



PATLQ

NEWS

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John E. Moxley Building · 555 Des Anciens-Combattants Blvd.
Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue, Quebec H9X 3R4

PATLQ's Business Plan

A Clear Vision for the Next Five Years

This past May, PATLQ's Board of Directors adopted a budget following the outline of our business plan for the next five years. Taking advantage of the wide experience of its Directors, Managers, Analysts and customer service Advisors, PATLQ carried out an intensive strategic planning exercise. The following trends were identified:

- Following the pattern observed throughout North America over the last 30 years, the number of dairy farms will probably decrease by 25% during the next five years. There should be about 7000 dairy producers in the province by 2005.
- The average herd in Quebec might increase from 44 to 60 cows (currently the Canadian average is 52).
- Automation and computerisation at the farm will accelerate.
- Savings from new technologies will benefit consumers and might translate into a 5 to 10% lower milk price for the producer.
- Many new quality standards may have to be implemented at the farm.

In order to support producers in dealing with this new environment, our business plan proposes to:

- Extend the use of PATLQ services to more than 90% of active dairy producers (currently at 75%).
- Develop new specialised services in dairy production and heifer management.
- Provide added value to the current 300,000 cow production database and create a dairy heifer performance database.
- Contribute to the computerisation of Quebec dairy farms by making several services available through the Internet.
- Continue the development of a software for entering and transferring data at the farm, so that pro-

ducers can integrate and access all the data on their herd (Interface project).

- Work closely with all industry partners to provide the best services at the best price.

As you can see, this planning and the resulting actions were not randomly selected. They result from a serious and realistic planning exercise targeting the challenges that we must face together. Our goal is simple: contribute to the best of our abilities to the sustained development of Quebec's dairy industry.

Bertrand Farmer
General Manager



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Permanent Identification for Cattle

Future Quebec System will go farther

As of January 1, 2001, a federal law will make the identification of all cattle mandatory in Canada. Identification will take place whenever the animal leaves the farm on which it was born. In the spring of 2001, the Quebec Government intends to implement its own system of permanent ID for all species used for commerce in the province. This future Quebec system will respect the requirements of the federal law, but will go farther in terms of **labelling performance** and **effectiveness in tracking the animals**.

Cattle producers' groups in Quebec and their genetic improvement organisations acknowledge the soundness of the Quebec approach. They jointly presented MAPAQ with **a list of ten points** on which they agree:

1. **Identification** will be done with a **single permanent lifetime number**, compatible with both the requirements of trade for slaughter and the requirements of genetic improvement.
2. The tag will be of the **magnetic** variety, and will be compatible with the requirements of the federal by-laws (magnetic number visible to the eye and accreditation logo);
3. The obligation for animal identification will apply **upon leaving the farm**;
4. In addition to recording the place of birth and the place of slaughter, the tracking of animals will be done with a **control point** approach using, for instance, visits by RAAQ, barn sales, veterinarians, breeders, milk recording agents, breed association agents, etc.;
5. A **database**, capable of interacting with the federal database, will be established. This database will be available for consultation, while also respecting confidentiality;
6. Development and implementation costs of the Quebec database will be entirely covered by government(s);
7. Operating costs of the database will then be assumed by governments and users (those consulting the database);
8. The operation of a specific system for Quebec must not generate additional costs for Quebec farmers and, if possible, should reduce them;
9. A fund should be created, to be supported by all users and beneficiaries of the system. This fund would help share the cost of tagging the animals;
10. There should be a plan for transition measures, acknowledging the identification activities already accomplished by some groups of farmers (notion of "grandfather" clause).

Magnetic tagging offers many advantages, including a retention rate of almost 100% and far superior readability. With all the benefits, including economies of scale, the costs are competitive. This is the type of animal tagging technology being adopted around the world.

As for the database, some federal officials are themselves of the opinion that with only one point of entry (upon leaving the farm) and one point of exit (death of the animal), the federal database will be of little use in tracking the animals. A follow-up by control points, on the other hand, will take advantage of all the data that is already recorded by various professionals and agencies.

This fall, our organisations will launch an information campaign directed to cattle farmers (dairy as well as meat producers). Implementation parameters, selected label model, cost and operational methods of Quebec's future system will be clarified. In the meantime, Quebec farmers are expected to comply with the federal law. They can choose among the different labelling systems permitted under the law. Transition measures will be planned for the implementation of the Quebec system. These measures will acknowledge the identification efforts already in place.

Invest right now in highly profitable services

This fall, pay close attention to your PATLQ advisor. He will let you know about some highly profitable tools which, for a minimal cost, can **increase your profits by many hundreds, even thousands of dollars.**

URÉELAB

Urea analysis is probably one of the most convenient tools since the invention of the automated milking machine! Imagine: from your milk sample, you get a reliable measurement that is a direct reflection of the ration's protein/energy ratio! A cow's rumen is like the furnace of a steam locomotive. In order for the train to run smoothly, you must shovel in the right amount of coal. Too little, and the fire starves. Too much, and the fire smothers. **URÉELAB** is like having a thermometer in the furnace. For a mere 28 cents per sample, you can discern whether to adjust your cows' concentrates. Think of the possible savings!

