

The nutritional importance of milk



It is imperative that milk and dairy products retain their choice position in the revised version of Canada's Food Guide and that their nutritional superiority be recognized.

Fall will be a hot time for the Canadian dairy sector with the renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). The attention politicians and the media will focus on this thorny issue risks putting another issue under the radar, even though it is just as crucial for the future of our dairy farms: the revision of Canada's Food Guide. As in the case of NAFTA, it is important to make our Members of Parliament aware of this issue in the weeks ahead.

The new recommendations on good nutrition and healthy eating habits considered by Health Canada could have a major impact on our farm businesses and on the dairy industry as a whole. According to the guidelines prepared for the consultations on Canada's Food Guide, it appears that Health Canada is considering eliminating the "dairy products" category in the new reference tool, even though the scientific principles that justified it are still relevant.

The direction emerging from the initial consultations is cause for concern. The proposals under study appear to give preference to consumption of vegetable protein, such as soy beverages, and to skim milk products for the other sources of animal protein. Health Canada is seeking to promote the consumption of polyunsaturated fats and seems to want to put all saturated fats in the same bag, disregarding recent studies that have rehabilitated butterfat.

This initial direction is surprising. In its report examining the scientific data on which the 2015 revision of the Guide was based, Health Canada recognized that the population was not eating enough dairy products, even though their consumption could contribute to reduce the risk of several diseases.

The scientific research is conclusive. For years, it has clearly indicated that dairy products are an excellent source of important nutrients, such as calcium and vitamin D, which Canadians do not consume enough, and that dairy proteins are much more complete than most of their plant alternatives. These nutrients are associated with many benefits for bone health and with a reduced risk of heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure and colorectal cancer.

We wonder about Health Canada's justification in considering this radical change. The dairy industry lobby is often criticized for being all-powerful. It seems that other pressure groups have obtained a very attentive ear for Health Canada to recommend such a change of direction.

It is imperative that milk and dairy products retain their choice position in the new Food Guide and that their nutritional superiority be recognized. I appeal to the Government's common sense and good judgment to not adopt strategic guidelines that would be contrary to the conclusions of its own studies.

This is obvious to us, but let's take the time to remind the political decision-makers in each of our regions. I strongly encourage all milk producers and dairy industry representatives to contact their MP directly on this crucial issue. Let's open a constructive dialogue with our politicians so that Canadian food policies continue to recognize dairy products as healthy and nutritious.

The health of all our fellow citizens depends on it.

Bruno Standa

Chairman



By MARIE-PIER BEAUCHAMP, ProAction Program Officer,
Milk Management and CATHERINE LESSARD,
Assistant Director, Economic Studies, PLQ



ANIMAL-BASED MEASURES

How does your farm rate?

THE ASSESSMENT OF ANIMAL-BASED MEASURES WILL ENABLE FARMERS TO DETERMINE HOW THEIR FARM RATES ON THIS ASPECT AND TAKE THE NECESSARY CORRECTIVE ACTIONS.





Assessments of animal-based measures, conducted by Holstein Canada under the proAction Program, have been in progress since the beginning of the year. Over 550 Quebec farms have been visited by the assessors. Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) waited for enough Canadian farms to be assessed before setting the objectives for each criterion, based on the results obtained. Since June, DFC has gathered enough data to obtain a representative picture of the situation, and thus the objectives to achieve. The farms assessed over the past few months will soon receive a report indicating how they rate in relation to other Canadian farms.

WHAT DO THE RESULTS MEAN?

In their individual reports, farmers will find a table presenting the result for their farm and the zone in which it is positioned for each criterion.

GREEN ZONE – This zone includes 25% of the herds, those presenting the best results and rated in the excellent category. The herds in this zone meet the objective. Good work!

YELLOW ZONE – This zone includes 50% of the herds: those presenting average results. For each result of a herd in the yellow zone, farmers must consider corrective actions and work on continuous improvement. Work is thus required to move into the green zone.

