

Quebec Farmers' Advocate

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Ministers make steps towards new ag policy



Canada's ministers of agriculture pose in Calgary following their annual meeting. (L to R): Oneil Carlier – Minister of Agriculture and Minister of Forestry, Alberta; Colin Holloway – Parliamentary Secretary to Minister for Business, Tourism, Culture and Rural Development; Jeff Leal – Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs, Ontario; Pierre Paradis, Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, Quebec; Norm Letnick – Minister of Agriculture, British Columbia; Monica Ell-Kanayuk, Deputy Premier, Nunavut; Rick Doucet – Minister of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries, New Brunswick; Ralph Eichler – Minister of Agriculture, Food & Rural Initiatives, Manitoba; Lyle Stewart – Minister of Agriculture, Saskatchewan; Lawrence MacAulay – Minister of Agriculture, Canada; Keith Colwell – Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Nova Scotia; J. Alan McIsaac – Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, Prince Edward Island.

"Politicians say they're beefing up our economy. Most don't know beef from pork."

— Harold Lowman

Andrew McClelland
Advocate Staff Reporter

The agriculture ministers of Canada's provinces and territories met in Calgary with federal Minister of Agriculture Lawrence MacAulay last month to talk shop and decide upon the future of Canada's farm industry. The resulting Calgary Statement—which represents a consensus among ministers regarding the key priorities to develop the next agricultural policy framework—is set to launch in April of 2018.

While Ottawa and the provinces are yet to flesh out the details of the new policy framework, all agree that government programs in the future must sup-

port Canadian farming by:

- expanding domestic and international markets and trade opportunities;
- advancing science and innovation capacity to enhance and strengthen competitiveness;
- anticipating, mitigating and responding to risk in a way that supports sustainable growth;
- supporting resiliency and environmental sustainability to ensure long-term adaptation and growth;
- improving value-added and the food processing sector;
- and securing public trust.

Canadian producers have said that Growing Forward 2—the suite of farm support programs started by the Harper

government—doesn't properly cover risk management. They want programs such as AgriStability and AgriInvest improved.

This was MacAulay's first meeting with all provincial and territorial ministers since being named federal minister of agriculture in the Trudeau cabinet. He took the opportunity to pledge his support to reenergizing Canada's farm economy.

"The Canadian agriculture sector generates over \$108B for the Canadian economy and is the single largest employer of all manufacturing sectors—providing jobs to one in eight Canadians," MacAulay noted.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

QFA's Farm Food Forums

Donate to the Warren Grapes Fund

Help young farmers get started on their dreams



On the cover

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"We want to make sure farmers and processors can continue to take advantage of new global market opportunities. By doing so, we're also supporting Canada's economy and the middle class, which includes farmers and processors."

MacAuley, who has represented the riding of Cardigan, Prince Edward Island, in the House of Commons since 1988, noted that enrolment in AgriStability is dropping and that the program needs to be "tweaked." AgriStability is the support program built into Growing Forward 2 that helps producers who experience a large margin of decline.

Quebec takes exception

While the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ) agrees in general with the Calgary Statement, Quebec Minister of Agriculture Pierre Paradis said it will issue its own communiqué as it considers this joint communiqué incomplete and not reflective of a full consensus.

"The issue of diafiltered milk is the biggest challenge facing Canadian agriculture today. And while we discussed it on a number of occasions during the

meeting, I think it is unacceptable that the joint press release made no mention of it," explained Paradis.

But where's the money?

The Calgary Statement keeps Ottawa's promise that it will foot 60 per cent of the bill for the support programs, with

"As a first step, the stated objectives are interesting, subject to the Quebec government's comments" — Charles-Félix Ross, director general of UPA

the provinces and territories making up the remaining 40 per cent. However, just how much money will be given to the new policy framework remains to be seen. The current suite of programs offered by Growing Forward 2 is worth \$3 billion.

"Just how much dollars will be there, and how it will be put together will be basically put together in the next year," MacAuley said. "We want to be sure, as it was indicated quite clearly at the meetings, the ministers and I want to make sure it meshes properly with Growing Forward 2. The amount of funding has

yet to be established, but the point has certainly been raised."

Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA) President Ron Bonnett met with ministers prior to the Calgary meeting. The CFA estimates that the changes made to Growing Forward 2 have saved the government up to \$260 million, but

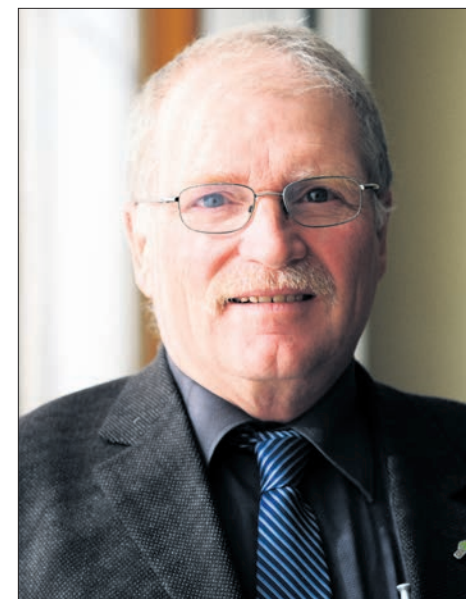
that doesn't mean the programs are giving farmers what they need.

"If you're going to have an industry that's making huge investments to capture new markets you have to have on that backstop a risk management program that prevents severe losses," Bonnet said.

For its part, the Union des producteurs agricoles (UPA) agrees that the spirit of the Calgary Statement is good news, but the question of financial support is everything.

"As a first step, the stated objectives are interesting, subject to the Quebec

government's comments," said Charles-Félix Ross, director general of the UPA. "But the support provided through the program will confirm everything. The federal government must invest more in terms of risk management and strategic initiatives for producers."



JAMES ANDREW ROSEN

"If you're going to have an industry that's making huge investments to capture new markets you have to have on that backstop a risk management program that prevents severe losses," says CFA President Ron Bonnett, shown here at the QFA's annual meeting.



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

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Canadian
Heritage

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Andrew McClelland
Advocate Staff Reporter

The world of agricultural economics can be a confusing one at times. On one hand, we hear mention of the “global economy” ad nauseam from political pundits and economists. The world is now one big economic organism, so the story goes, and what affects one country is bound to affect the other.

And yet, time and time again economic pitfalls or surges occur in one part of the globe while the rest stays relatively stable. So what's true: the volatile global economy, or regional protectionism?

Such is the case when you look at outlooks for the Canadian and American farm industries for the coming year. Recently the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) shocked industry analysts when it announced that its \$2.65 billion operating loan program to help farmers keep their businesses going has already run out of cash. The US is suffering its worst agricultural downturn in more than a decade, and that's left American farmers looking to their government for help.

As we've been hearing since the Mulroney-era Free Trade Agreement, Canada and the US's farm economies are practically married, or “integrated” in politician-speak. So why is it that farm receipts in Canada are projected to remain pretty much the same throughout 2016-17?

The almighty (weak) dollar

Part of the reason is the low Canadian dollar. The CAD/USD exchange rate is currently 19 per cent below the five-year average. When that kind of depreciation occurs in an integrated North American farm economy, the prices Canadian producers receive go up since they're priced for the US market.

A very strong US dollar also means that international buyers have less purchasing power. That, in turn, leads to a decline in demand for commodities, according to the age-old economic rule of supply-and-demand. When US prices fall for cattle, wheat, or other products, the lower Canadian dollar offers some protection for the country's ag producers.

Mother Nature

Say what you will about the Canadian winter and short growing season: sometimes it plays to our advantage. In the

Canada still the safer bet for farmers



The Canada-US farm industries are “integrated,” so experts say. So why is the US suffering one of its worst farm income crises in more than a decade when things look so steady in Canada?

past several years, drought has consistently hurt California's crop production and lowered the revenues of some of the biggest farm companies south of the border.

intended effect. Canadian exports of edible vegetables grew between 2006 and 2012 at an average annual rate of 7.3 per cent. That's great news, but it gets better: between 2012 and 2015, exports

Canada reported that farm input prices declined by 2.1 per cent in the first quarter of 2016. In comparison, farm input prices increased 0.8 per cent on average in the US over the same period.

