

# Provincial elections: What dairy farmers expect



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On October 1, Quebecers will elect their government for the next four years. Quebec dairy farmers are calling on the political parties to continue to recognize the importance of our sector and, above all, to commit concrete political support to ensure the sustainability of our contribution to the economic vitality of the regions and to Quebec as a whole.

Our sector is the flagship of the Quebec agri-food industry. Dairy farming is the leading sector, generating 27% of Quebec's agricultural revenues. We are the source of 82,000 jobs, add more than \$6.1 billion to the GDP and pay about \$1.3 billion in taxes. Few people know it, but Quebec dairy farmers and processors generate more direct and indirect jobs than aerospace, the mining sector and the video game industry.

Our contribution is more than just economic. We shape the Quebec rural landscape, we are involved in the life of our communities in every region, and the 500 or so cheeses made with our milk are the pride and joy of our fellow citizens.

These achievements did not just happen. Generations of farmers have worked relentlessly to reach our goals. To increase revenues and develop our markets sustainably, we implemented a collective marketing and supply management system. For several years, we have experienced a climate of uncertainty due to trade negotiations that are threatening this agricultural policy. The NAFTA negotiations are the most recent and greatest source of concern. The next government must commit to continue to defend and promote our business model. In fact, all 125 MNAs who will be elected this fall should commit to support our model. As farmers, we have a role to play in this respect. We must consider the election campaign as an opportunity and participate in it actively, regardless of the party or the candidate we choose to support. Beyond comforting words, concrete actions will be expected from the members of the National Assembly to promote the benefits of our model and ensure that the federal government, which is responsible for the NAFTA renegotiations, keeps our agricultural model intact.

We expect the next government, of whichever party, to deploy the Quebec Bio-Food Policy that was unveiled last April. With our downstream and upstream dairy sector partners, our goal is to increase the development of profitable markets and maintain Quebec's place as the leading dairy producer and processor in Canada. The deployment of the Bio-Food Policy is of the utmost importance for the Quebec agricultural sector. It provides unique opportunities to achieve a strong, dynamic and profitable dairy industry. It must also foster infrastructure improvements for dairy farming and processing, research, development and technology transfer, support for training, the availability of production expertise, strategic support for development of profitable markets in Canada, and finally, more consistency across government departments for greater administrative efficiency, the lack of which too often hinders our projects.

Finally, the policy must address two basic and very important issues related to the modernization and performance of our production infrastructures: efficient high-speed Internet access throughout the regions and a more powerful and robust power grid that meets modern production requirements. In the age of robotics, computerization and automation, this problem must absolutely be resolved. The next government should complete this project.

While politicians are in an election campaign, I invite all dairy farmers to remind them of our expectations and get them to commit to work with us so that our sector performs even better.

*Bruno Lévesque*

Chairman

# Changing from Total Protein to True Protein

- As of September 1st, you will observe a decrease in your milk's protein composition levels. This is due to the introduction of a testing method that will measure the exact casein and whey protein content of milk and exclude non-protein nitrogen (NPN) from the results. This change will not impact producer revenues and will be implemented across Canada.

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## TRUE PROTEIN VERSUS TOTAL PROTEIN: WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Caseins and whey protein make up what is generally termed true protein. These proteins have high nutritional value, contribute to cheese yield, and provide real biological and economic value to the industry.

Electronic analyzers based on infrared spectrometry are used worldwide to measure protein content on a large scale. This technique allows for the rapid processing of large numbers of protein reference samples accurately, efficiently and at low cost. So far, the spectrometers have been calibrated using samples composed of protein based on the total nitrogen content of milk. Historically, the term "milk protein" meant total nitrogen. However, "total nitrogen" contains a small amount of nitrogen from non-protein sources, or about 5% of the total. These other sources are called non-protein nitrogen because they are not part of the protein structure. Basically, they are urea, ammonia and other small nitrogen molecules that do not play a functional role in milk processing. The "true protein" in milk is the total nitrogen minus the non-protein nitrogen. The scientific community uses the term "protein nitrogen" to designate true protein. The total nitrogen measurement therefore slightly over-estimates by 0.19% the measurement of the actual quantity of true protein in milk.

## WHY MAKE THIS CHANGE NOW?

Technically, measurement of the true protein in milk has been possible for many years. Indeed, the infrared spectrometers use a wave length that is only sensitive to the peptide bonds in protein. These instruments could have

## PROTEIN COMPOSITION RESULTS BEFORE SEPTEMBER 2018



been calibrated on a protein nitrogen basis. However, in 1992, when the producer payment system based on milk components was implemented, the “total protein” test method was the world standard for milk, so it was adopted here as well.

