

L'ENREGISTREMENT
C'est payant!

Permanent ID and electronic registration of
Holstein livestock by Internet

To save trouble, time and money

Ann Louise Carson, agr., Business development manager

PATLQ' clients are the lucky winners with our new services *Permanent ID* at *ATQ* and *Holstein Electronic Registration* offered by their advisors. Only a few minutes on the computer, two Internet transmissions, and that's it! Users are delighted with the precision, the speed and the money they save. No more penalties is a true relief!!

The number of milk producers that benefit from these services is going up every week. **Why not join them? Talk to your advisor!**

VMEM A question of quality...and of profit

Annik Perron, Communication Manager

Milk quality is giving you a hard time? **VMEM** will help you find the right solutions to solve your problems. Your SCC is already below average? **VMEM** is the ideal preventive solution to avoid any future problem and to improve your performance.

VMEM is a verification of your milking equipment and methods, performed by an independent and impartial expert. A **VMEM** visit includes:

- The complete analysis of your milking system with the most recent diagnostic tools
- A systematic review of your milking method (a good training or improvement opportunity for a new employee or for your family)
- The verification and analysis of the washing system (physico-chemical analysis of water, etc.)
- An evaluation of your barn environment (dimensions of stalls, litter used, etc.)
- Clear, non-nonsense explanations and down-to-earth suggestions for corrective actions
- If needed, a follow-up by your advisor with your *Vision2000* SCC reports.

By following your **VMEM** advisor's recommendations, you will gain:

- Improved *udder health*, therefore, better health for the entire herd
- A reduction of the *replacement rate*,

- therefore a more profitable herd
- Better *milk quality*, so no worries with the new standards
- Improved *milk production*, therefore, **better revenues for you**

The higher the SCC, the higher the money loss. Even with an SCC at 200 000, you lose **\$300 per cow per year**. A **VMEM** visit comes at about \$225. One **VMEM** visit every year is therefore one of the most profitable investments that a dairy producer can make.

VMEM: a question of quality and...of profit.



Your **VMEM** agent is a milk quality expert, using the most up-to-date diagnostic tools to detect any anomaly in your milking equipment.

Our contest for December!

Results for Quiz Number 13

The drawing was made on October 20th, among several hundred entries. The winners are: **Georgette Auclair, Ferme Cagette inc.**, St-Pierre de Broughton (advisor: *Luc Laflamme*) and **Patrick Marchand, Ferme Claude Marchand**, St-Justin (advisor: *Simon Smith*). Each won a \$50 credit on PATLQ services. Congratulations to all participants!

The correct answers were:

Question 1

Why use the **VMEM** service (**VSMT**, in French) ?

- e) All of these answers
 - a) In order to prevent financial losses due to poor milk quality
 - b) To improve my herd's udder health
 - c) To evaluate the need to invest in my barn or equipment
 - d) Because this impartial service is provided by a specialist

Question 2

Somatic cell count is higher between July and September. Among the four following reasons, find the one that does not apply.

- d) Longer photoperiod affects microbial proliferation

Question 3

In the Fall, the ration of pasturing heifers still needs supplementation.

True

Here is Quiz Number 14!

Answers can be found in this bulletin, in the *Rapport de production 2002*, or by consulting your advisor. Two \$50 credits on advisory services will be drawn on January 26, 2004.

Question 1

Among these symptoms, which can be related to the presence of mycotoxins in the ration?

- a) Reduction of feed consumption
- b) Reduction of milk production
- c) Abortions
- d) Ongoing oestrus

Question 2

When mycotoxins are present in the ration, what actions can contribute to solve the problem?

- a) Adding sodium bicarbonate
- b) Increase contents in energy, protein and other nutrients
- c) Adding binders

- d) Dilute contaminated feed with healthy feed
- e) Get rid of the contaminated feed

Question 3

Whether average milk production is at 6,000 or 10,000 kg, the herd's calving interval is about the same.

