

Improve the management of your dairy herd

Having the **Agri-Lacta** program at the farm helps improve day-to-day herd management, by allowing you to

- keep your complete herd data handy, at the farm;
- exchange data with your advisor or data entry technician, easing-up the monthly visit;
- print reports adapted to your management needs, and formatted to your own specifications;

- exchange directly with industry partners and providers.

Ask your PATLQ representative or contact our partner **Agri-Gestion inc. at 1-800-463-7283**. Purchasing **Agri-Lacta** includes installation, individual training at the farm, a follow-up training session as well as access to a technical help line.



Results of Quiz N° 19

Winners from their March contest are: **Martin Roy, Ferme Verdor**, St-Gervais (Advisor: **Pierre Morneau**) and **Johanne-Daniel Chevalier**, St-Armand (Advisor: **Ghislain Côté**). Each wins a \$50 credit on advisory services.

The correct answers were:

Q-1 : d Q-2 : c Q-3 : 185th day Q-4 : (according to your Annual Herd Management Report)

Quiz N° 20

Answers can be found in this bulletin. You may also ask your Advisor for help. Two \$50 credits on advisory services will be drawn on June 18.

Question 1

1. Cows that go to pasture have better chance of enjoying:
- healthy hooves and legs
 - better reproductive performance
 - reduced feeding costs
 - all of these answers

Question 3

- It is best to return to a lot when grass has grown back to:
- 5 cm
 - 10 cm
 - 15 cm
 - 20 cm

Question 4

- Among herds using pastures, the top performers have an average milk production of:
- 7259 kg/cow/year
 - 8295 kg/ cow/year
 - 8666 kg/ cow/year
 - 9006 kg/ cow/year

Question 2

- For good pasture turnaround, you need a minimum of:
- 6 lots
 - 8 lots
 - 10 lots
 - 12 lots

Entries must be received **prior to June 17, 2005**. Please send to the attention of **France Lauzon**, PATLQ, 555 boul. des Anciens-Combattants, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, Quebec H9X 3R4 -- Fax: 514-398-7963 - E-mail: quiz@patlq.com (You may enter by E-mail. Just write in the subject box "Quiz - 20", followed by your herd number, and give your answers and full name and address as your message).

Reply Form – Quiz N° 20 - May 2005

Answers: 1 : _____ 2 : _____ 3 : _____ 4 : _____
 Name: _____ Herd Number: _____
 Address: _____
 Tel.: _____ Fax: _____
 E-mail: _____



PATLQ

NEWSLETTER

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

1-800-BON-LAIT : at your service!

by Line Turcotte, Customer Service Supervisor

From now on, any information request can be sent to our new Customer Service, operational since May 2005 at our head office. By calling 1-800-BON-LAIT, you can rest assured that you will get an immediate answer and that your problem will be solved in a very short time.

PATLQ has put forward a customer service policy with an emphasis on quality and speed of response. Our objective is to provide an immediate response to 90% of calls, the remaining 10% being addressed within 24 hours. One has to understand that some calls require research and validation with specialists from other services, checking lab results, etc., and cannot get an instant answer.

Customer Service personnel received ongoing training for several months, perfecting their knowledge of current services, lab results analysis, management reports, publication standards, billing, etc. Everything has been thoroughly reviewed! Your Customer Service representatives are now ready to do their very best to give you entire satisfaction.



Ready for your calls: **Manon Cadieux** and **Line Turcotte** (supervisor), from the new PATLQ Customer Service.

So, to get an answer on any business-related matter, you now have two options: ask your advisor or technician, or call our Customer Service. **We are here for you !**

Business hours are 7 am to 5 pm. Call toll free 1-800-BON LAIT (1-800-266-5248) or e-mail your request at service.clientele@patlq.com.

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Make Money Producing Milk

Another resounding success for PATLQ Specialized Training Sessions

PATLQ Specialized Training Sessions are going strong! Even before the end of the 4th year, we have reached 5000 clients! It happened on Thursday February 24th, at St-Pierre-les-Becquets, on a **Make Money Producing Milk** session given by **Clément Blais**, agr., Strategic Advisor, and **Caroline Collard**, Advisor from the Fédération des groupes conseils agricoles du Québec. The winner is **Yvon Charland**, dairy producer from St-Pierre-Les-Becquets, a long-time PATLQ client, who enrolls with one training session every year. His prize: this year's training session is free of charge, as well as next year's.



