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"It's very hard to find someone who's successful and dislikes what they do."

— Malcolm Gladwell

Stand with your fellow Quebec farmers!

Have you renewed your QFA membership for 2016 yet?

Fill out your membership application on p. 2

Dairy farmers stand united on diafiltered milk



All across the province, dairy producers took to the streets to defend their market and press the federal government to intervene and stop the import of diafiltered milk.

Andrew McClelland
Advocate Staff Reporter

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is in trouble with Canada's dairy producers. Milk producers in Quebec and the rest of Canada are demanding the federal government enforce rules concerning how much real milk is included in cheese products across the country.

At a press conference organized by the Producteurs de lait du Québec (PLQ) on April 12, dairy industry representatives released a list of 59 milk processors that support the dairy farmers' demand for the federal government to start enforcing regulations on diafiltered milk.

"This is easy to fix. Families are suffering," said Union des producteurs agricoles (UPA) President Marcel Groleau at

the Montreal press conference. According to him, the domestic dairy industry is losing money because cheese companies are skirting the rules.

"About 8,500 families in Quebec live off of agriculture," he said. "For the average family, they are losing between \$15,000 and \$18,000 a year. That's about 30 to 50 per cent of their annual revenues."

The issue causing controversy is diafiltered milk—milk protein coming into Canada from the US that is used in the manufacturing and processing of low-cost cheese. Thanks to the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the United States dairy industry currently enjoys unfettered access to the Canadian market for milk protein products containing 85 per cent or more protein.

Market access for the rest of the world for these products is limited to 10,000 tons, and the over-quota tariff rate is set at 270 per cent.

Cheese producers are using the cheaper diafiltered milk to satisfy the minimum milk requirement, which dairy farmers claim is breaking the rules.

In Canada, all cheese sold must have a minimum percentage of protein sourced from actual milk.

"The problem is that there is a laxity and lack of will on the part of the federal government," says PLQ President Bruno Letendre.

PLQ Director General Alain Bourbeau echoed the PLQ president's opinion that Ottawa is fully aware of the problem.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



On the cover



ARCHIVESTON

Bruno Letendre, president of Les Producteurs de lait du Québec, expressed loud and clear to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau: the federal government has to solve the diafiltered milk issue, and fast. He was accompanied by Wally Smith, president of Dairy Farmers of Canada, Marcel Groleau, president of the UPA, Pierre Paradis, minister of agriculture, and Serge Riendeau, president of Agropur.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"All political parties during the last election, including the present government, reiterated their commitment to address this problem," said Bourbeau in an official statement. "If this loophole isn't fixed, it clearly threatens the sustainability of Canadian agricultural policy for the dairy sector. The problem has been known to government authorities for at least two years, but is still unresolved."

Even Quebec Minister of Agriculture Pierre Paradis—a Liberal MNA—stood with Quebec dairy producers on the united front to call on the Liberal prime minister to limit the amount of diafiltered milk being used in Canadian cheese production.

"There are four governmental departments shouting at each other on this issue," Paradis said. "But this is a job for the Office of the Prime Minister. The situation is easy to fix. It breaks my heart to see it, but that's the situation."

On April 13, the Prime Minister's Office announced that the matter was being looked at by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and its minister, Lawrence MacAulay.

"We inherited this issue from the previous government," said MacAulay. "Supply management was introduced by the Liberal Party, and we continue to support it... [T]his case involving the use of diafiltered milk imported for cheese production is a priority for our government."

Diafiltration is a process used in conjunction with ultrafiltration in which water is added back into ultrafiltered milk. The resulting substance is then dried to a power. Dried milk protein concentrate can be made using a combination of ultrafiltration and diafiltration.

In 2014, Canada imported nearly 14,000 metric tons of protein isolates, a 37 per cent increase compared to 2013 imports.

Advancements in manufacturing technology that reduce costs and increase flexibility in manufacturing have led to a growing demand for US milk proteins in Canada, according to USDA's Foreign Agriculture Service.

Milk proteins are used in a variety of food products—including infant formulas, protein and nutrition drinks for people of all ages, and nutrition bars, to name a few.



Mission

To defend the rights, provide information and advocate for the English-speaking agricultural community in Quebec.

Vision

The QFA's actions contribute to a sustainable future for both agriculture and the environment while providing a decent quality of life and financial return for the individuals and their families who have made agriculture and food production their chosen professions.

Shared Values

Members of the QFA believe in:

Maintaining family-owned and operated farms / Food sovereignty and self-determination by individuals and nations / Intergenerational involvement / Lifelong learning / Protection of the physical environment / Preserving land for agricultural production / Minimum government interference / Working alone and in partnership with others

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Quebec Farmers' Association Membership Application

Last Name.....

First Name

Address

Phone

Fax

E-mail

Price

Agricultural or forestry producer, rural resident or retired farmer:

- ☐ 1 year \$68.99 (\$60 + \$3 GST (5%) + \$5.99 TVQ (9.975%))
☐ 2 years \$137.97 (\$120 + \$6 GST (5%) + \$11.97 TVQ (9.975%))

- ☐ My cheque is enclosed, payable to "Quebec Farmers' Association"

GST No. 107 867 814 RT 001 QST No. 100 611 322 9 TQ 001



Signature

Membership Includes

- a one year subscription to the Quebec Farmers' Advocate
- discounts on QFA sponsored events and services
- free advertising in the Advocate's classified ads
- voting privileges at the QFA Annual General Meeting

Quebec Farmers' Association

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Longueuil, Quebec J4H 4E7

Receipts are issued upon request. Memberships are valid for 12 months from month of purchase.



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QFA memberships, which include a free subscription to the Advocate, are \$68.99 (\$60 + \$3 GST + \$5.99 QST) for **one year** OR \$137.97 (\$120 + \$6 GST + \$11.97 QST) for **two years**.
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 E-mail: qfa_advocate@upa.qc.ca / www.quebecfarmers.org



Farmers raise awareness with parliamentarians

The Quebec Farmers' Association took part in the tenth annual Breakfast on the Hill on April 12. Together with the Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA), the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) and the Franco-Ontarian Farmers' Federation, farmers, volunteers and QFA executive members from across Quebec spoke with parliamentarians about the pressing needs of today's agriculturalists.

An OFA volunteer and farmer from Lanark County, Ontario, Dave Campbell, opened the proceedings. He was followed by welcoming remarks from Minister of Agriculture Lawrence MacAulay along with comments from CFA President Ron Bonnett and OFA President Don McCabe.

There were eight personal meetings with MPs throughout the day, including with Ruth Ellen Brosseau, the NDP agriculture critic, and two members from the parliamentary agricultural committee: Francis Drouin and Pierre Breton. More meetings have been scheduled for a later date. Over 50 volunteers and coordinating staff took part in the event, with 11 coming from the QFA.

The messaging put forward was consistent with previous campaigns and comprised four overarching themes. An excerpt displaying some of the messaging can be seen in the information box below.

- Agriculture and Trade Negotiations
- Investing in Agriculture



Ivan Hale, Chris Judd, Gib Drury, Glenn Switzman, Lucas Kaiser, David Gillespie, John McCart, Mathieu Rouleau and Dougal Rattray.

- Towards a Canadian Food Policy
- Managing Risks

A total of 33 MPs attended the day's proceedings, and 37 MPs and senators came to the breakfast meeting held in Le Parlementaire restaurant. Despite these seemingly low numbers, the turnout is seen as a success, as a nor-

mal expected attendance rate is around 10 per cent of those invited. The feeling from MPs was very positive, and many commented on the tremendous opportunity that the event provided: allowing MPs to meet with real farmers to help them better understand issues and priorities.

Canadian agriculture in numbers

- There are more than 200,000 Canadian farm families
- 98 per cent of Canadian farms are proudly family owned and operated
- Canadian farmers utilize more than 160 million acres of land from coast to coast – occupying approximately seven per cent of Canada's land resource
- The average size of a Canadian farm is 778 acres, but varies considerably
- The agriculture and agri-food sector employs 2.1 million Canadians – 1 in 8 Canadian jobs are in the agriculture and agri-food industry

- Agriculture has a tremendous role in Canada, contributing \$107 billion annually to the national economy
- Canada is the fifth largest agricultural exporter in the world
- Minimum tillage saves more than 170 million litres of fuel from being burned in Canada annually
- Farmers are stewards of the environment, providing the highest quality of safe, nutritious food for Canadians
- Agriculture is a primary provider of environmental goods and services from water and air filtration, habitat protection, carbon sequestration and renewable resources

- Natural sequestering of carbon, which happens in the soil by use of minimal to no-till practices, is an example of how the agricultural industry is part of the climate change solution
- Canada ranks first in the G7 for low food processing costs
- Canadians spent 11 per cent of their disposable income on food in 2015

Excerpt of content from Hill Lobby Day messaging. NOTE: Figures are based on most recent data available.