It seems that much of Canada's interventionist farm economy benefits its farm producers — more so than the US's laissez-faire economic policy.

In 2015, California dairy and livestock drought-related losses amounted to an estimated US\$350 million (or 2.8 per cent of revenues). If that wasn't bad enough for the state, world dairy prices have declined more than 30 per cent during the same time frame. That has hit the US, the world's largest single-country dairy exporter, much harder than Canadian producers.

Moreover, sheer politics and opening up markets seem to have had the

increased at an average annual rate of 25.9 per cent. Hurrah for all those trade negotiation trips to overseas markets by Canada's trade and ag ministers?

Overhead costs can be lower

Sure, the low Canadian dollar can mean that Canada's farmers get higher prices for their products. But you might be saying: “It also means we have to pay higher prices for supplies and inputs.” While true, it's not always the case. Statistics

All in all, it seems that much of Canada's interventionist farm economy benefits its farm producers—more so than the US's laissez-faire economic policy. Canadian crop receipts are projected to increase 5.8 per cent in 2016, with a further 3.8 per cent in 2017. Livestock receipts are expected to decrease 6.9 per cent in 2016, rebounding in 2017 with a 2.6 per cent increase. Canada is looking like a good place to farm in the near future.



Celebrating the Family farm

A longtime family passion for Ayrshires

Emily Southwood
Freelance Writer

Along the shores of the Rivière des Anglais in Howick, QC, lies Terrace Bank Farm where the Larry Ness family has a long history of importing and exporting livestock. Originally from Scotland, the Nesses came to the Chateauguay Valley in 1852 and returned overseas regularly to bring horses back to Quebec. Eventually, the family shifted to importing Ayrshire cattle. They continued importing Ayrshires from Scotland for over a century until 1960, at which point the transatlantic journeys came to a stop when they considered the Canadian Ayrshires to be genetically on par. Larry Ness's father, Robert Ness, made one trip abroad. By contrast, Larry's great-great-grandfather crossed the Atlantic an astounding 111 times by boat.

The Ness family has a long-held reputation for prize-winning Ayrshire cattle. They currently participate in several shows a year, and their farm, Terrace Bank, formerly Burnside Farm, has participated in every single one of



The Ness family at Ormstown Fair 2016.

Ormstown's popular annual fairs. The grand champion Ayrshire ribbon from the 1956 Ormstown Expo, Larry Ness's birth year, hangs in the century-old barn. Larry clearly takes pride in their family history, but also has a sense of humour about changing times. Terrace

Bank Farm now has a special interest in promoting Ayrshire genetics, and Larry recounts the story of being excited to receive a call about exporting his Ayrshire cattle embryos to Japan. That was until he discovered an article in the historical section of his local paper about his great-grandfather sending 60 live Ayrshires to Japan by boat in his day. "I had to laugh when I realized that my great-grandfather had already more than one-upped me there," Larry chuckled.

The Ness family has a long-held reputation for prize-winning Ayrshire cattle.

