

Our contest for May !

Results for Quiz Number 15

The drawing was made on April 14 among several hundred entries. The winners are: **Lionel Boisvert**, of St-Adrien-de-Ham (advisor: *Jeannot Côté*) and **Ferme Emond Couture et Fils**, of St-Narcisse (advisor: *Luc Laflamme*). Each won a \$50 credit on PATLQ services. Congratulations to all participants!

The correct answers were:

Question 1

Concerning heifer growth, what are the target ADG (average daily gain) for the Holstein and Ayrshire breeds (at the 50th percentile) ?

b) 810 g HO - 700 g AY

and/or

d) 950 g HO - 800 g AY

Question 2

New growth curves : what is, over the last 15 years, the weight increase percentage for heifers at calving?

c) 15 %

Question 3

On your 2004 *Carte de régie*, what are the figures for average herd weight and age at first calving for your herd?

(depends on your data)

Question 4

What is the daily amount of concentrates a cow should be consuming at calving time?

b) 6 kg

and/or

c) 0,75 % of body weight

Here is Quiz Number 16 !

Answers can be found in this bulletin, in the PATLQ chronicle *Analyses+*, Part II in the June issue of *Le Producteur de lait québécois* or *The Quebec Farmers Advocate* and on your *SCC Report - Management List*. You may also ask your advisor for help. Two \$50 credits on advisory services will be drawn on July 30, 2004.

Question 1

In Quebec, for 2003, each cow ingested on average how many kg of hay silage per day ?

- a) 7,5 kg
- b) 13 kg
- c) 18 kg

Question 2

The ideal temperature for the growth of lactic acid bacteria in a silage is:

- a) 25°C
- b) 30°C
- c) 40°C
- d) 50°C

Question 3

The protein/fat ratio available by the *Analyses+* module helps point out two major problems. They are:

- a) acidosis
- b) mastitis
- c) foot rot
- d) milk fever
- e) ketosis

Question 4

According to your new *SCC Report - Management List*, the cow that is costing you the most due to her high SCC is _____ (Cow Name or Number)

Entries must be received **prior to June 30, 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 - 16", followed by your herd number, and give your answers and full name and address as your message).

Reply Form – Quiz N° 16 - May 2004

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

Name : _____ Herd Number : _____

Address : _____

Tel : _____ Fax : _____

E-mail : _____



PATLQ

NEWSLETTER

67 - MAY 2004

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

Genetic Improvement

PATLQ is a major partner

PATLQ is a major partner in the genetic improvement of dairy herds. For the last 35 years, most Quebec cows have been on milk recording and analysis : the resulting data are basic tools for animal breeding. The ongoing flow of reliable data, to the *Canadian Dairy Network*, and then to Breed Associations, is at the heart of our genetic improvement system.

Aware of the importance of its mission, PATLQ strives to uphold and improve data reliability, to increase public knowledge of our collective accomplishments and to continue responding to the needs of dairy industry partners. Our actions in the last few months include:

- PATLQ Management makes it their business to be present at the Annual Meetings of Breed Associations. This year, we presented an update on recent actions aimed at improving data reliability, including an overview of the criteria used for data validation and of the retest guidelines in case of questionable data. These new procedures were greeted very positively by producers.
- Similarly, many PATLQ advisors attended meetings of the Cercles d'amélioration du bétail (CAB), in addition to their participation in common local activities.
- Since January, in collaboration with CIAQ and Breed Associations, PATLQ has been actively promoting animal registration, allowing more herds to qualify for genetic evaluations. As of March 31, almost 200 producers have shown interest.

- On April 7, the *2004 Genetic Forum* was held in Quebec City, hosted by the CPCAB (the Provincial Board of CABs), in collaboration with CIAQ, CQRL, FPLQ and PATLQ. More than 350 people attended. Our delegates presented PATLQ's role in genetic improvement and highlighted the potential - as yet not entirely exploited - available in the reports received monthly by producers.

Finally, since the summer of 2003, PATLQ eases life for dairy producers with the opportunity for electronic registration of cattle by their advisors. For now, this service is avail-

Sylvain Biron, T.P., Regional Manager, *Les Rives*

able only for Holsteins, but discussions are under way to extend it to other breeds. Inclusion of identification pictures is another improvement coming soon. More good news to come in the next few months !



PATLQ Management is always present at the Annual Meetings of Breed Associations. Bertrand Farmer, agr., General Manager of PATLQ, at the 2004 meeting of Holstein Quebec.