2016 Census of Agriculture coming this spring

In early May 2016, farm operators will be asked to update Canada's agricultural profile by completing the 2016 Census of Agriculture questionnaire. The census will provide farmers, farm organizations, policy makers, stakeholders and citizens with relevant information about the future of the Canadian agricultural sector and help them make informed decisions regarding agricultural practices in this country.

In early May, farmers will receive a letter with easy-to-follow instructions on how to complete your

Census on Agriculture questionnaire. This user-friendly option will save you time by automatically adding totals and limiting the questions to ones that apply to your operation.

The questionnaire can be completed by anyone who is responsible for, or knowledgeable about, the day-to-day management decisions of your farming operation. As required by the Statistics Act, the information you provide will be kept confidential and used only for statistical purposes.



Marcel Groleau
UPA President

Agri-Food: Quebec lacking in ambition

For the last two years, the Quebec government has put a lot of energy into balancing the budget. Because of the exceptional market situation, with good prices for both grains and meat, the agriculture sector has been a large contributor to achieving this objective.

For the last few years, a portion of the Financière agricole du Québec (FADQ) budget has gone towards paying back two thirds of the deficit accumulated prior to 2010 (\$1 billion). The government also made cuts to the institution's annual budget on two separate occasions (\$113 million in October 2014 and \$151 million in April 2015). Since 2010, accumulated deficits in the Farm Income Stabilization Insurance (ASRA) fund have been nearly paid back in full, and the crop insurance fund is reporting a surplus of \$260 million. Last year, a \$110 million instalment was transferred into a security fund held at the Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec. Another instalment is to be transferred this year to bring the fund up to \$300 million.

Speaking of budgets, finance minister Carlos Leitão's third budget was well received by the UPA (Union des producteurs agricoles). But, as always, the devil is in the details. When you put the 2016-17 budget under the microscope,

cause for celebration is harder to find. This year, the government is slightly increasing the budget for its Programme de crédit de taxes foncières agricoles (farmland tax credit program). But upon close inspection, it appears that the 2017 transfer to Revenu Québec won't be a zero-cost proposition for producers. Big surprises may be in store.

The budgets allocated to farmland drainage clearly won't be sufficient if we consider the investments required and the

"Farmers want to invest and produce. But they are waiting for a signal that just isn't coming. When will it come, Minister Paradis?"

income generated from cereal production in the targeted zones. Yes, the government announced the development of an agri-food strategy. On the surface, this sounds like good news, but it is something we should keep an eye on. Also, young farmers are still waiting for their chance to benefit. And overall, the MAPAQ's budget has been cut by \$23.2 million, while the FADQ is facing \$9.5 million in cuts.

The forestry sector got some goodies in this budget. It's clear that forests

have been included in the province's economic development plan: we've seen an increase in budgets for this sector, tax measures for producers, investments in forest management, and other perks. Wine, cider and other alcoholic drink producers also received measures to build up their sector.

The FADQ will have \$437 million in the budget for the next year. This would allow it to implement a good chunk of the recommendations of the FADQ-MAPAQ-

The government has to stop seeing the FADQ as a cost centre. The FADQ is a tool for developing the agriculture sector. How about Investissement Québec? Is it a government cost centre, or an economic development tool? The FADQ budget needs to be used to stimulate investment in farms through effective income security programs.

The recent Programme d'appui au développement des entreprises agricoles du Québec (Quebec farm business development support program), whose purpose is to "financially support the growth and development of businesses by stimulating productive investment," has fallen short of expectations. With a maximum assistance of \$20,000 per business over five years, it's certainly not going to be possible to modernize livestock buildings and bring them in line with animal welfare standards.

Quebec is sorely lacking in ambition for the agriculture sector. The farmers I meet with these days are concerned—and so is the next generation. The demand for food is there. The expertise is there. Farmers want to invest and produce. But they are waiting for a signal that just isn't coming. When will it come, Minister Paradis? When will the recommendations of the working group be implemented?



**Les Producteurs
de lait du Québec**

APRIL 2016

Fixed Price: \$24,000.00

	Nombre	kg de MG/jour
Offers to sell		
Total	72	677.0
Eligible for allocation	72	677.0
Successful	72	677.0
Reserve		
Quantity purchased (-)/ sold (+)		+ 0.4
Offers to buy		
Total	1,287	8,847.6
Eligible for allocation	1,286	8,840.7
Successful	1,286	677.4

Participation on a prorata basis in any unprocessed offer to purchase equal to or higher than 1.5 kg of BF/day.

Centralized Quota Sales System (SCVQ)

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
			< 24,000.00	1	6.9
72	677.0	677.0	24,000.00 ceiling price	1,286	8,840.7

ALLOCATION TO BUYERS AND SELLERS

Buyers			
	Number	kg of BF/day	%
Startup Assistance Program	0	0.0	0.0
Holding of less than 12 kg of BF/day	1	0.5	0.1
Reimbursement of startup loans	29	2.9	0.4
Iteration (0.3 kg of BF/day)	1,285	376.8	55.6
Prorata (3.51 %)	1,122	297.2	43.9
7.66% of the offers have been processed		677.4	100.0
Sellers			
	Number	kg of BF/day	%
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	72	677	100
100.00% of the offers have been processed	72	677.0	100.0



Another award for the *Advocate*

The Quebec Farmers' *Advocate* once again picked up an award at the Better Newspapers Awards!

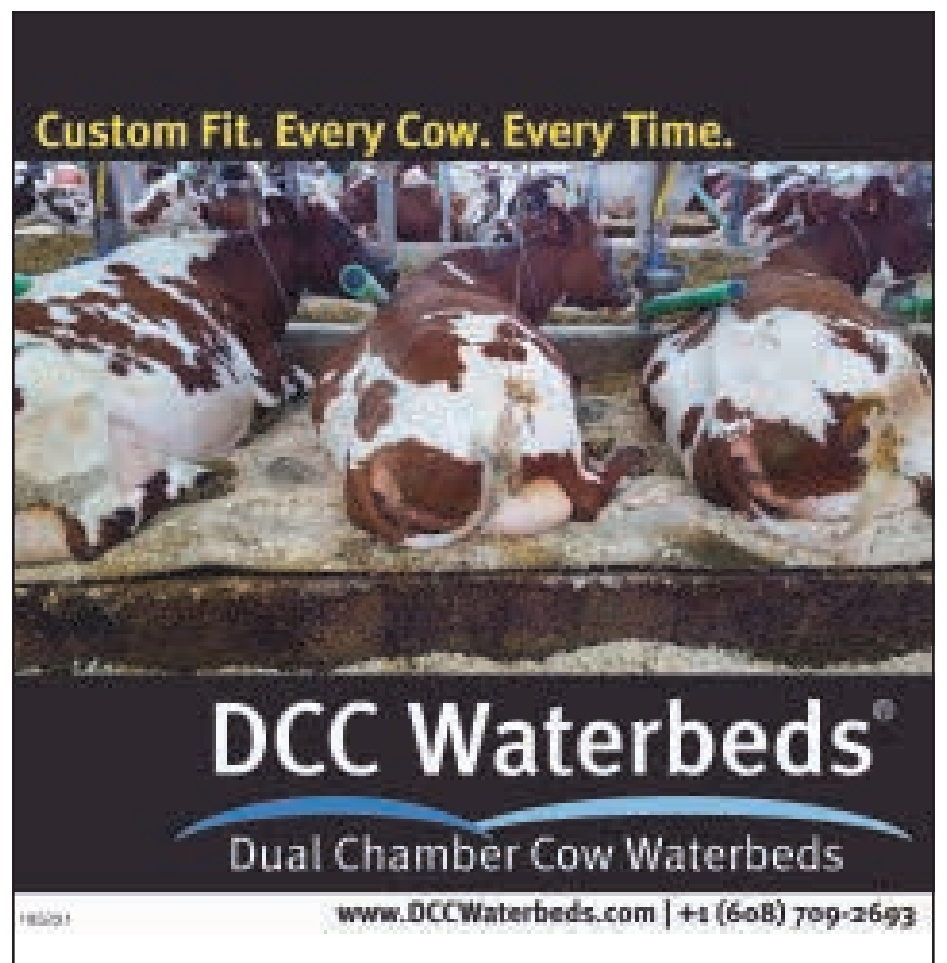
Long-time *Advocate* Managing Editor Andrew McClelland earned third prize in the category of "Best Agricultural Story" for his article, "TPP signed: Will it hurt?", concerning the possible fallout from the signing of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the sweeping trade deal that has many worried about its effects on supply management.

This is the sixth time McClelland has won an award at the Better Newspapers Awards in the past eight years, earning top honours twice!

The *Advocate* sends its congratulations to Ben Bulmer of *The Low Down to Hull & Back News* and Jessica Deer of *The Eastern Door* for their respective first- and second-place wins!

The Better Newspapers Awards are administered by the Quebec Community Newspapers Association (QCNA), a regional organization serving Quebec's English-language and bilingual community newspapers. The awards banquet will take place on June 3, 2016, at the Holiday Inn & Suites Hotel in Pointe-Claire, Quebec.