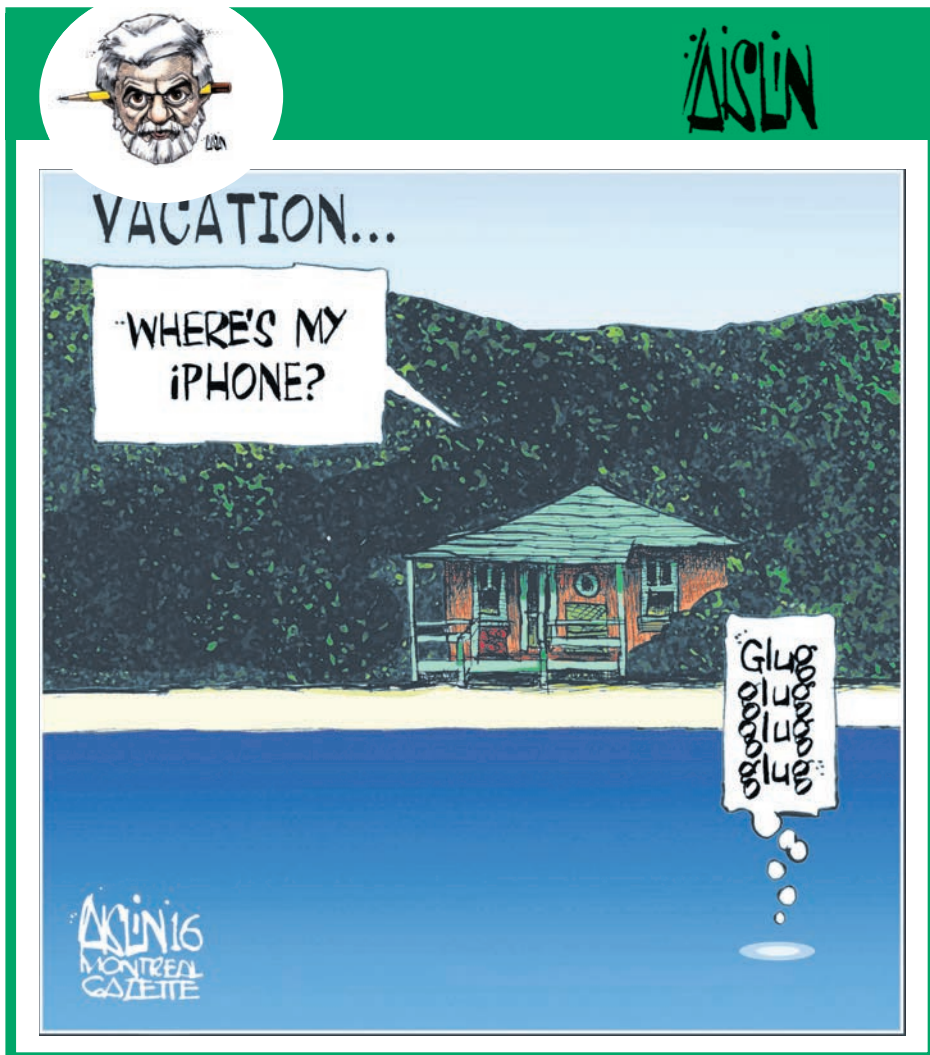
Larry's grandfather, J. Earle Ness, a fourth-generation Canadian, purchased Terrace Bank Farm in 1920. The outside of the barn remains almost identical to its original structure built in 1902. John D. Duncan, a young man from Scotland who'd worked on farms and subsequently became a successful businessman in Montreal, was the original owner of the building. Mr. Duncan built what was an extremely modern, innovative structure for its time, with a steam engine that powered dairy production and provided power to grind grain and cut roots.

The farmhouse on Terrace Bank Farm was also built in 1902, with another addition in 1915. A large fancy brick house for its time, it currently is home to Larry and Cecile Ness, formerly

Cecile Antink from Hatley, QC. The two met through 4-H, then known as Quebec Young Farmers, and the century-old home is where they have happily raised their four sons and daughter. All of their children—Eric, Jason, Andrew, Robert and Keesha—are involved in farm life or agriculture in some capacity. "We're never bored," Larry says of their busy family life. The farm is a true multi-generational operation with Larry's 88-year-old father, Robert, still active on the farm most days. "He cuts grass and fixes windows. If there is some odd job he can do, he does it. He loves it."

Today the farm raises mostly purebred Ayrshires, as well as some Holsteins and several Jerseys. In addition to cattle, the Ness family has a few sheep and goats, and they grow soy, corn and produce maple syrup. Larry speaks very highly of being a farmer in Southern Quebec. "It's a great area to farm in," he says. "We have very few crop failures and our crops are usually fairly steady and abundant. It's a good area to farm in and a good place to live." He even finds the silver lining of Quebec winters: "Living in a northern place has the benefit of breaking some disease cycles."

He's similarly optimistic about what the future holds for Terrace Bank. When asked whether he thinks his children will continue to run the farm he responds, "I think in some fashion the kids will carry it on, though it's hard to say if it will always be a dairy farm. We'd like them to be healthy and happy and do what they want to do in life. Time will only tell how it all pans out."