RED ZONE – This zone includes the bottom 25% of the herds: those presenting inferior results. For each result of a herd in the red zone, farmers must document and write up a corrective action plan and start implementing it to improve the situation. Effective September 1, 2017, they must show their corrective action plan during validation.

AN ASSESSMENT EVERY TWO YEARS

Individual herd assessments must be conducted every two years, which will allow farmers to track their continuous improvement over time. To satisfy this requirement of the proAction program, farmers must provide, during validation:

- The assessment report on the cows produced by a Holstein Canada assessor;
- A documented corrective action plan to improve the results in the red zone, if applicable.

If this documentation is unavailable during validation, the validation officer will issue a notice of major non-compliance, which could prevent the farmer from obtaining proAction certification and result in financial penalties.

WHAT MUST I DO FOR THE SECOND ASSESSMENT?

WHEN MUST I SHOW IMPROVEMENT?

If your herd presents one or more results in the red zone or the yellow zone, you must show improvement during the next assessment. DFC is considering progression to the fixed objectives and defining improvement criteria, which will be applied in the subsequent assessments. The details will be communicated when these changes are implemented.

HOW CAN I IMPROVE MY RESULTS? WHO CAN HELP ME?

Farmers can obtain assistance from their veterinarian, a nutritionist or another dairy specialist to establish an action plan. In addition, DFC assessment fact sheets describe the common causes of each problem and propose suggestions on how to improve them. Visit the website at www.proaction.quebec for these tools. ■



www.proaction.quebec



I'm all for increasing farm biosecurity but this process is going to drive me crazy!

For input on articles, obtain information, ask questions or make suggestions on the content of your magazine, please contact

LE PRODUCTEUR DE LAIT QUÉBÉCOIS at 450 679-0530 # 8306

or by e-mail: plq@lait.qc.ca

Also, visit the PLQ's Web site: www.lait.org

Centralized Quota Sales System (SCVQ)

JUNE 2017

Fixed Price: \$24,000.00

	Number	kg b.f./day
Offers to sell		
Total	90	934.4
Eligible for allocation	90	934.4
Successful	90	934.4
Reserve		
Quantity purchased (-)/ sold (+)		- 0.3
Offers to buy		
Total	841	8,111.0
Eligible for allocation	839	8,095.6
Successful	839	934.1

Participation on a prorata basis in any unprocessed offer to purchase equal to or higher than 0.9 kg of BF/day.

ALLOCATION OF OFFERS TO SELL AND TO PURCHASE PER PRICE STRATUM

SALES				PURCHASES		
Number	Quantity in kg b.f./day	Cumulation	Price offered \$/kg b.f./day	Number	Quantity in kg b.f./day	Cumulation
1	1.0		< 24,000.00	2	15.4	
89	933.4	934.4	24,000.00 ceiling price	839	8,095.6	8,095.6

ALLOCATION TO BUYERS AND SELLERS

	Number	kg of BF/day	%
Buyers			
Startup Assistance Program	1	16.0	1.7
Holding of less than 12 kg of BF/day	1	0.1	0.0
Reimbursement of startup loans	6	0.6	0.1
Iteration (0.6 kg of BF/day)	837	487.2	52.2
Prorata (5.67 %)	766	430.2	46.0
11.54% of the offers have been processed	934.1	100.0	
Sellers			
Seller who stopped producing 1 or more months ago	0	0.0	0.0
Offers partially processed in the previous month	0	0.0	0.0
Offers in the current month	90	934.4	100.0
100.00% of the offers have been processed	90	934.4	100.0

Quota prices in Canadian provinces JUNE 2017

Nova Scotia	\$/kg b.f./day no sale	Quebec	\$/kg b.f./day 24,000.00 ceiling	Alberta	\$/kg b.f./day 37,500.00
Prince Edward Island	23,500.00	Ontario	24,000.00 ceiling	Saskatchewan	32,000.00
New Brunswick	24,000.00 ceiling	Manitoba	22,000.00	British Columbia	42,000.00