To read the award-winning story, see the front page of our October 2015 issue. Or visit the online *Advocate* archives at www.quebecfarmers.org/advocate-en/archives-en/



Farm Safety

Childcare program helps keep kids safe

Amy Petherick

Canadian Agricultural Safety Association

Any parent could use an extra set of hands sometimes. That's what inspired the development of one on-farm childcare program in Ontario nearly 30 years ago.

The farm women of Durham County were troubled by a number of child deaths in their community, and, in 1987, the Bethesda-Reach Women's Institute was determined to prevent more from happening. Corrine Croxall could see the hazards the new, larger farm equipment was introducing to her dairy farm, so she enlisted the help of her friend Barbara Evans to start what's now known as the Durham Farm and Rural Family Resources On Farm Childcare Program (DFRFR).

The DFRFR program is designed to match flexible, on-site child caregivers with farm families during peak seasons between May and September. The caregivers that are available plan activities and have basic infant-care skills. The service is available only to farm families in the region of Durham, and a Farm Business Registration (FBR) number is required to qualify. Families can book a maximum of nine hours daily, and must pay for a minimum of four hours.

Karen Barkey, who is the coordinator of the program today, says the organization is very proud of its history. The format that was originally implemented by those forward-thinking women is still honoured today. The caregivers available to farm parents still prepare a light lunch for the family. And just as they were in the beginning, the



Last year, 25 families in the Durham area used the program to help keep their kids safe.

young people hired come from Early Childhood Education fields of study. Karen says she's heard that there were as many as four similar pilot programs operating in the province when the program started in Durham, but it seems the others have all died out.

"The Canada Summer Jobs program makes this work," she says, noting that they apply for assistance every year. Karen says they could make it a totally self-sustaining program by charging the families more, but their goal is to keep costs as low as possible so that start-up farms are not forced to choose between operating capital and safer childcare options.

Originally the program required that both parents farm full-time, but it has since evolved after coordinators learned obtaining childcare for farm kids can be tricky. "I have a few families who might only use us once all summer," she explains. "Not every family is looking to us as their regular solution for childcare, which we're okay with, and there's quite a wide variety in how often people use us and the reasons why they use us."

Karen says for a lot of farm families there's a cousin available to watch the kids in a pinch, or Grandma will offer backup, but it bothers her that some parents might not have another choice

than to take their kids with them into potentially hazardous situations. "A piece of me wants to encourage kids to be part of daily farm life... I think there's a difference between teaching little Johnny what it's like to grow up on a farm and having little Johnny with you ten hours a day," she says.

Parenting is full of personal decisions, and many people may not see the need to bring in help. But last year, 25 families in Durham did decide it was an extra safety precaution they wanted during the busy season to ensure their kids stayed safe. Maria Davis, who was a caregiver for the program for many years and now works as a teacher, believes in the program so much that she's working to get a similar program operating for families who want this option in her area.

"When there's three young ones and you only have two hands, it's a little bit hard to keep your eyes on everyone's movements," she says. "Having me there, we could still do some little chores, but they had a chaperone. It lets the kids be kids in the summer and gives the parents the flexibility to come and go."

Having also been one of the first kids to benefit from the program on her own family's farm, she understands how valuable it is to grow up in a farm environment. She also witnessed firsthand how providing childcare on the farm made it possible for parents to make time for their kids. She's sure that her involvement did help to make the farms she worked for a safer place to raise kids, and she says it was more fun for everyone.

Symbols for Safety

There are hundreds of potential hazards to keep in mind when working on a farm. Be aware of the risks by getting to know the symbols and signs that alert you to danger.

Below, we've reprinted some of the warning signs you might find on farm machinery and equipment. Take a quick look at them and remember what they stand for. It could save your life.



WARNING:
Machine rollover
backover



WARNING:
Wear ear protection



WARNING:
Crushing hazard -
runaway round bale

Hazard symbols taken from the Association of Equipment Manufacturers.



The caregivers hired for the program are studying Early Childhood Education.



Developing standards for agricultural machinery

Some years ago, Ivan Hale, who was then the executive director of the QFA, accepted an invitation to join the Canadian Standards Association (CSA)'s Agricultural Machinery Technical Committee, which helps develop standards for farm machinery across North America and Canada.

QFA's current executive director, Dougal Rattray, sees the importance of maintaining this commitment, and so he continues in this tradition. "Standards contribute greatly to protecting farm machinery operators from unnecessary accidents," said Rattray after attending recent meetings, adding "there is so much more that can be done through machinery design improvement to help make the industry a much safer place to work. It is a real privilege to be able to contribute at such a key stage in the production process."

CSA Group originally began as the Canadian Engineering Standards Association (CESA) in 1919. To better reflect the breadth of its activities, it officially became the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) in 1944. As an independent, not-for-profit membership association dedicated to serving society, it is committed to public safety, sustainability and social good.

CSA Group by numbers

- 1,600 people employed globally
- Present in 14 countries worldwide
- 1,300 committees
- 8,000 volunteers

Various standards are cited in legislation at federal, provincial, state and municipal levels across North America. Many are internationally or regionally harmonized. CSA Group is accredited in Canada by the Standards Council of Canada for a vast number of subject areas, including Agricultural Machinery.

Standards developed by CSA Group are the result of the knowledge and expertise of the volunteer members who create them. Members come from all walks of life; their backgrounds include: scientists, academics, environmentalists and technicians who

represent a broad range of stakeholders such as government, industry, labor and consumers. Standards are only finalized once committees reach consensus, which ensures that a broad range of viewpoints receives a fair hearing and no single interest group dominates.

Different interest categories make up groups within committees who are responsible for consensus and who specify requirements for products, materials and services:

- **Producer Interest (PI):** Those who are predominantly involved in production (e.g., manufacturers), promotion, retailing or distribution of the subject product(s), material(s), or service(s).
- **User Interest (UI):** Those who predominantly represent consumer interests or end users of the subject product(s), material(s), or service(s), and who are not involved in any way in production and/or distribution of the subject product(s), material(s), or service(s).
- **Regulatory Authority (RA):** Those who are predominantly involved in regulating the use of the subject product(s), material(s), or service(s).
- **General Interest (GI):** Those who are not associated with production, distribution, direct use or regulation of the subject product(s), material(s), or service(s) but who have demonstrated relevant expertise or credentials. This category may include representatives of academic and scientific interests.

QFA is on the Farm Machinery Technical Committee representing the User Interest group. Each group has a maximum of six participants and a minimum of three. Focus ranges on everything from Lighting and Marking of Agricultural Field Equipment to Tractor and Trailer Breaking Systems, Mechanical Connections on Towing Vehicles, Instructional Seats, Sustainability in Agricultural Machinery, ROPS Standards and more.

For further information regarding standards and CSA, please visit: <http://www.csagroup.org/>



ARCHIVESTON

The Farm Machinery Technical Committee works on everything from Lighting and Marking of Agricultural Field Equipment to Tractor and Trailer Breaking Systems, and more.

The CSA Group

CSA Group also provides localized testing and certification services globally for a wide range of products across key business areas including hazardous location and industrial; plumbing, construction, lighting and wiring; health, safety and technology; appliances and gas; alternative energy and sustainability; as well as consumer product evaluation services. The CSA certification marks indicate that a product, process or service has been tested to a Canadian or US standard and it meets the requirements of an applicable CSA Group standard or another recognized document used as a basis for certification. Billions of products bearing CSA Group certification marks are found on the shelves of well-known retail chains and sold by major product distributors.

CSA Group is also a global provider of customized consumer product evaluation and inspection services designed to help enable our customers to better manage products in their supply chain.

CSA Group is dedicated to promoting sustainable solutions on behalf of its customers, members, stakeholders and the community at large, through organizational, environmental and economic practices, and the continual pursuit of social good. The values CSA promotes are those held by each and every employee and are the guiding principles for how CSA Group conducts business.



Grains

2016 Annual General Meeting sees high participation from grain farmers

On March 31 and April 1, 2016, the Producteurs de grains du Québec (PGQ) held their 41st Annual General Meeting—with over 350 delegates, guests and observers in attendance.

Delegates agreed on the action items for the coming year by adopting 14 resolutions. For more details, visit www.pgq.ca/aga2016 (French only).



Choosing a primary income security program: The consultation begins

All grain producers who insured corn or soy crops through the Farm Income Stabilization Insurance (ASRA) program in 2013, 2014 or 2015 received a letter in the mail from the PGQ president, along with a reference sheet containing information on the main issues involved in choosing a primary income security program.

One or two voting ballots were also enclosed, depending on the crops they insured (corn and/or soy).

Instructions on how to vote (online or by mail) were also included in the mail-out. Producers have until May 27, 2016, to vote. For more details, visit www.pgq.ca/choix-programmes (French only).

Market commentary



NEW – Declare your grain sales online!