True or False?

Question 4

Which among the following factors influence the consumption of forage dry matter :

- a) Quality of forages
- b) Availability of water
- c) Number of meals
- d) Herd average weight

Entries must be received **prior to January 23, 2004**. Please send to the attention of Julie Charlebois, PATLQ, 555 boul. des Anciens-Combattants, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, Quebec H9X 3R4 -- Fax: 514-398-7963 - E-mail: jcharlebois@patlq.com (You may enter by E-mail. Just write in the subject box "Quiz - 14", followed by your herd number, and give your answers and full name and address as your message).

Reply Form – Quiz Number 14 - December 2003

Answers : 1 a) b) c) d) 2 a) b) c) d) e)
3 True False 4 a) b) c) d)

Name : _____ Herd Number : _____

Address : _____

Phone : _____ Fax : _____

E-mail : _____

PATLQ

NEWSLETTER

65 - DECEMBER 2003
John E. Moxley Building · 555 Des Anciens-Combattants Blvd.
Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue, Quebec H9X 3R4

Greetings from all of us at PATLQ

The Board of Directors and employees of PATLQ wish you the best of holidays and, most importantly, the best of times with your family. We also wish you good health and great success in your projects for 2004. We thank you for your continuing support to PATLQ and for your trust in our services. PATLQ is constantly striving to better respond to your needs and support your evolution.



Your success is our priority

Nowadays, dairy producers are doing business with several providers, who are offering a wide array of products and services, all of them presumably aimed at improving the farmer's chances of success. The same producers also face a significant narrowing of their profit margin, due to the constant increase in prices, new regulations and requirements, while the money they get for milk and meat stay the same... or go down. So they actually have less money to buy all that is available on the market!

In such a predicament, it is quite normal to take a long, hard look at expenses and investments in order to select what seems more promising. It is indeed possible to find substantial savings (and profits) by improving milk quality, feeding costs, health, reproduction and heifer raising, and so on. The problem is, a lot of people are offering you miraculous products, outstanding services, top-of-the-class advice. Who should you listen to?

Give priority to unbiased advisory services

Among all the available solutions, some are provided by professionals who happen to offer unbiased services, meaning that their advice is not linked to a business imperative. An organization such as PATLQ, which is under majority control of dairy producers and which aims at covering operation costs without looking for profit, is a perfect example. Your economic advisor and your veterinarian are also professionals that deserve all of your trust.

Of course, many other partners can bring a positive contribution to your farm's development. However, your best strategy for the future is to begin by bring-

ing to the table your unbiased advisors – your PATLQ advisor, your economic advisor and your veterinarian – in order to review with them any major purchase or investment you are considering, so as to make sure they are really the most profitable for you.

This is precisely the spirit moving us at PATLQ, as we are currently building bridges with the *Fédération des groupes-conseils agricoles du Québec*, the *Association des médecins vétérinaires praticiens du Québec*, as well as *Agri-Traçabilité Québec*, and the various industry partners in the field of genetic improvement. Together, we are working to find ways to reduce costs, make your life easier and better harmonize our recommendations in order to maximize *your* profit.

Your unbiased advisors are committed to the success of dairy producers ahead of the success of any corporation or organization.

Bertrand Farmer, agr.
General Manager

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New advantage for PEP collaborators



Agathe Drolet, agr., Director, communication and genetics, CIAQ
Ann Louise Carson, agr., Business development manager, PATLQ

Producers collaborating in CIAQ's Young Sire Proving Program (PEP) will now benefit from a new advantage. **A credit on PATLQ's milk recording invoice will be paid by CIAQ according to the breeder's contribution to young sire proving.** This measure comes in addition to existing incentives – discount on young sire semen cost, credit upon classification of young sire daughters, discount on proven sire semen cost, annual visit by a CIAQ representative and access to the free sire mating program *Strat@gen*.