Corn, soy and the future of ASRA



Grain farmers must have access to programs that provide coverage for losses on the basis of production costs.

The board of directors of La Financière agricole du Québec was unfortunately forced to take the easy road—the same road travelled by the MAPAQ since the early 1990s—and dismantle the ASRA program for corn and soy farmers. The

Producteurs de grains du Québec (PGQ) will continue to call for agricultural policy that addresses the specific needs of grain producers, such as those found in the United States and the European Union. Having said this, now is the time

when our organization must consider the best ways to transition towards the Agri programs in the corn and soy sectors. One of the main issues at present is establishing our sector's priorities for investing the roughly \$57 million in

ASRA funds earmarked for these crops.

The PGQ will keep you abreast of any progress made. The message we continue to reiterate is that grain farmers must have access to programs that provide coverage for losses on the basis of production costs.

Quebec Grain Roundtable gets coordinator

The Quebec Grain Roundtable (Groupe de concertation du secteur des grains) now has a development agent, Éline Grignon. Éline's mandate is to design, develop and implement foundational and collaborative projects with a view to making Quebec's grain sector more competitive. She will also serve as coordinator, fostering synergy among members and stimulating their motivation and engagement in shared projects. The Roundtable is made up of representatives from grain buyers, input suppliers, government, research institutions and producers. The strategic plan includes 7 themes, 32 objectives and 73 action steps.

The 2016-17 grain market outlook



Many factors are pushing down future grains prices.

The price outlook for corn and soybeans is bearish for 2016-17. Indeed, there are several factors pushing for lower futures prices. The weather has been favourable for crop development in the US. Moreover, on June 30, USDA raised the area forecasts for all three major grains – corn, soybeans and wheat. As a result, production is forecast to reach a record-high 14.54 billion bu of corn, 3.88 billion bu of soybeans (a near record) and 2.26 billion bu of wheat (vs. 2.05 billion bu in 2016).

Overseas, Russia is harvesting a bumper wheat crop estimated at 65 million tons (MT). After a very poor start, the Ukrainian winter wheat crop is forecast to reach 25 MT, only 2 MT below last year's level thanks to a mild winter and good spring rainfall.

There are a few bullish factors, including a poor wheat crop in France. However, the world is awash with wheat supplies. Moreover, Western Canadian crops are benefiting from plentiful rainfall throughout the Prairies and may be on their way to reaching record levels.

However, the outlook may be less pessimistic for our local corn basis. The basis will be under pressure until harvest but may find some support after that. Southwest Ontario is suffering from a serious drought that will reduce their corn and soybean crops. Moreover, on June 29 Statistics Canada reduced the Quebec corn area estimate by 20,000 hectares, which means that our corn surplus next year will be less burdensome than initially feared.



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

New standards for maple syrup equipment

For the past few months, the new California standards have been raising plenty of questions—and they are poised to change the landscape of the maple syrup industry.

The story of Prop 65

In a 1986 referendum, the state of California adopted the Safe Drinking Water and Toxic Enforcement Act, also known as Proposition 65. The purpose of the legislation is to inform citizens about chemicals in their environment and protect them from harm. Since the adoption of Prop 65, the public must be notified if there is a risk of exposure to products that could be carcinogenic or pose reproductive harm.

Maple syrup under the microscope

In June 2013, a number of Canadian and American maple syrup packers received Prop 65 violation notices. Knowing that this type of case rarely works out in favour of defendants in court, the packers elected to negotiate. The negotiations led to a compromise and to new lead reduction measures in the maple syrup industry.

Lead reduction measures adopted

The maple syrup packers, in concert with the International Maple Syrup Institute (IMSI), agreed upon lead reduction measures based on equipment type and company size. These measures must be implemented in all maple-producing states and provinces by 2021.

Lead content is verified in maple syrup in Quebec. As of 2015, if the



In June 2013, a number of Canadian and American maple syrup packers received Prop 65 violation notices.