There's a new, easier way for grain farmers to send information confirming grain sales: a secure online sales declaration form (Déclaration de vente en ligne). The form can be completed on a computer, tablet or smartphone.

This new user-friendly tool allows farmers to enter their data quickly, without having to send documentation. The producer's contact information and sales data are validated with each declaration. To access the form online, visit www.pgq.ca/transmettez-vos-ventes (French only).

Advance payments: 2016–2017 campaign launch

Grain producers interested in participating in the 2016–2017 advance payment campaign have until June 30 to register for the seeding component. The campaign offers an interest-free loan in which advances are paid on grain crops destined for market. The information newsletter and the request form are both available in English at www.pgq.ca/paiement-anticipe.

USDA's March 31 seeding intentions report surprised the grain market. Corn acreage was much higher than expected at 93.6 million acres (mln ac) compared to 88 mln ac last year. Soybean area is down 400,000 acres at 82.2 mln ac, while wheat acreage fell by 9.3 per cent at 49.6 mln ac.

The market reacted sharply to the seeding intentions report, with corn futures closing down by 15 cents that day. The focus has now shifted to the weather conditions as seeding takes place. USDA will publish its first 2016–2017 supply and demand tables in the

May 10 report. Until then, the market will try to gauge the US grain supply. Still, a corn acreage of that magnitude points to end stocks in 2017 well above 2 billion bushels, assuming normal yields, which is inherently bearish for the corn market.

It is worthwhile noting that total acreage for the three main grains is identical to last year's at 225.4 mln ac. However, five million acres of wheat are to be switched to corn. Since US corn yields are on average 3.3 times as high as wheat's, total US grain production is bound to increase significantly this year.



The Producteurs de grains du Québec (PGQ) represent the interests of about 11,000 Quebec grain farmers. In addition to liaising with farmers, the PGQ engages in monitoring, analysis, collaboration and communication with industry and government. The PGQ is responsible for acting on various economic and political levels, specifically in the following domains: market information, commerce and market development, research, technology transfer and consulting, financial protection, and risk management.

Maple syrup producers continue to mobilize

If Minister Paradis assumed that publishing the Gagné Report in February would forestall relentless mobilization on the part of syrup producers because they would be occupied with the harvest, well, he was completely off the mark. On February 16, only five days after the report was made public, in the middle of the tapping period—and in the middle of a storm—over 1,200 maple syrup producers travelled to Quebec City to signal their profound disapproval. Later, on March 22, even with the sap running, 250 producers held a peaceful demonstration at the public session held by the Régie des marchés agricoles. They came to support their Federation in asking that the quota be increased by 2.35 million taps for the 2017 harvest. Upon arrival, each producer received a crisp new t-shirt that read *Mon contingent acéricole, j'y tiens! Pas d'ingérence Paradis* (My maple quota, my business! Back off, Paradis!). They all made sure to wear the t-shirts during the session. The regional mobilization plan is

still in full swing as well: the Federation has already received numerous official shows of solidarity from maple syrup purchasers, equipment manufacturers, MRCs, municipalities, parliamentary representatives and other organizations, both public and private.

You can show your support too

So far, over 2,500 people have voiced their support for the current collective maple syrup marketing system by visiting the Quebec National Assembly website and signing the petition on “marketing of Quebec maple products and reviewing the recommendations of the Gagné Report.” We call on all maple producers, their family members, and anyone else directly or indirectly connected with the Quebec maple industry to sign this petition to tell the government that the report shouldn’t have seen the light of day. To sign, visit www.assnat.qc.ca, click “Voice Your Opinion,” and then click “Signing an E-Petition.”



The mission of the Fédération des producteurs acéricoles du Québec (FPAQ) is to defend and promote the economic, social and moral interests of the province's 7,300 maple syrup businesses, as well as to put forth initiatives to collectively market their products. Thanks to the hard work of our maple producers and their 43 million taps, Quebec leads the world in maple syrup with 72 per cent of the world's production.

 **Fédération des producteurs acéricoles du Québec** fpaq.ca – @AcericoleQc

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Young Farmers

The next generation

Audrey Desrochers
Regional correspondent

From the time he was nine years old, Mathieu Rouleau has been enthusiastically involved in 4-H clubs. In his local chapter, he participated in heifer shows and helped organize square dances and garden projects. Rouleau went on to become president of the provincial 4-H club for two years. Now, at 23, Rouleau is president of the McGill University Macdonald Campus Students' Society. Thousands of young farmers like him got their starts in 4-H clubs and junior farmer circles.

The main mission of the Association des jeunes ruraux du Québec (AJRQ), the francophone arm of 4-H, is to sustain youth interest in rural areas. "We want young people to understand that even if they don't live in the city, they have every opportunity ahead of them," AJRQ Executive Director Annie Chabot says. "In the country, they can raise a family and have a career."

Besides its general mission, the ARJQ also has a related goal: to shape agricultural succession. As well as training days, the 32 local centres organize expos where future farmers show their heifers. They go on to the regional exhibition,



Youth from rural communities won the heifer costume parade in the 2015 Quebec rural youth classic.

then to the Quebec rural youth classic, which, year in and year out, brings together approximately 200 youth from across the province.

"Young people have to find sponsors to organize these events. They are also responsible for preparing their heifers for the competitions," Chabot explains. "The experience helps them network and learn to work as a team."

In the English-speaking community,

4-H clubs also offer youth the opportunity to learn while they work. 4-H members develop their skills by organizing various projects, from photography to community gardens, as well as cooking, square dancing and dairy projects. "The themes are limited only by their creativity and their aspirations," says Chelsea Daniel, who oversees Quebec 4-H. "We have maintained the mission we had over 100 years ago: to shape young farmers."

The projects are supervised by older community leaders, who oversee the activities to help ensure their success. Their support helps the young farmers develop leadership skills. "It's a space for youth from rural communities to learn agricultural trades, as well as for personal growth," Daniel adds.

Leaving their mark

Like Mathieu Rouleau, many children and teenagers who have come up through junior farmer circles and 4-H clubs are now actively involved in their communities. "If you ask, in the executive offices of regional co-ops, how many went through junior farmers, you'll see, they're everywhere," according to Annie Chabot. The skills they develop in young farmers' clubs give them a head start, she says. "They know how committees work."

Mathieu Rouleau agrees. "I learned very early on how to work efficiently with people with different personalities. 4-H clubs also helped develop my leadership skills."

For this young man, young farmers' clubs provided experience and expertise he was able to use on his family farm and in his community. It's what makes him a good president of the Students' Society.

Occupation: Hoof trimmer

Johanne Martin
Regional correspondent

CAP-SANTÉ — In the vernacular, they're called *tailleurs de sabots*. But Maxime Verville and Raphaël Hossay prefer the term *pareurs d'onglons* (hoof trimmers). Either way, the two self-professed animal lovers and farm nuts say they've found their path.

Maxime had to give up his own dairy herd because he didn't have enough money. Raphaël owned a farm for a while before deciding to make hoof trimming his primary occupation because he enjoyed it so much.

Looking back, Maxime and Raphaël wouldn't have it any other way. Both are members of the Association des pareurs d'onglons du Québec (APOQ), a hoof trimmers' group founded in 2013. They say they've adopted the hoof trimmer's lifestyle, which gives them plenty of close contact with animals and agriculture.

"I don't come from a farming family, but I really like working with cattle,"

says Maxime. "I find it exciting to meet clients and work in a new environment every day. And like all good trimmers, I spend my time making animals more comfortable."

APOQ members are all perfectionists at heart, but they also receive basic training. There's only one hoof trimming school in North America—and it's in Wisconsin. Here at home, most trimmers are either self-taught or acquire their knowledge and technique from other trimmers one-on-one.

"Unlike farriers, trimmers don't have access to training in Quebec. If you want to become a certified trimmer and join the Association, which has 30 members at the moment, you have to take an exam administered by veterinarians," Raphaël says.

Maxime has been trimming for three years, while Raphaël has been at it for just two. There's no shortage of work. "We didn't have enough trimmers in my area, Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean, and I wanted to fill that gap," says Raphaël. "I'm even considering hiring an assistant."



Self-professed animal lovers and farm nuts Maxime Verville and Raphaël Hossay say they've found their path.

(Almost) nothing but good things to say

Off the top of his head, Maxime can think of only positive things to say about his occupation—other than the lingering odour of hoofs and the intense physical effort the job demands. Apart from that, he takes great enjoyment in preventing limps and recurring illnesses in cattle.

"A good trimmer needs to be patient and gentle with animals; you need attention to detail, dexterity and sharp observation skills. You also have to be good with your hands, have a strong work ethic and love farming. But there are lots of opportunities and good money to be made if you do your job well," says Maxime enthusiastically.

The International Strawberry Symposium to be held in Quebec City this summer

Between 500 and 800 researchers, producers and stakeholders in the horticultural sector will be coming to Canada this summer to attend "the most important scientific gathering in North America," according to André Gosselin, researcher at Laval University and co-president of the eighth International Strawberry Symposium (ISS). Like the Olympics, this Symposium is held every four years, the last one being in China. Quebec won the opportunity to host the 2016 edition from August 13 to 17 at the Convention Centre in Quebec City.