Breeders eligible to PEP will then receive \$20 per young sire daughter that has been classified during the usual period (October 1st to September 30th of the following year) and this amount will appear once a year as a credit on their PATLQ invoice.

The period considered for attribution of the first PATLQ credit at the beginning of 2004 includes females classified between October 1st, 2001 and September 30th, 2002, since they will have completed their lactation. The 2005 credit will include females classified between October 1st, 2002 and September 30th, 2003.

In order to be eligible, the young sire daughters must:

- Come from a herd enrolled in PEP and client of PATLQ at the time of credit attribution;
- Have provided at least 3 tests with component analysis eligible to genetic evaluations (in the case of a female moving to a new herd, the credit will go to the herd first meeting this criteria).
- Clients of both CIAQ and PATLQ will receive the credit applicable to their herd according to these criteria at the beginning of 2004, with a list of eligible cows.



Let us begin work for the next credits right now

More and more, producers require precise and trustworthy information on the functional traits that have an important economic impact. This is why we now urge you to communicate to your PATLQ advisor precise and complete information for the genetic evaluation of auxiliary traits.

So, for daughters classified between October 1st, 2003 and September 30th, 2004, an important part of the amount to be credited in 2006 will be linked to a new criteria, namely that the producer provide data on the auxiliary traits : calving ease, milking speed and temperament.

On each test-day, producers are asked to provide information on the birth of each calf in the herd (all calvings) concerning calving ease. Also, your evaluation of milking temperament and milking speed for each female from the first to the sixth month of the first lactation will allow to get a proof on their sire for these two traits. **The collection of complete information concerning auxiliary traits will ensure the attribution of the maximum PATLQ credit from the 2006 PEP program.**

This new incentive will benefit the entire breeding industry in Quebec. Both CIAQ and PATLQ are pleased to contribute to its implementation.

Technical Column Managing mycotoxins

These days, mycotoxins are in fashion. Since we know them better, we tend to fear them more. But they have always been around. Last summer's humid weather were ideal conditions for the development of mycotoxins in feeds. Let us see what measures can be taken in order to reduce their impact on our herds.

A mycotoxin is a substance produced by a mould that can have unwanted effects on animals and humans. There has always been a certain amount of mycotoxins in the ration of our dairy cows, and they persistently contribute to some health problems. However, mycotoxins cannot be held accountable for all ailments. Other factors come into play, and mycotoxins are only amplifying some metabolic or environmental problem already present. Furthermore, for any two herds exposed to similar amounts of mycotoxins, the reactions can be entirely different. Proper feeding and a good general health seem to preserve some herds from the more severe symptoms.

To this day, more than 350 mycotoxins have been identified. In Quebec, we mostly find species of the genus *Penicillium*, *Aspergillus* and principally *Fusarium*, which includes the most commonly analysed mycotoxins: DON (deoxynivalenol our vomitoxin), ZEN (zearalenone) and T-2. It is recommended to have DON analyzed first, since it is the most common and can be used as a marker. DON is related to a reduction in feed consumption and milk production, and a weakening of the immune system. ZEN, is related to lower production, diarrhea, infertility, abortions, ongoing oestrus and swelling of the udder. Finally, T-2, which is much more toxic, also causes a reduction in feed consumption and milk production, as well as irritation of the digestive tract and abortions, and will affect the immune system. It is found more frequently in forages, rarely in grains.

Prevention

Moulds need nutrients (starch, protein, lipids), a pH close to neutral (7), warm temperature and about 70% relative humidity. Most of the time, they appear in the field. In order to limit their proliferation, grains and forages should be harvested at the proper stage of matu-

rity and moisture level. When filling the silo, keep an eye on moisture and cut length (to get optimal compaction), and proceed rapidly. At feedout, it is recommended to take at least 3 inches in an upright silo, and 4 to 6 inches in a bunker silo in order to avoid heating. Also make sure that the conveyor belts, augers and mixer are completely empty at the end of each day. Likewise, feed bunks should be emptied of any feed residue and cleaned.

