

## Milking supervision and data quality: congratulation to clients and technicians

Sylvia Lafontaine, agr.,  
data quality control, PATLQ

The mission of PATLQ requires, among other things, the assurance of data integrity from supervised test. Each week, results from all supervised tests are reviewed. Test-day productions are compared to bulk tank, the percentage of cows above or below standards, the production level of herds and cows all come under the microscope.

In the last two years, 33 re-tests have been performed. For the most part, these confirmed the original test. Others led to several type of actions: milk meters verification, increased verification during tests, replacing results from the original test by results of the retest, changing test options (AM-PM, pre-scheduled), confirmation/revision of milking hours, supervised test without warning.

The overall result has been positive. Since the tightening of quality control in 2002, the average ratio of milk produced VS bulk tank has improved slightly. Milk recorded on supervised tests is closer to bulk tank measurements.

We wish to congratulate PATLQ technicians as well as clients on supervised tests. Together, we ensure the quality and good reputation of PATLQ data.

### Results from Quiz No 21:

The drawing took place on November 8. The winners are **Jean-Louis Garneau**, *Ferme Gargouille inc.*, of St-Fortunat (Advisor: **Jeannot Côté**) and **Denis Turcotte**, of St-Sylvestre (Advisor: **Luc Laflamme**). Each wins a \$50 credit on advisory services.

The correct answers were: Q-1 : b Q-2 : b Q-3 : e Q-4 : b

## Quiz N° 22

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 January 16, 2006.

### Question 1

What factors can distort the evaluation of TMR intake?

- a) Refusals are not weighed
- b) Dry matter content of the silage can vary
- c) Part of the mix may have been served to another group
- d) All of the above

### Question 2

All other components of a ration being equal, if actual intake of hay silage drop from 22,4 kg to 15,9 kg/cow/day, the metabolisable protein will be deficient by:

- a) 50 g/d
- b) 100 g/d
- c) 150 g/d
- d) 200 g/d

### Question 3

In the same case as question 2, what will be the production loss in litres/cow/day?

- a) 4 litres /d
- b) 3 litres /d
- c) 2 litres /d
- d) 1 litre /d

### Question 4

Even if forage intake vary a lot from cow to cow, it is very useful to weigh from time to time the average intake of 4 or 5 cows in a given group.

- a) True
- b) False

Entries must be received prior to January 16, 2006. 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 - 22", followed by your herd number, and give your answers and full name and address as your message).

### Reply Form – Quiz N° 22 - December 2005

Answers: 1: \_\_\_\_\_ 2: \_\_\_\_\_ 3: \_\_\_\_\_ 4: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Herd Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax : \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_



# PATLQ

## NEWSLETTER

N° 73 • December 2005

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

## Your objectives are our inspiration

Another year just gone by! What were the main features of 2005?

Our new service of data entry by a technician rather than an advisor has helped to reduce costs for clients willing to use it. Many have expressed their satisfaction and we appreciate this.

More good news: the popularity of our specialized training for groups. Last year, the course **Make Money Producing Milk** - given in partnership with FGCAQ - raised the bar on dairy farm profitability. This year, in partnership with FGCAQ, CIAQ and Holstein Quebec, we continue this

progress with **BORN to Make Money**, about optimising heifer rearing. Already, close to 70 sessions are scheduled for all courses. Great! This is an excellent investment for you.

Over the last year, several producers have also profited greatly by using our specialized consultation service (see fine article below). We are gratified when you take full advantage all the tools available to improve the profitability of your farm.

Finally, if you use the advisory service option, you are part of the 4500 dairy producers who now benefit from the new **RATION'L**

program. With the help of your advisor, you can now make better use of all the feeds you produce at the farm and your milk production can be optimal, while keeping close watch on your feeding costs. Good for you! Innovation means success.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the entire PATLQ team, we wish you happy holidays and a great year in 2006, joy with family and friends, and health. Thank you so much for your confidence: your objectives inspire us every day.

**Bertrand Farmer**, agr.  
General Manager

## Daniel Viens, producer, St-Alphonse-de-Granby "Call the Strategic Advisor, you won't regret it !"

**Ferme Viens et Frères inc.**, of St-Alphonse-de-Granby, managed by **Daniel Viens**, with his brother **Patrice** and their father **André**, is a highly regarded

dairy farm: eighty-five cows with impressive genetics (2E, 37 VG, 46 GP), 11,000 kg at 4.10% fat, 3.27% protein and a SCC well below the provincial average at

**Michel Pouliot**, writer,  
Communication Team

195,000. In short, the Viens family have every reason to be proud.

But in life, there are always problems to be solved. Early this summer, Daniel was concerned with his cows in early lactation. Despite quality feeds, several cows were losing too much weight, 4% suffered from ketosis and, worst of all, 15% had displaced abomasums, which is five times the provincial average.

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**Diane Lequin**, Strategic Advisor, made highly profitable recommendations to **Daniel Viens** in order to solve a serious problem.

## Summary

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*Daniel Viens, producer, St-Alphonse-de-Granby*  
**"Call the Strategic Advisor,  
 you won't regret it !"**

(continued from page 1)

His Advisor, **Élisabeth Julien**, suspected a nutritional imbalance. Daniel, however, wondered if his management practices had something to do with it. In order to settle the matter, Élisabeth suggested that he called **Diane Lequin**, agronomist, one of PATLQ's five Strategic Advisor.