Researchers from all over the world will be presenting their latest discoveries on the theme "Moving Strawberry Science to New Frontiers." As a member of the organizing committee, the Quebec Strawberry and Raspberry



Growers' Association (APFFQ) has played an important part in designing a three-day program entitled The Strawberry Tech Program, which is intended particularly for growers interested in hearing about innovative projects and results relating to various topics such as breeding, crop management, organic production, strawberry flavour, nursery production, health effects, entomology, diseases and marketing. All presentations will be given in English or translated simultaneously into English on site. On the third day, technical tours will be offered on Île d'Orléans, on the south shore of Quebec City and in and around Montreal.

Early bird registration is available until May 1. Please consult the website for more details: <http://www.iss2016-quebec.org/fr/node/43>.

Tractor love

Audrey Desrochers
Regional correspondent

SAINT-GABRIEL-DE-BRANDON — It's the end of the grape harvest at Vignoble Saint-Gabriel. In the vineyard, a volunteer is busy taking down netting. He is sitting at the wheel of a Cockshutt 20, a tractor manufactured in Canada in the mid-1950s. This wonderful relic is one of several in producer Paul Jodoin's fields. The two huge barns that flank the main building house a veritable tractor sanctuary.

The son of a farmer, Jodoin has always had a weak spot for tractors. "One day, we were looking for a tractor for the vineyard. We found an old one by chance, and that's how my collection got started," he remembers. "I used to tell myself I would stop when I had 25, then 50, then 100, but I kept going." His collection has grown to include 120 antique tractors, all of them operational.

Jodoin owns every major brand in North American agricultural history, but his heart belongs to Cockshutt. "When I was young, my neighbour had a Cockshutt tractor, and I was always curious. Today, I've got just about every model," he laughs.

Curious crowds

Paul Jodoin has since opened his collection to visitors. His is the only antique tractor museum open to the public, he claims. About half of the visitors to his vineyard, he estimates, are there to see the tractors. "Then they'll stay and eat at the vineyard, sample the wines."

Richard Lamond, the volunteer mechanic who looks after the engines, enjoys talking to visitors. "I learn a lot about tractor history by chatting with them," says the tractor aficionado.

Lamond spends hours on the web looking for solutions to mechanical problems. "I once searched online for 30 hours to get an engine to run," he recounts proudly.

To get a tractor back in the field, Paul Jodoin sometimes has to buy two or even three identical machines. "Unfortunately, the market's no good right now." The upside, says the collector, is that there are hidden gems to be had cheaply at auction.

Despite his passion for agricultural antiques, Jodoin is quick to pledge his devotion to wine. His daily mantra: "Grapes before tractors." Yet next summer he plans to expand the museum, inviting visitors to the second floor of one of his barns, a treasure trove of farm antiques.



Paul Jodoin uses some of his antique tractors to work in his vineyard.

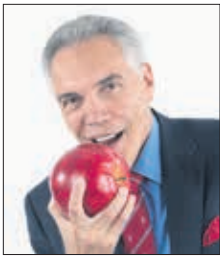


This David Brown tractor, with the steering wheel on the right-hand side, is a showpiece.

AUDREY DESROCHERS

AUDREY DESROCHERS

Separating sense from nonsense



Dr. Joe Schwarcz
Scientist and author

Screen houdini tied up with twisted facts

Editorial note: With the torrent of information now flooding popular media channels and the turbulence in contemporary traditional media, sometimes it can be hard to discern fact from fiction. In an effort to provide science-based, balanced content that values a healthy public discourse, the Advocate has begun publishing extracts from Dr. Joe Schwarcz. We hope you enjoy this thought-provoking read.

I'm an unabashed Houdini buff. While the fame of one of the greatest entertainers in history rests mostly on his escapes and magic, I've long been captivated by his battles with charlatans who claimed to be able to forge contact with the great beyond. Houdini insisted that they provide proper evidence, which was not forthcoming. Science is of course based on evidence, and for me Houdini was a great model of the proper pursuit of science. So is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes, another of my favorites. His classic line "it is a capital mistake to theorize before one has data because one insensibly begins to twist facts to suit theories, instead of theories to suit facts" has become my credo. Both Houdini and Holmes were adamant about relying on facts and not stretching the truth.

Conan Doyle, in a bizarre contrast to his scientifically minded detective, was a staunch believer in communicating with the spirit world. Houdini was highly critical of spiritualism and was the scourge of fake mediums who used magic tricks to convince the gullible that they had made contact with the dearly departed. Conan Doyle first met Houdini in 1920, and two years later when the

writer came to America to lecture on spiritualism, Houdini invited his friend to the annual meeting of the Society of American Magicians. Conan Doyle was hesitant about accepting, fearing that the

"Both Houdini and Sherlock Holmes were adamant about relying on facts and not stretching the truth."

magicians would ridicule his spiritualist beliefs. But as it turned out, it was Sir Arthur who had something up his sleeve!

After the magicians had gotten through upstaging each other with their newest tricks, it was the Scot's turn. He asked that the lights be turned down and a movie projector be brought in. The magicians' jaws dropped when they saw what appeared to be live dinosaurs cavorting on the screen! Conan Doyle refused to answer questions about the film, other than to insinuate that what may at first appear to be impossible, may indeed be possible. His message to the magicians was that they should not dismiss phenomena they did not understand too quickly.

The footage was the first example of stop-motion photography of miniatures. Doyle had the last laugh on this one, as none of the magicians, including Houdini, were able to explain how dinosaurs had

been captured on film. Famed science writer Arthur C. Clarke would later comment, "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic." The spiritualist Conan Doyle had clearly demonstrated this to the skeptical magicians.

Conan Doyle believed that Houdini actually had psychic powers because he could not imagine how the magician's wondrous stunts could be performed by scientific means. This, in spite of knowing how science had done the apparently impossible by bringing his fictional dinosaurs to life.

Award-winning chemist Dr. Joe Schwarcz is famous for debunking many of the myths about science and is director of McGill University's Office for Science and Society.



Sometimes it can be hard to discern fact from fiction. Science-based information helps to increase the public discourse.

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Crack-ups



Monkey business

A boy with a monkey on his shoulder was walking down the road when he passed a policeman who said, "Now, now young lad, I think you had better take that monkey to the zoo."

The next day, the boy was walking down the road with the monkey on his shoulder again, when he passed the same policeman.

The policeman said, "Hey there, I thought I told you to take that monkey to the zoo!"

The boy answered, "I did! Today I'm taking him to the cinema."

Say your prayers!

Two guys are walking through a game park and come across a lion that has not eaten for days. The lion starts chasing the two men. They run as fast as they can, and the one guy starts getting tired and decides to say a prayer, "Please turn this lion into a Christian, Lord."

He looks to see if the lion is still chasing him and discovers the lion on its knees. Happy to see his prayer answered, he turns around and heads towards the lion. As he comes closer to the lion, he hears it saying a prayer: "Thank you, Lord, for the food I am about to receive."





Mitchell Beer
President, Smarter Shift

Ocean agriculture points to opportunities for farming on land

It's a story of fresh thinking, climate resilience, "ecological redemption," and a solid shot at reversing the predations of the industrial food system.

And when I read Bren Smith's long, thoughtful and incredibly inspiring post on ocean agriculture ("The Seas Will Save Us: How an Army of Ocean Farmers are Starting an Economic Revolution"), I realized I'd run across an approach to sustainable food systems that would shift my thinking about climate solutions, and might just do the same for yours.

Smith's "blue-green revolution" is taking shape in Long Island Sound, New York. It's a vertical, underwater farm that cultivates seaweed, oysters, scallops and clams for food, fuel, fertilizer and feed, with just a fraction of the horizontal footprint of a conventional aquaculture operation.

"Our 3D farms are designed to address three major challenges," Smith writes. "First, to bring to the table a delicious new seafood plate in this era of overfishing and food insecurity; second, to transform fishermen into restorative ocean farmers; and third, to build the foundation for a new blue-green economy that doesn't recreate the injustices of the old industrial economy."

Smith may also be onto a big-time solution for a hungry world. "We can grow incredible amounts of food in small areas: 25 tons of greens and

250,000 shellfish per acre in five months." Which means a network of our ocean farms the size of Washington state could feed the planet.

The humility and pride of the primary producer

Bren Smith feels as strongly about the oceans as many farm producers do about the land. "I want to die on my boat one day—that's my measure of success," he writes. Until then, he speaks lyrically about "the humility of being in 40-foot seas, the sense of solidarity that comes with being in the belly of a boat with 13 other people working 30-hour shifts, and a sense of meaning and pride in helping to feed my country."

For a while, that life plan wasn't working so well for Smith, who left school in Petty Harbour, Newfoundland, at age 14 to fish the Georges Bank and the Grand Banks for tuna and lobster, and then the Bering Sea for cod and crab.