Furthermore, using **URÉELAB** in conjunction with observations on the cows' reproductive cycle helps confirm that a diet too rich in protein has a negative impact on reproduction, as well as increasing feed costs. Irregular –or absent– heats, repeated services, fetus mortality are all related to an excess of protein in the ration. Inversely, a lower rate of urea indicates a lack of protein in the rumen, and limits production. One should target a rate of milk urea between 10 and 16 milligrams per decilitre. Correct the cow's ration, and everything gets back to normal. It's plain, it's simple, it works. Already, more than 40% of PATLQ clients have discovered this golden opportunity. Do not wait any longer: add **URÉELAB** to your toolbox and get a better control on your herd's feeding and breeding costs right now.

PROM-S

If there is a tool that might compete with **URÉELAB** as our finest gift of the decade, it most certainly is **PROM-S**. This first rate software allows you to optimise the management of your replacement heifers. From birth to calving, planning of feeding, growth and reproduction of each of your heifers is a snap! Follow each animal step by step and get to the optimal breeding weight earlier, saving those precious months that make the difference between an average performance and a maximum profit.

With this issue, you will find the all new **PROM-S Profitability Card**. In black and white, this card clearly demonstrates the savings –or rather, the substantial benefits– that you can earn by entrusting your replacement heifer management to **PROM-S**. Take the opportunity of your advisor's next visit to complete the "Your Herd" column. Then you decide whether or not you can do without this outstanding tool.

BARN CARDS

A little later this fall, you will hear more about the new **Vision2000** barn cards. You just have to see them to fully appreciate what they do!

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How well do you know your *Vision2000* Interpretation Manual and Reports?

Win \$50 in just a few minutes!

Earlier this year, clients subscribing to high-end PATLQ services have received the *Vision2000 Interpretation Manual*. This Manual is a useful tool in the understanding of the many reports generated by our analysis system. How well have you studied your *Manual*? Do you know where to find information? Then, this quiz is for you! Correctly answer the four questions, send in your form, and you could win prizes worth \$100 in all.

For instance, a combination between elements such as: forage analysis, URÉELAB tests, an hour

of advisor service, a PATLQ polo shirt, etc. Prizes are either products or services from PATLQ. Two sets of prizes worth \$50 each will be drawn quarterly from participants correctly answering the questions. There will be four different quizzes between now and next spring. The results of each drawing will be announced in the following bulletin. PATLQ personnel and their families are not eligible.

The answers can all be found in the *Vision2000 Interpretation Manual or Reports*. Only one choice among a), b), c) or d) is correct. Good luck or, rather: Happy hunting!

« I know Vision2000 » Contest – Quiz #1

Question 1

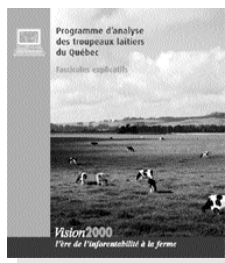
What does Linear Score do?

- a) evaluate the animal's conformation
- b) evaluate loss of production
- c) determine milk quality
- d) evaluate slope of the pipeline

Question 2

The result of milk urea analysis:

- a) when high, indicates a waste of dietary nitrogen
- b) allows confirmation of the animal's pregnancy
- c) allows verification of dietary energy and dietary protein synchronisation
- d) both answers A and C are true



Question 3

The annual average:

- a) is not affected by calving interval
- b) allows evaluation of the herd's real productivity
- c) considers lactations projected to 305 days
- d) considers 305-day completed lactations

Question 4

Feeding represents an important part of production costs. The average feeding cost in the province in 1999 was \$13.94 per hectolitre of milk. Find out where **your** feeding cost is located within the following groups:

- a) under \$11.99/hl (16% of herds)
- b) between \$12.00 and \$13.99/hl (43% of herds)
- c) between \$14.00 and \$15.99/hl (31% of herds)
- d) equal to or over \$16.00/hl (10% of herds)

Answer Form - « I know Vision 2000 » Contest – Quiz #1 - September 2000

Answers : 1 : _____ 2 : _____ 3 : _____ 4 : _____

Name : _____ Herd N° : _____

Address : _____

Tel : _____ Fax : _____ E-mail : _____

Please return **prior to October 16, 2000** to the attention of Julie Charlebois, PATLQ, 555 boul. des Anciens-Combattants, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, Québec H9X 3R4 • Fax: 514-398-7963 • E-mail: jcharlebois@patlq.com (You may enter by E-mail. Just write in the subject box "Quiz #1" followed by your herd number, and give your four answers and full name and address as your message).