A specialized consultation with a Strategic Advisor means, according to the situation, either the study of a specific problem, either a complete review of the herd management and feeding practices, with a thorough examination of the *Vision2000* and *Agri-Lacta* reports. With his/her knowledge and experience, the Strategic Advisor can quickly detect irregularities or deficiencies, as well as the means to correct the situation efficiently and at the lowest cost. After her visit, Diane wrote a detailed report, with an objective assessment of the herd's strengths and points to improve, ending up with clear recom-

mendations. In the case of *Ferme Viens et Frères*, she advised, among other things, increasing TMR intake in early lactation, keeping tight control on the amount of dry hay, revising the transition ration and checking body score condition regularly in order to monitor progress.

After reading Diane's report, with the assistance of Élisabeth, Daniel immediately applied the main recommendations. "The results have been impressive", says Daniel. "Since the end of August, in about 15 calvings there was only one case of displaced abomasum: we are already down from 15% to 6% ! This is a quick return on my investment!" Élisabeth adds: "A well-balanced nutrition is a key to success. With all the tools now available - 24-hour feed analysis, MUN analysis for validation, and the new **RATION'L** program-, getting an optimal ration is easier than ever."

Michel Pouliot, writer,  
 Communication Team

Later on, a neighbour with a couple of problems of his own asked Daniel if he should also call PATLQ's Strategic Advisor. Daniel's answer was eloquent: "Call her as soon as you can: you won't regret it!"



**Élisabeth Julien**, Advisor, helps to implement Diane's recommendations. Her monthly visit ensures that **Daniel Viens** will keep his objectives in sight.

*Ration fed*  
**Weigh a bale or scoop  
 from time to time**

by **Jean Brisson**, agr.,  
 R&D Team



In our September chronicle, we talked about the importance of knowing the body weight of cows to balance the ration. Many have taken the tape out of their pocket since then. Congratulations! Now, let us consider the ration itself. With the new **RATION'L**, your advisor can now provide very precise recommendations. For example, for five cows, mineral recommendations can be 78, 103, 89, 112, 94 grams, respectively. Of course, unless your robot can deliver these amounts with one-gram precision, you might as well round up to 100 grams, with no harm done. However, the bias could be a lot worse if you think that the plate contains 100 grams, while it really contains 192 grams.

So, it is important to check regularly the weight of the mineral scoop, the corn scoop, as well as the feeder calibration. If you are sure that the scoop contains 2 kg and it contains 4, you are going to get surprises. If you assume that the average square bale weighs 50 lbs (22.5 kg), while it really weighs only 35 lbs (15.9 kg), you could face quite serious problems. And if several people care for the cows, one feeding 5 bales per day and the other feeding 8, you can end up with a fibre deficiency, even if the ration is at 20.5% ADF on paper. So, weighing a few bales from time to time and having a word

with co-workers can avoid a lot of problems.

How about silages? Table 1 shows what happens when the cows, for any reason, eat less hay silage than the computer model estimates. In normal conditions, cows should be eating 22.4 kg of hay silage. If we complete the feeding program without checking actual intake, the recommendations will not yield the expected results. Actual intake will mean an energy deficit of 3.2 MCal, and cows will be skinnier than expected. There will also be a metabolisable protein deficit of 150 grams, so milk production - as well as the protein rate - will be disappointing. The bulk tank will be short of 3.0 litres per cow per day...

So, you need to know the amounts fed, but also the amounts actually eaten. How many kg of refusals per day? With TMR, the built-in scale comes handy, but the dry matter content can vary, and the cows can sort the feed. Also, some of the feed may have been served to another group (cows close to calving, for example), etc.

The equations of **RATION'L** are very precise, but what counts is what really happens in the barn. Of course, actual intake vary from cow to cow, sometimes twofold. But what we want to know is the average intake per cow per day. It takes only a few minutes... to ensure that your cows are well fed, in good health, and yielding their maximum production. Just weigh a bale or scoop from time to time.

**Table 1.**

Impact of overestimating actual silage intake, for a milk production of 30 kg per day - with a ration including 8 kg corn silage and 2 kg dry hay (source: **RATION'L**, new version)

	Ration on paper	Actual intake
Hay silage (kg/cow/d)	22.4	15.9
Shelled corn (kg/cow/d)	5.4	5.4
Supplement (kg/cow/d)	3.0	3.0
Mineral (kg/cow/d)	0.16	0.16
Energy balance (Mcal/d)	0	-3.2
Metabolisable protein balance (g/d)	0	-150

PATLQ News • N° 73 • December 2005

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Depot: ISSN 1496-2748 - Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec (1984) and National Library of Canada

Design and printing: CIDMA Imprimerie & Design • www.cidma.ca

**ELECTRONIC REGISTRATION**  
 Available for 5 breeds  
**PATLQ is already doing 66% of all Quebec electronic registrations at Holstein Canada**  
**Join the winners!**

**Looking forward to seeing you at the 2006 Trade shows !**  
 The PATLQ team is always delighted to start the New Year on the right foot by meeting a large number of clients at the Salon de l'agriculture in St-Hyacinthe, January 10 to 12, and at the Salon provincial de la machinerie agricole in Québec, February 2 to 4. Come and have a chat, enter our drawings and try your luck at the **RATION'L** wheel !

**Feed Analyses YOUR RESULTS IN 24 HOURS**  
  
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**Take full advantage of the new features in RATION'L**