"We were tearing up entire ecosystems with our trawls, chasing fish further and further out to sea into illegal waters," he writes. The collapse of the Atlantic cod fishery in the early 1990s "created a split in the industry: the captains of industry, who wanted to fish the last fish, were thinking 10 years down the road, but there was a younger generation of us thinking 50 years out. We wanted to make our living on the ocean."

The only difference is geography

About a month ago, I was struck by a colleague's comment that humans treat Earth's vast oceans as an afterthought because we're a land-based species. In my day-to-day work on climate change, I routinely handle news on ocean acidification, sea level rise and coral bleaching, but the colleague is right—sitting on dry land in Central Canada, a huge life-sustaining system feels far away.

Bren Smith's work brings the oceans closer, partly because of the parallels between his story and land-based agriculture.

Both involve essential forms of primary production that few consumers understand or appreciate.

Both are economies where front-line producers eke out a living in industrialized markets dominated by a small number of large multinational businesses.

Both must cope with climate change and other forms of ecological degradation that could be reversed by new business models that might also deliver steady, satisfying employment to a new generation of producers.

Drop us a line about the parallels or differences you see between his work and yours.

Mitchell Beer is president of Smarter Shift in Ottawa and curator of The Energy Mix, a thrice-weekly e-digest on climate change, energy, and the low-carbon transition.



Bren Smith operates in Long Island Sound, New York, a vertical, underwater farm that cultivates seaweed, oysters, scallops and clams for food, fuel, fertilizer and feed, with just a fraction of the horizontal footprint of a conventional aquaculture operation.





Consider foot health before starting the milking robot

Gervais Bisson,
*Agronomist, Dairy Production Expert -
Milking Robots, Valacta*

Steve Adam
*Agronomist, Dairy Production Expert -
Animal Comfort, Behaviour and Well-
Being, Valacta*

The move to robotic milking requires some major adjustments on the part of both the producer and the cow. Switching from tie-stall housing to free-stall housing is one such change, but adapting to a new floor surface is another change that requires focussing on foot health as a matter of priority.

When the robotic milking system goes into operation, the cow's hooves are the first part of the animal's body to come in contact with the floor of the new barn. Unfortunately, hoof problems are often the first sign that a cow is having difficulty adapting to a new environment. An animal transferring from tie-stall housing to a free-stall setup is already adjusting to having to move about to meet her needs, so lameness will inevitably make her less inclined to walk to the milking robot or the feed bunk, resulting in a rapid decline in milk production. So how do we minimize lameness in the first weeks after starting robotic milking? The key factors are preparing the cows' hooves for the transition and making sure that the floor surface provides good traction while causing minimal sole damage.

Preparing hooves for robotic milking

Ideally, a cow should spend 12 hours a day resting, which means the remainder of the day is spent standing or walking. The start of robotic milking will have a significant impact on a cow's feet because she will need to move around to eat, drink and be milked instead of spending the whole day in the same stall. This initial phase will be taxing, not only for the animal's hooves but for her entire muscular system as well.

Supplements such as zinc methionine or biotin are recommended to improve claw horn quality and should be incorporated into the cows' rations three to six months prior to starting robotic milking. Talk to your feed supplier to determine the recommended dosage for your herd.



André Clavet, veterinarian

The veterinarian's perspective **LocoVet Service & Bureau vétérinaire B. St-Pierre**

Dr. André Clavet, a veterinarian with extensive expertise in hoof trimming, collaborated in the development of Valacta's 2016 training session, A Step Ahead. Here are some of his recommendations aimed at facilitating an upcoming transition from tie-stall housing to a new facility equipped with free stalls and a robotic milking system.

Taking stock

Dr. Clavet points out that the months before starting robotic milking are good times to assess lameness in the herd. He recommends making a list of the cows that are showing signs of lameness and keeping records of any information pertaining to foot-health treatments. These records provide valuable information about the state of each individual cow as well as the different types of lesions and their prevalence in the herd. It is important to treat as many cases of lameness as possible to ensure the animals' feet are in top condition when the herd is transferred to the new barn.

Hoof trimming

Regardless of who is doing the hoof trimming – a veterinarian, a professional hoof trimmer, or the herd owner – it is important to avoid removing too much of the sole. The last hoof trimming should be scheduled at least six weeks

prior to the start of robotic milking. The general recommendation is to preserve the heel. Dr. Clavet also underlines the importance of maintaining a thicker sole before switching to robotic milking. New concrete is often abrasive and the sole can wear down quickly. Cows with a normal gait will put their heels down first, but once transferred to a new building their behaviour becomes similar to that of heifers put on pasture. They tend to walk more to explore their environment and establish a hierarchy within the herd. Excessive sole wear can lead to hoof lesions such as toe ulcers, and the problem may be exacerbated when sand is used as bedding.

Professional tip

When initiating robotic milking with small groups of 15 to 20 cows, Dr. Clavet recommends temporarily confining the cows to a smaller area of the barn. Barriers can be set up to reduce the space available. The cows will thus spend less time walking, with less wear on the soles.

Importance of the foot bath

Herds housed in tie stalls will need to become accustomed to foot baths, which are used to control the transmission of digital dermatitis. In herds where more than 15 per cent of the animals are affected by digital dermatitis before the shift to robotic milking, the foot bath must be operational as soon as robotic

milking begins and should be used three days a week. In herds with fewer cases, a weekly foot bath is generally sufficient. Digital dermatitis must be rigorously controlled to prevent the few contagious cows in the herd from contaminating the others. In the first few weeks after the transfer, farmers may note that some of their cows are unable to adapt to this new lifestyle or that the conformation of their mammary gland is unsuited to robotic milking. These cows will need to be replaced, and it is important to remember that introducing new cows into the herd increases the risk of spreading digital dermatitis. **Dr. Clavet stresses that lameness management must be a matter of priority in a robotic milking system, since reduced milking for an individual cow is almost always linked to some form of lameness.**

Good planning is paramount!

Planning a shift to robotic milking is important on a number of levels, particularly in respect to foot health. Lameness at the start of robotic milking increases the stress of the transition, which compounds the already considerable workload and quickly leads to a decrease in production. Ensuring proper hoof care prior to starting the milking robot and choosing a less abrasive surface that provides good traction are considerations that will undoubtedly increase the chances of a successful transfer to robotic milking.

Macdonald

Reports



Governments to boost agri-food competitiveness, industrial innovation and agricultural greenhouse gases research

Kathy MacLean,
Faculty Planning and Communications

Two recent government announcements are poised to have a significant impact on research initiatives at Macdonald.

Agri-food innovation

The first was a line in the recent provincial budget that was good news for the Quebec agri-food sector. The Government of Quebec has awarded \$1 million per year for five years for the creation of the McGill Agri-Food Innovation Network (M.A.I.N.), led by the Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and the Conseil de la Transformation Alimentaire du Québec (CTAQ), in collaboration with the Centre de recherche et de développement de Saint-Hyacinthe (CRDA) and other Quebec industry and university participants. McGill University's Business Engagement Centre (MUBEC) has been instrumental to the success of this initiative.

The new consortium aims to increase Quebec agri-food sector's competitiveness and promote industrial innovation by building collaborative research projects that address the priorities and the needs of the province's food processors. In the short term, this initiative will develop economically viable approaches to extend the shelf life of food products and meet the consumer demand for clean and clear labels, as consumers in increasing numbers are asking for minimally processed, preservative free, healthy food products with clean labels—products that contain food ingredients and additives that are natural with familiar names.

Natural functional food ingredients, including plant extracts and their essential oils, enzymes, peptides, bacteriophages and fermented ingredients, can be used as potential antimicrobial alternatives to the synthetic ones to improve the shelf life of food products.

The team plans to create tools that will link the chemical profiles of potentially useful natural ingredients to their antimicrobial/antioxidant properties



The Honorable Lawrence MacAulay announces the extension of the Agricultural Greenhouse Gases Program for an additional five years.

and to develop edible and non-edible antimicrobial/antioxidant packaging systems.

Work on this initiative has taken place over the past year and has included a series of workshops led by the Faculty's Associate Dean (Research) **Dr. Salwa Karboune** and Faculty partners, including the Departments of **Food Science and Agricultural Chemistry** and **Bioresource Engineering**. International food companies and small and medium-sized enterprises alike from the Quebec agri-food sector, as well as numerous researchers, participated in the co-design and open innovation process to determine research priorities for the meat, bakery and produce sectors. Seed funding for this phase of the project was provided by the Ministère de l'Agriculture des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation (MAPAQ) and food processing industry partners.

Agricultural greenhouse gases program

Hard on the heels of the provincial announcement came one from the federal government. The Honorable Lawrence MacAulay, Federal Minister of Agriculture, was on campus to participate in the symposium and wrap-up meeting for a project on water management and agricultural greenhouse gas emissions, led by Chandra Madramootoo (Bioresource Engineering). The project was funded by the Agricultural Greenhouse Gases Program.