Several countries, including France, Australia and the United States implemented the true protein testing method a long time ago. In Canada, industry has only recently recognized the benefit of using the true protein content. With the introduction of the ingredient class in Canada, it became essential for both producers and processors to determine the exact quantities of protein in milk to ensure monitoring of liquid ingredients and thus fair auditing and invoicing procedures.

### WILL THE LOWER PROTEIN CONTENT AFFECT PRODUCER REVENUES?

The change will not have any economic impact for producers. The protein level will decrease, since the casein and whey-protein quantities will be measured, but the components associated with non-protein nitrogen will be taken into account with the lactose and other solids content. The quantity of total solids will remain the same. The value of protein will be increased slightly but that of lactose and other solids will be reduced so that the overall effect will be revenue-neutral.

### WILL THE CHANGE AFFECT PRODUCERS DIFFERENTLY?

The quantity of protein in cows' milk depends on feeding practices and, to a lesser extent, on breeding programs and genetics. The new testing method will determine the protein concentration very precisely. Up to now, this component accounted for most of the test result, i.e.  $\pm 95\%$  of what was called “total protein.” The calibration technique using the total nitrogen measure resulted in an average non-protein nitrogen value of 0.19%. By calibrating the instruments to determine the true value of protein, each sample will continue to reflect the specifics of each producer and the milk from their herd.

### HOW WILL THIS CHANGE IMPACT PRODUCTION STATISTICS AND THE FORMULATION OF RATIONS?

Composition results will continue to be expressed on a total protein basis. You may compare your payment composition results with your cows' historical composition results by adding 0.19 kg to the protein composition results for your milk payment. This amount reflects the non-protein nitrogen content. It can also be used to formulate rations, if need be, and for production statements by the Milk Recording Section. More specific test results will contribute to more equitable payment of protein content in milk for both producers and processors. ■

## SUMMARY

- As of September 1, 2018, composition results will be expressed in terms of true protein (casein + whey protein).
- Test results based on true protein are slightly lower because they do not consider non-protein nitrogen components (urea, ammoniac and other nitrogen molecules).
- Test results of lactose and other solids will be slightly higher to account for non-protein nitrogen components.
- The impact will be revenue-neutral. The price of protein will be increased to compensate for the decrease in quantity. The value of lactose and solids-non-fat will be reduced to offset the addition of non-protein nitrogen components.
- To compare results with previous compositions or for formulating rations, add 0.19 to the new protein concentration result.



I know she's a little weird and not easy to load into the truck,  
but how on earth did you manage to make her vanish?

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## Centralized Quota Sales System (SCVQ)

**JUNE 2018**

Fixed Price: \$24,000.00

	Number	kg of BF/day
<b>Offers to sell</b>		
Total	115	1,888.93
Eligible for allocation	115	1,888.93
Successful	115	1,888.93
<b>Reserve</b>		
Quantity purchased (-)/ sold (+)		+ 0.01
<b>Offers to buy</b>		
Total	794	8,762.94
Eligible for allocation	792	8,743.92
Successful	792	1,888.94

Participation on a prorata basis in any unprocessed offer to purchase equal to or higher than 0.18 kg of BF/day.

### ALLOCATION OF OFFERS TO SELL AND TO PURCHASE PER PRICE STRATUM

SALES				PURCHASES		
Number	kg of BF/day	Cumulation	Price offered \$/kg of BF/day	Number	kg of BF/day	Cumulation
3	21.79		< 24,000.00	2	19.02	
112	1,867.14	1,888.93	24,000.00 ceiling price	792	8,743.92	8,743.92

### ALLOCATION TO BUYERS AND SELLERS

	Number	kg of BF/day	%
<b>Buyers</b>			
Startup Assistance Program	0	0.00	0.0
<b>PRIORITY</b> Holding of less than 12 kg of BF/day	0	0.00	0.0
Reimbursement of startup loans	3	0.30	0.0
Iteration (1.25 kg of BF/day)	792	941.09	49.8
Prorata (12.14%)	716	947.55	50.2
<b>21.60% of the offers have been processed</b>		<b>1,888.94</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Sellers</b>			
Seller who stopped producing 1 or more months ago	0	0.00	0.0
Offers partially processed in the previous month	0	0.00	0.0
Offers in the current month	115	1,888.93	100.0
<b>100.00% of the offers have been processed</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>1,888.93</b>	<b>100.0</b>

## Quota prices in Canadian provinces JUNE 2018

	\$/kg of BF/day
Nova Scotia	24,000.00 ceiling
Prince Edward Island	24,000.00
New Brunswick	22,997.00

	\$/kg of BF/day
Quebec	24,000.00 ceiling
Ontario	24,000.00 ceiling
Manitoba	29,725.00

	\$/kg of BF/day
Alberta	41,000.00
Saskatchewan	35,000.00
British Columbia	38,500.00