A silo that was used to store contaminated feed must also be cleaned. Organic matter clinging to the walls should be scraped off with a brush before using the pressure washer. Some chlorine or propionic acid-based disinfectant usually provide adequate cleaning.

Strategies

If, despite these precautions, analysis should reveal that some feed is contaminated, you have the choice between getting rid of the feed (extreme case), or use it with the following precautions: 1) do not offer the feed to the more vulnerable animals (young heifers, dry cows and fresh cows) 2) dilute it with healthy feed – and mix thoroughly –, 3) increase contents in energy, protein, zinc, copper, selenium, vitamins A and E, and 4) as a last resort, consider adding binders (sodium bentonite, hydrated aluminosilicates of sodium and calcium) which, according to some, have the property of “tying-up” mycotoxins and so, of limiting their absorption.

Last note : when feed is contaminated, you should take into account a loss of nutritional value of 10 to 15%.

Further than that, the best strategy to reduce any negative effect on the health of your cows is to reduce stress at the barn. Just as humans, cows remain in better health in a clean, calm and comfortable environment.

For any question regarding mycotoxins, or to order an analysis, please contact your advisor.



Bruno Gosselin, agr.

New dairy industry standards An excellent example of cooperation between industry partners

Sylvia Lafontaine, responsible for Industry Standards at PATLQ

The new standards for supervised herds and herds qualifying for genetic evaluation have been officially transferred to the Industry Standards Committee. This committee, made up of members from Canadian Dairy Herd Improvement, Breed associations, Artificial Insemination and the Canadian Dairy Network (CDN), is responsible for establishing standards associated with publishable lactation records and information required for genetic evaluations. The transfer of these standards to the Industry Standards Committee is an excellent example of cooperation among industry partners. By having all partners responsible for setting the standards, a high quality, credible system that meets the needs of all partners is assured.

In October 2003, all PATLQ clients on a supervised or alternating service levels received a complete copy of the new standards by mail (as well as the new disciplinary committee procedures). Although these standards are in large part addressed to supervised herds, herds qualifying for genetic evaluations have their own part to play in maintaining the credibility of the Canadian animal improvement industry. The following excerpt details the actions required within these standards, for a herd to be eligible for genetic evaluations (other requirements may be set by CDN's *Genetic Evaluation Board* that are beyond the scope of this manual ex. percent-age of animals identified on test day).

1.2 Herd Owner Responsibilities

The Herd Owner shall:

- Agree that acceptance and payment for any services described in this document shall constitute consent to adhere to the respective Service Standards.
- Ensure that each animal has within herd identification, which is properly indexed with approved national identification systems where applicable;
- Enroll all animals in the herd which have calved at least once, whether or not they are milking;

- Maintain and provide accurate records of key events necessary for record calculations including dates of calving, purchases, sales, deaths or completion of lactation;
- Maintain the same schedule of milking on test day as on other days;
- Assure the accuracy and completeness of all information collected and recorded;
- Not engage in any activity which may mislead, impair or attempt to impair the reliability of any information about an animal or the herd.
- Use approved milk metering devices and accept an annual meter verification by a DHI agency employee.

Each herd owner is responsible for assuring that the data collected on the farm meets the service standards for the service level selected. To do so, each must take the time to review the requirements! Any questions you may have can be addressed to your PATLQ representative. Should you like to have a complete copy of these service standards, your PATLQ representative will make one available to you.

From January
13th to 15th, 2004
**Welcome to the
Salon de
l'agriculture**

Mid-January will see the traditional get-together of the *Salon de l'agriculture* in Saint-Hyacinthe. Like every year, PATLQ will be there with your dairy partners, CIAQ and Holstein Quebec. Come and say hello, and don't forget to enter our drawing !