PATLQ Specialized Training Sessions: 5000 clients in less than four years! Left to right: Sylvain Biron, Regional Manager, Les Rives, Yvon Charland, producer from St-Pierre-Les-Becquets, Richard Massé, Advisor, Bertrand Farmer, General Manager.

In 2004-2005, PATLQ Specialized Training Sessions reached more

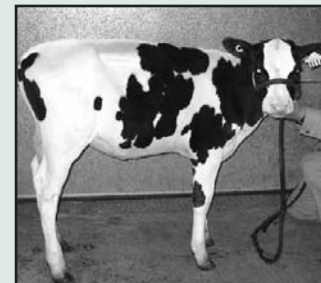
than 1400 participants, most of them with the **Make Money Producing Milk** course (71 sessions throughout Quebec). Thanks to all participants!

No more worries, no more late fees!

Electronic registration by PATLQ personnel

Ayrshire - Holstein - Jersey and Brown Swiss

With optional picture



A few minutes that will save you several hours and a lot of \$\$\$!

Make Money Producing Milk with pastures



by **Diane Lequin**, agr., Strategic Advisor

The end of Spring marks the return of pasture season. This feeding mode shows definite advantages. Pasturing cows have better chances to enjoy healthy hooves and legs, better reproduction performance, and a longer life. Furthermore, feeding costs go down.

Table 1 compares herd results according to the use of pasture. Some benefits are quite obvious (green cells), however other data show a reduced performance: on average, herds using pasture eat less, hence produce less milk, bringing in less revenue (middle column, white cells). The question is, can these lower results be explained by the very fact of pasturing, or through improper management?

Column 3 shows the results of the 59 best performing herds using pasture (production over 8300 kg of milk and net revenue over \$3900). The answer is clear: when pasture and feeding management are adequate, you get good performance.

Too often, pasture management is at fault

You need small pasturing lots, in order to have adequate turn-around. Depending of the time of year (hence, the grass growing rate) and the number of pasturing days, you need a minimum of 8 lots. The more lots you have, the better the animal performances and the forage production per hectare.

Animals should be sent out early in the season, as soon as the grass is 10 cm high. This allows for better tillering and a reduction of refusals. Animals should not be left more than four days in a lot, otherwise they begin to select the new growth (plants cropped on the first day), so they make life harder on useful plants. Result: weeds growing strong, occupying more and more space, instead of good grass and legumes. On the other hand, you need to return to a lot as soon as grass has grown back to 15 cm, which can take only 14 days in Spring, but as much as 40 days in Autumn. So, it is very likely that the turnaround sequence will change over the season.

A major aspect that is often neglected is supplementation. Pastures are very rich in degradable protein, but relatively poor in energy and non degradable protein. You need to fulfill the nutrient requirements of your cows, otherwise production and body condition will suffer. Also, a long-fiber supplement, especially in the Spring, will slow down the rate of passage and lead to better digestion.

It is possible to make money producing milk using pastures. Cows need to eat large amounts of forage and enough concentrates, adjusted to optimize production. All of this comes down to a proper management of available resources.

Table 1. Comparison of herds according to use of pastures¹

Parameter	Without Pastures	With Pastures (over 500 kg DM from pastures)	
		Average ²	Top Performers ³
Number of herds	2610	389	59
Herd average age (months)	49.5	54.6	51.0
% Culling	34.3	29.0	31.2
% Culling related to hooves and legs	9.6	7.0	7.3
Number of services / cow / year	1.95	1.78	1.85
Average milk production (kg)	8295	7259	9006
Fat (%)	3.81	3.71	3.69
Protein (%)	3.25	3.18	3.22
Forage DM intake (kg / cow / year)	4400	3660	3771
Concentrate DM intake (kg / cow / year)	2440	1967	2489
Total DM intake (kg / cow / year)	6840	5627	6261
Feeding costs (\$ / cow)	1252	1074	1234
Milk revenue (\$ / cow)	5152	4430	5485
Net revenue (\$ / cow)	3900	3356	4251

¹ Herds enrolled with PATLQ Feeding Services, 2004
² Green cells indicate an advantage in relation to herds without pastures.
³ Selection criteria : ≥\$3900 net revenue, ≥8300 kg milk

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