Minister MacAulay announced that the Government of Canada plans to invest \$27 million to extend the Agricultural Greenhouse Gases Program nationwide for an additional five years.

"There is no doubt that science is a most valuable tool for fighting climate change and for staying on the cutting edge of industry," MacAulay told conference participants. "The initiatives you

are discussing here today will be of great benefit to Canada's farmers and Canada's environment. Canadian farmers have always been strong stewards of the environment – they safeguard air, water and soil resources. They continue to make great strides in reducing the agricultural environmental footprint through higher-producing crops, effective use of inputs, like fertilizer, and technologies that use water efficiently. They use practices like zero tillage that keep carbon in the soil and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They apply nitrogen fertilizer in a more efficient manner as a safeguard to the environment and, of course, improvement to the bottom line of the farmer."

"A recent study at Lethbridge Research and Development Centre has shown that Canadian beef producers have reduced greenhouse emissions by 15 per cent over the past three years, at the same time increasing their production by over 30 per cent through genetics and management strategies such as feeding. Clearly, Canadian farmers are up to the challenge of feeding the world sustainably," said MacAulay.

"As you know, our government has a strong agenda for innovation. In the budget [last week] we committed to investing in research, innovation and science infrastructure that will help Canada's agriculture and food sector continue to create jobs and growth for all Canadians. Over the coming years, the budget commits to developing an approach for additional investments in agriculture, science and research. We know that strong action on climate change is needed. Never before has the role of stewardship been as important as it is now."

The renewed program will focus on helping farmers reduce greenhouse gases in four key areas: managing and feeding strategies, capturing carbon through land and tillage systems, agroforestry and crops grown with irrigation and drainage. Results of this research will give farmers new tools to reduce their emissions and boost their bottom lines.



The Tree Doctor



Leilak Anderson
Certified Arborist
Advocate Arboriculture Columnist

In my line of work, I find a lot of mushrooms on trees, and recently I've become interested in learning about some of

Quebec's edible tree-growing mushrooms

the common ones in Quebec. In my last article, I talked about mushrooms as a potential farming tool; I'd like to also highlight some benefits for humans.

Chaga (*Inonotus obliquus*) is an ugly, charred-black fungus that grows on birch trees. This mushroom has been used in Eastern European traditional medicine for centuries, and in recent

lab and animal studies, chaga has been shown to inhibit cancer, stimulate the immune system and reduce inflammation. More studies in humans need to be conducted, which, unfortunately, is slow to happen with natural products for patent reasons. The concern now is that natural sources of the fungus are hard to come by, partially from incorrect and overharvesting, but scientists are attempting to cultivate substitutes. For now, I ask if you come across a nice specimen to take care in your harvesting by using a clean, sharp tool, and to leave behind a portion of the chaga (rather than cutting it off at the bark) to allow regrowth.

Another tree-growing mushroom I'm starting to keep an eye out for is turkey tail (*Trametes versicolor*). In recent clinical studies, turkey tail has been shown to have anti-tumour and immune-boosting qualities, and it helps to reduce the side effects of chemo and radiation therapy. This mushroom is aptly named: it appears in various

colours, resembling the plume of a turkey feather. It grows widely in our forests, and is a wood-rotting fungus that helps decompose dead wood, so look for these mushrooms on dying or dead hardwood trees, logs and stumps.

For the consumption of these mushrooms, obviously, do your research. Often the medicinal properties are best extracted by making a delicious tea. If you are interested in learning more, you can look up world-renowned mycologist Paul Stamet, who wrote *Mycelium Running: How Mushrooms Can Help Save the World*, or check out studies overviewed on the website of the Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York.

Leilak is five-time Quebec tree-climbing champion and proudly represents Quebec in the international arborist scene. Leilak runs a tree-care company in the Outaouais and National Capital Region. When he's not climbing trees, he's a volunteer firefighter. You can read more of his articles at www.leilak.info.

CONTEST

JAE

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- must be a farmer and draw at least two-thirds of the farm's total income

SELECTION CRITERIA

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- production history
- community contribution
- maintenance of financial records
- interview by jury

ALL FINALISTS WILL RECEIVE:

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CASE II

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LEILAK ANDERSON

This is a nice specimen of chaga that I came across while skiing near my house this winter.

Cookin' with the Advocate



Agents work in tandem

Cynthia Gunn
QFA's Food Writer

Truth be told, high school chemistry and I weren't a natural fit. Somehow I missed the essential message that the world around us is all about chemistry and physics, another subject that eluded me. The third pillar of high school science, math, somehow became one of my best buddies. We had a quiet understanding of each other, and it helped me through many a tough spot in the decades since.

In my current role of caterer, food writer and aspiring gardener, I am finding it essential to turn my back on earlier life setbacks in the chemistry department and discover it anew. In last month's column, I introduced some basic kitchen chemistry. This month, I am once again immersed in the whys and hows of molecules and their attachments to or disdain for each other.

Earlier in the week, I was tasked with finding a perfect-looking ginger cookie. Perfect-looking, because I was contracted to make them for a scene in a television show. Research led me to this crunchy chewy sugar cookie. It is a most unusual cookie recipe, one that is based on science rather than tradition, coming as it does from America's Test Kitchen. Normally I err on the side of tradition, but baking is truly an applied science, so I trusted in the scientific method used to create this recipe (they tried 50 different variations!)

I now know how two types of leavening agents - baking soda and baking powder - work in tandem to make flatter cookies with a crinkly top. Baking powder causes the cookies to rise. It produces most of its gas after the cookies go into the oven, where the dough sets before these bubbles can burst. A quote from America's Test Kitchen: "But too much lift can mean cookies that turn out humped. Here's where baking soda comes in.... Baking soda raises the pH of dough, weakening gluten. Weaker gluten means less structure and cookies that spread. As for crackly tops, baking soda reacts immediately in the wet dough to produce large bubbles of carbon dioxide that can't all be contained by the weakened dough. Before the cookies can set in the oven, the bubbles rise to the top and burst, leaving fissures in their wake."

And why the two types of fat, saturated and unsaturated? Apparently they create a sturdier structure that requires more force to bite through, hence the chewiness. I'm still not clear on the chemistry of that part, but I can guarantee it works!

Cynthia is a researcher and writer, covering issues related to environment, heritage, tourism and food. She runs a small catering business and lives in Western Quebec with her two daughters and husband. She holds a MA in Geography.

Crunchy Chewy Lemon Sugar Cookies



CYNTHIA GUNN

Ingredients

2 ¼ cups (11 ¼ ounces) unbleached all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon table salt
1 ¼ cups sugar, plus ¼ cup for rolling
2 ounces cream cheese, cut into 8 pieces
6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and still warm
⅓ cup vegetable oil
1 large egg
1 tablespoon lemon juice
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
Grated zest of one small lemon

Whisk flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt and lemon zest together in medium bowl. Set aside.

Place 1 ¼ cups of sugar and cream cheese in large bowl. Place remaining ¼ cup of sugar in a shallow dish and set aside. Pour warm butter over sugar and cream cheese and whisk to combine. Whisk in oil until incorporated. Add egg, lemon juice and vanilla, whisking until smooth. Add flour mixture and mix with rubber spatula only until soft smooth dough forms. It will be quite wet.

Divide dough into equal-sized balls, 18-36. Using hands, roll dough into balls and roll in reserved sugar. Space evenly on prepared baking sheet, leaving 2-3 inches between balls, depending on size. Flatten dough balls slightly. Bake in preheated 350°F oven until edges are set and just beginning to brown, 11-14 minutes, rotating tray after 8 minutes.

Adapted from America's Test Kitchen "Crunchy Chewy Sugar Cookies"

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Shorthorn Bulls - 12 to 15 months old, polled. Well-muscled, excellent EPD's and ultrasound scanned for carcass traits. 450-260-5272 shadybrook@iteract.ca (1/1)

Annual Bred Heifer Sale for Preston & Terry Cull at the farm on 923 Spence Road, Douglas, Ontario. Friday, May 6, at 7:00 p.m.

Approx. 75 Charolais X-Bred first & second calf heifers - whites/tans & reds - bred to large frame Charolais, or Red Angus Bulls. Numerous with calves at foot, remainder due May/June. Double vaccinated, Scour Bos and preg-checked.

Pictures can be found at www.prestoncull.com. Auctioneer: Preston Cull, R.R.#1 Douglas, Ontario. 613-649-2378 (1/1)

Switch grass round bails bedding mulch 4 X 5ft, 600lbs each, \$45. Truck load delivery can be arranged from Lennoxville. Call 819-572-9394 for more details. (1/3)

MACHINERY FOR SALE

20 foot bush hog, John Deere CX20. Year 2015, has only worked 250

acres. Fully equipped, air suspension on all walking tandems, double blades, hydraulic folding LIKE NEW. 613-673-2714 (2/2)

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\$100 OFF Farm Credit Canada (FCC) management software - AgExpert Analyst and Field Manager - contact your local FCC office for details!

