mind), the employees set goals to be reached during the year.

Through their immediate supervisor, the exercise is followed and validated according to concrete results as judged by internal and external customers. Last May, managers from more than 1 000 dairy enterprises enrolled with PATLQ took time to evaluate individual, team and organizational performances.

This feedback from you is essential to acknowledge our employees' efforts. It also reflects your satisfaction level in regards to our services and the tools made available to you. We would like to extend a very special thank to all those who participated.

YOUR TRAINING, A PROFITABLE INVESTMENT!

The two levels of training (introductory and advanced) aim at improving each participant's level of knowledge in the field of dairy cattle feeding. GREPA's 1996 report (on the costs of production for Quebec dairy enterprises) shows that feeding-related costs account for more than 45% of total actual costs of producing milk. This item puts feeding in first place among all expenses related to milk production.

Comments received from participants speak volumes: "Excellent courses, the instructions given have clarified many points and refreshed my memory" (Lac St-Jean), "It will be most interesting to read the documentation" (Sherbrooke), "I've thoroughly enjoyed the course and found it stimulating" (Victoriaville), "In the future, producers will have to be more knowledgeable about feeding if they want to stay competitive" (St-Joseph), "This course leads to questioning our way of doing things. It is for us to decide..." (Trois-Rivières).

Clear advantages

These courses develop one's ability to creatively approach new ideas and recommendations from advisors and stakeholders. They enable one to ask "the right questions" through better knowledge of feeding, its role, possibilities and limitations. It ties nutrition to health (milk fever, lameness, acetonemia, reproduction, acidosis, etc.). Discussions with the instructor, as well as with other participating producers, give extra value to these two days. Sessions at both levels will be held this Fall and Winter. For more information, talk to your PATLQ advisor or dial 1 800 266 5248. Our Website (www.patlq.com) has a special feature on feeding courses.

Don't hesitate- invest in your training!



Newsletter

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LET'S TALK...

To facilitate production transfers

Each PATLQ employee strives to make rapid and accurate production transfers. Make sure to provide us with the following information: registration number (name or chain number if available), calving date, seller's name, address and phone number and his milk recording option (Official or Owner sampler). If the animal is from the States, please provide its ICR (Individual Cow Record). In the case of a rented cow returning to the herd of origin, please add the information about the lessee.

PATLQ transfers roughly 5 000 productions yearly. One can understand how important complete information is to insure accurate and rapid transfers. We thank you for your collaboration.