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Heifer Growth

Dairy Industry partners endorse PATLQ's new curves

Ann Louise Carson, agr., Business Development Manager

In the February issue of *PATLQ Newsletter* and in the April issue of *Le producteur de lait québécois* and *The Quebec Farmer's Advocate*, we introduced the new growth curves for Ayrshire and Holstein heifers, developed by the PATLQ R&D team. These curves have been actualized thanks to **your** growth data, which shows that one of PATLQ's major assets is simply having more than 6000 clients. Our very "wealthy" data base is the collective treasure of Quebec dairy producers!

The new curves are based on close

to 74,000 measurements on more than 24,000 heifers, up to the year 2003. Their reliability is excellent, and we are proud to announce that these curves were recently endorsed by the *Dairy Cattle Committee* of the *Centre de référence en agriculture et agroalimentaire du Québec (CRAAQ)*. They thus become the official reference for the Quebec dairy industry.

The previous curves were published in 1996 in the *Dairy Cattle Guide / Guide Bovins Laitiers*, using data from the late 1980's. Compared to

these, the new references show a 10% increase for the optimal weight at 24-months, and a 3 cm increase for height.

To increase the productivity and profitability of our herds, keep measuring heifer growth. Your technical support agent and advisor are there to assist you with these measurements and to follow-up your future cows.

We are proud to offer you the three PROS of PATLQ: **professionalism, progress, profit!**

2003 Production Report

Available early in May

At the beginning of May, the **Rapport de production 2003 du PATLQ** will be mailed to you. Like every year, it is a gold mine of information on the production and management of the 6200 dairy herds enrolled with PATLQ. Have a fine read and, most of all, great discussions with your advisor!

Your opinion on PATLQ-Newsletter, please !

How do you rate your information bulletin? What should we change? What subjects should we cover? The more feedback you provide, the more we can adapt to your needs! You can leave your comments on line 1-800-266-5248. THANKS !

Specialized Advisory Services for Groups

Training sessions to improve your profitability

In 2003-2004, more than 1000 producers throughout Quebec took advantage of PATLQ training sessions. Sixteen different courses were available, 68 sessions were given in all regions, with a satisfaction rating as high as ever. No surprise, as each training session provided readily applicable, practical solutions to improve herd profitability. Thanks to every participant from your PATLQ advisors and trainers.



Silage Conservation. A training session focusing on profitable applications at the farm (Lennoxville, February 4, 2004).

Technical Column

Act now for good feeds next winter



Jean Brisson, agr. / R&D-Nutrition Team

Given the circumstances since May 2003, hay and silage inventories have been lower than usual for the past year. The high prices paid at the end of winter are evidence of this phenomenon. One more reason to take the necessary steps for harvesting and storing good quality forages for next winter.

Hay

We all know what's needed for great hay: a few days of fine weather, no rain at three PM, moisture as low as possible, the opportunity to add a hay preservative, and hay dryers in good working order. It is also a good idea to use a reliable moisture tester to keep away from the risky zone. Cows don't like moldy hay...

Hay silage

In Quebec, for the year 2003, each cow ingested on average 13 kg of hay silage per day. If, for any reason, the silage is poorly preserved, dairy production, health, reproduction and farm profitability will be affected.

The silage fermentation process occurs in four phases:

1. Aerobic phase (presence of oxygen)
2. Fermentation phase (absence of air)
3. Stable anaerobic phase (little or no activity)
4. Feed-out phase

It is imperative that phase 1 and 2 be as short as possible. Here are a few tips:

Whatever the chosen harvesting and storage technique

- Always harvest grass that is neither too wet, nor too dry
- Store in silo quickly

Wrapped round bales or big square bales

- Make sure to use the proper thickness of plastic

Upright Silo

- Ideally, seal the silo. Is this possible at your farm?

Bunker Silo

- Compact adequately : thin layers, sufficient tractor weight, etc.
- Quickly cover the silo

Among other precautions

- Use a moisture tester

- Plan on using additives or inoculants if appropriate to your goal: sealed silo, aerobic stability at feeding-out, etc.
- Reduce contamination through soil, manure, and last year's vegetal residues in the field
- Have a plan B in case material happens to be too dry
- Take care of machinery maintenance, sharpen harvester knives , etc.
- Adjust cutting length according to:
 - Silo diameter
 - Grass vs legumes
 - Average moisture content
 - Filling rate of silo

Reminder: for proper fermentation, you need a short cut. However, if material is cut too short, the risk of acidosis increases !

During fermentation, the temperature of the silage mass provides a good indication of what is going on. Ideal temperature for the growth of lactic acid bacteria (indispensable to fermentation) is 30°C.

We wish you a great harvesting season. For any questions, please contact your advisor. You should also consider attending the *Silage Conservation* training session, during the 2004-2005 season of PATLQ Specialized Advisory Services for Groups.



For any silage, feed-out is always a critical step. One must remove the correct amount without spoiling the remaining silage. For instance, in a bunker silo, avoid loosing up too much of the material, as shown on this picture.

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