

VALACTA – Dairy Production Centre of Expertise



A story in which you're the hero, together with the Brault family

2014 Valacta Training Session

It's hard to summarize an improvement process in one short article. Hence Valacta will be addressing the subject in more detail in the training session that will be offered to producers across Quebec this winter. To familiarize you

with an improvement process in concrete terms, we'll follow all the steps involved with brothers Christian and Sylvain Brault, of Ferme Brault et frères inc., in St-Louis-de-Gonzague.

The members of this family operation

talk about their farm with pride. They emphasize the human side of dairy production, achieving a balance between work, family, social involvement and leisure. They share their thoughts with us about the possibilities for improvement on their farm. Before getting started, however, they want to target the areas that offer the most potential for improvement. For them, it's important that the improvement be tangible in terms of both profitability and quality of life. With a clear purpose in mind, they are

now counting on your ideas and the training session to help them establish their priorities, set their goals and determine a plan of action.

For the Brault family, there are three sectors of interest: production and components; feeding and the feeding margin; and operating efficiency. Together, we'll examine the different possibilities for each of these sectors. The agenda includes workshops, videos, discussion and knowledge sharing among producers.

Potential Gain: Increase your Profitability!

A new tool and a new approach to help you make good resolutions

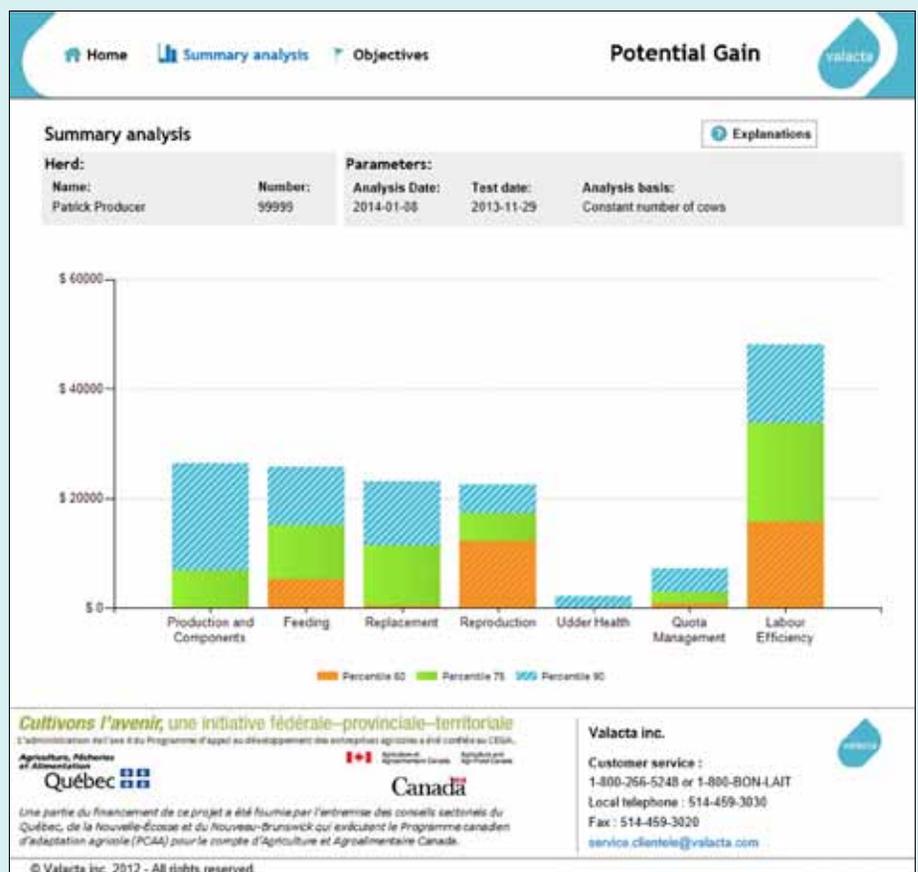
Valacta has just introduced a new service called Potential Gain. Its first aim is to present an overview of the operation, focusing on Valacta's seven sectors of expertise. To compare the sectors amongst themselves, the tool presents a graph in which the potential improvement in the technical results is expressed in dollar terms so as to gauge the impact on the farm's profitability. The calculations are based on 14 indicators that cast the net as wide as possible in order to provide a "wide-angle" view of your farm (see Figure 1).



Figure 1. Graph of the Potential Gain summary analysis

Percentile scores of 50, 75 and 90 allow you to rank your farm among the 5000 Quebec farms enrolled in milk recording. Producers who wish to measure their operating efficiency must request that calculation from their dairy production technician or advisor. The result is expressed in minutes per cow per day and then converted into dollars. Potential Gain has the advantage of assembling the farm's techno-economic parameters and translating them all into dollar terms. Thus, in Figure 1, we see that the Production and Component and Feeding sectors have an improvement potential equivalent to \$20 000 each. The Replacement sector, which is strongly influenced by the culling rate, shows the greatest potential for gain at \$50 000. The analysis can be conducted on the basis of a constant quota or a constant number of cows.

Moreover, you don't have to wait until the start of the year to make good resolutions. The Potential Gain tool recalculates at every test date. That means you can start on an improvement process with your Valacta advisor at any time of the year.



The Brault Family on their farm in St-Louis-de-Gonzague.