3 FREE QFA CLASSIFIEDS - for all your machinery & livestock sales,

auctions and other announcements.

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The discount card is sent with your welcome pack on receipt of your membership payment. Items eligible for discount include:- Dakota work shirts and pants, coveralls, overalls and coats; All Carhartt merchandise; DH merchandise - jeans, shirts, knits and polar fleece wear and coats; all WR coats - winter underwear and all CSA approved footwear.

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Rural Community Better Together



REGIONAL NEWS & EVENTS

Eastern Townships:

Richmond 4-H

Congratulations to Erin Scoble, recognized by 4-H Canada as the Quebec Leader of the Year!

A warm welcome home from Halifax to Noah Enright and Ryley Keenan, who travelled to the first ever National 4-H Science Fair in Nova Scotia to present their project on the relationship between soda and tooth decay.

Sawyerville 4-H Dance

Music by Slightly Haggard

When: May 28, 9:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m.

Where: Cookshire Fairgrounds

Cost: \$7, tickets available at the door
Info: Kendra Parnell (819-889-3275 or kendraelly@gmail.com)

Montréal:

Thank you to Howick 4-H club, local sponsors, and all the farms we visited for a wonderful Innovative Ag Tour, which took place from March 18 to 20.

- Les Serres Lefort (Vegetables and transplants)
- Ferme Louis Bourdeau Inc. (Dairy)
- Willy Haeck et Fils (Ornamental horticulture)
- Anderson Farms Inc. (Dairy)
- Stacey Enterprises (Maple production)
- Miel d'Isabelle (Apiary)

- Tullochgorum Farms (Broiler hens & organic popcorn)
- Glenisla (Dairy goats)

Laurentides:

Lachute 4-H Club Fundraising Square Dance

Music by Glenn Silversen Band

When: April 30, 2016, 8:00 p.m.

Where: Grenville Community Center, Grenville

Cost: \$10

Light refreshments will be served

Pontiac:

Quebec 4-H Provincial Rally

Theme: Hollywood.

Open to: Participation is open to 4-H members aged 12-25 and juniors from the

host club.

General public is welcome to spectate.

Date: July 21-24, 2016; show day is Saturday, July 23.

Location: Hosted by Shawville 4-H Club at the Shawville Fairgrounds

Cost: \$60 includes one project; \$20 for additional project entries

Register by: June 1, 2016

4-H members will demonstrate various livestock and life skills projects, competing as individuals and teams. An awards banquet on Saturday evening will recognize achievements. Community volunteers and sponsors are welcome to contribute.

For more information visit: quebec4-h.com/rally or email: office@quebec4-h.com.

QUEBEC 4-H ASSOCIATION

Summer Junior Camp

Theme: First Nations

Open to: 4-H members aged 9 to 12

When: August 14-17

Where: Dunn Memorial Scout Camp, Elgin

Intermediate Leadership Camp

Open to: 4-H members aged 13-15

When: September 23-25

Where: Camp d'action biblique, Richmond

4-H CANADA

Scholarships

Scholarship applications deadline is May 31, 2016. 4-H'ers can supplement the cost of a post-secondary education and access resources and networks that will be invaluable throughout their academic careers and beyond. Currently available:

- Leadership Excellence Awards of Distinction (L.E.A.D.)
- TD 4-H Agriculture Scholarships

- CIBC 4-H Post-Secondary Education Scholarships
- John Deere Canada 4-H Scholarships
- Larry Milton Campbell Memorial 4-H Scholarship
- Weston Family 4-H Agricultural Scholarships
- Canadian Co-operative Wool Growers 4-H Scholarship

For more information visit: 4-h-canada.ca/GrantsScholarships%26Awards

4-H Rural Safety Fund

A total of \$20,000 in funding will be available to support 4-H clubs, districts, regions and provincial offices. Funds must be used in the development of an activity, project or initiative that develops youth leadership, safety awareness and advocacy among 4-H youth and within the community. Successful applicants will receive \$500-\$2000.

Application deadline: May 31, 2016

For more information visit: <https://4-h-canada.ca/4-h-rural-safety-fund>

Are you a QFA member?

All UPA Regional Federations corresponding to the linguistic minority decided at the close of 2015 to stop funding translations going into the *Advocate*. This is not to say they wish to stop funding services for English-speaking farming communities. Indeed, regional offices are working hard to fulfill the needs of English producers and administrators, and elected officials see greater value in funding activities rather than translating information for publication in the *Advocate*.

Files show that there are around 1,500 English-speaking farmers paying their dues to the UPA. All are potential members of the QFA and ALL receive the *Advocate*. Only one quarter of potential members give money to support production of the *Advocate* and other services.

If you become a member, not only does your money go directly towards production of the newspaper, but you are also eligible to receive exclusive benefits such as: competitively priced health insurance; considerably reduced prices on Farm Credit Canada management software; discount cards for Carhart work wear; discounted QFA translation services; 7.5 per cent discount on Via Rail travel; and three free classified advertisements for the *Advocate*. Taking advantage of these benefits more than pays for the membership cost, so, essentially, membership is free. A list of new and recently returning members appears below. This list is not complete, so if your name does not appear this month, it will be in the May issue.

If you have recently paid for membership but have received another notice, please accept our sincere apologies and disregard the renewal notice. Occasionally, there are delays in processing.



John Ableson	Cullen Forage Services	Kirk Lang	Hugn and John Salisbury
Alfred Alexander	Mike Culleton	Romeo Lagarde	Douglas and Isabel Schwartz
Melissa Arthur	Frank Fields	Lindsay Laughren	William and Donna Silverson
Kelly Allen	Brian Gainsford	Edward Lemieux	Brent Simpson
Archie Blankers	James and Maureen Gallagher	John Lindsay	William and Deborah Stewart
Bevin Boyd	Lindie Gilpin	Ralph and Marjorie Marlin	Gary Taylor
Wilhelm Brand	John Gomery	Bob and Sue McClelland	Robert Thiel
Ken Brooks	David Gowan	Doug McColm	Melvin and Kenny Thompson
Gerald Brown	Melvin and Verna Graham	James McGerrigle	Edward Vogel
Reginald and Lynne Burrows	Bob Griffin	Erwin Mohr	Bob Waller
Donald Chisholm	Timothy Hancock	Glen, Lynn and Dennis Moore	Brent Waller
Gordon and Susan Chisholm	Robert Higgins	Adair Mountain	John Wilson and Connie
George and Rozlin Clark	Hannah Hoare	Roy Nugent	McClintock
Harold and Carolyn Closs	Blake Hooker	Stephen Olmsted	Thomas and Paul Werner
Larry Cooke	Anthony Hungerbuhler	Robert Paterson	Susan Wolker
Gary Cowan	Carl Jackson	Michael Rember and Stacey	Oene and Trudy Ykema
Roy Copeland	Rufus and Helen Jamieson	Beatty	Robert Younge
Robert and Helen Craig	James and Joshua Johnston	Janet and Frank Retty	Percy Zacharias
Dustin Cullen	Daniel and John Kelly	George Robb	

TOGETHER WE SUSTAIN QUEBEC'S ENGLISH-SPEAKING RURAL COMMUNITY.

QFA working for you

Spring is always a busy season, and the last few weeks have been no exception. In order to better inform members and readers of what is happening at QFA, we intend on periodically publishing a brief point-form synopsis of recent activities and highlights.

- We have been working hard on overhauling the QFA website, and a site with a new look is due to be launched in the coming weeks. It has been many years since we made any significant changes, and we hope that you will enjoy the new look, which will be more functional and user friendly.
- The final report for the seniors' project that was featured in the October *Advocate* was submitted to the funding agency in March, and we are pleased to announce that it has been accepted without recourse. Our final payment has been received. This venture sought to support seniors through an innovative project focusing on the therapeutic benefits of gardening with the objective of reducing seniors' isolation and promoting health. It was a tremendous success and one which we intend to build on.
- Translation activities have been strong, and we have received a number of approaches from new clients, most notably the Agricultural Institute of Canada, whose conference QFA attended on April 13 and 14. A report covering this conference will appear in the May issue. Our new Director of Translations, Scott Irving, is settling in well, and business has been relatively swift.
- QFA attended proceedings at Parliament Hill in Ottawa on April 12 and was involved in organization leading up to the event, which has become a staple in the QFA calendar over the last number of years. A report can be seen in this issue.
- Although the Forum in March had to be cancelled, organizing the April Forum has been ongoing. We hope turnout will be strong. We are also seeking to respond to a request that came from Armin Ruf, one of our directors in the Estrie region, to add an extra Forum in May on the hot topic of highway regulations. We are working on this.
- Besides customary duties of membership processing, of which we had around 160 over the course of last month, and *Advocate* design and creation, there was the usual allotment of meetings, phone calls, correspondence, networking and relationship development. In addition, the QFA office moved within the UPA building and is now up on the third floor adjacent to the Potato Federation, Apple Growers and Vegetable Processors.



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