Starting in 2021, if any maple syrup analyzed on California soil is found with lead content exceeding 11 ppb, the packer must be able to prove that no equipment could have contaminated the product at any stage

content is over 250 ppb (parts per billion), the syrup must be destroyed. In California, however, the maximum allowable level under Prop 65 is 11 ppb, which is about one twenty-third the

allowable limit set out in Quebec's marketing agreement.

Starting in 2021, if any maple syrup analyzed on California soil is found with lead content exceeding 11 ppb, the packer must be able to prove that no equipment could have contaminated the product at any stage from tree to bottle. If this cannot be proven, the manufacturer is liable for a fine and must post a warning on the container notifying consumers of the presence of lead.

Although the agreement applies only to a certain number of packers and a specific market, the presence of lead is an issue that affects the whole sector. Since the Fédération des producteurs

acéricoles du Québec (FPAQ) manages the inventory of maple syrup and is called to provide packers that supply all markets, it must be ready to follow commercial standards that apply both at home and abroad.

What's next?

The FPAQ, in conjunction with the Conseil de l'industrie de l'érable and certain equipment manufacturers, prepared a proposal to create an inventory stating which equipment does and does not meet the standards, and to test the efficacy of a quick method to assess equipment compliance.

Given the scale of the project, the FPAQ and its collaborators sought, and received, funding from the MAPAQ. This project will be an important step in gathering all the relevant information to guide producers in bringing their operations into compliance. The FPAQ and its partners will disseminate the results to all Quebec maple syrup producers as soon as they are known.

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



Passing on skills and support through 4-H

Carolyn Coddington
4-H Quebec Association

Many 4-H'ers have been busy this summer showing their projects at their local achievement days, fairs and the 4-H Quebec Provincial Rally. Although the spectators are often focused on the participants, an important person is standing front and centre: the judge. A trend is emerging in organizers' choices of judges: 4-H alumni or current members are stepping up to help. These alumni and members take pride in sharing the knowledge they gained throughout their 4-H days with the younger members.

Abby Morin, a current Richmond 4-H member who has been judging for a few years, most recently at achievement days for both the Hatley and Sawyerville clubs, says, "4-H taught me that it's not all about the ribbons and trophies; it's about working hard and learning to do by doing. That's why I love judging at these shows. It's a good feeling to give back to the organization, and I like helping the younger members improve their showmanship skills and gain knowledge." Another example of a current member sharing her knowledge is Jessica Rouleau, president of the Howick 4-H club, who recently judged the Richmond 4-H achievement day's rabbit show. She credits the older members in her club for her interest in judging: "I have learned



Richmond 4-H member Abby Morin shares her rabbit expertise as she judges at the Hatley 4-H club achievement day.

"4-H changed my life! It helped me learn a lot of life skills and taught me to learn to do by doing every day." — Lachute 4-H member Jesse Bradley

how to square dance, garden, show dairy, show a rabbit and judge through my brothers and older members in my 4-H club showing me. I feel privileged passing on everything I learned throughout the years I have been exposed to the fun of 4-H. Now future 4-H members can use that knowledge to compete at other fairs or provincial competitions."

Many recent 4-H alumni continue their 4-H journey through judging 4-H competitions. Jesse Bradley, a recent Lachute 4-H alumnus, who has judged 4-H showmanship, conformation and fitting competitions, also finished third overall at the National Judging Congress held in PEI in 2014. Bradley continues to judge events because of the impact 4-H had in his life. "4-H changed my life!" he says. "It helped me learn a lot of life skills and taught me to learn to do by doing every day. If you don't know how to do something, like fitting cattle for example, you pick up the clippers and blow dryer, and practice makes perfect. 4-H taught me to be really social, not to be shy with others, and the importance of teamwork."

Jesse, like many alumni, sees judging 4-H events as a way to pass on his knowledge as well as to give the 4-H'ers the same

opportunities he had or wishes he had. "I love teaching showmanship to kids, I love talking to kids at events, I love listening to them and, if they have questions for me, I love giving them a real, correct response. Some adults don't have the patience to give real responses to young people, but I was young once too and I wanted the chance to be taught and to be listened to. I treat 4-H'ers the way I want to be treated. When I was younger, I tried to be better than everyone around me. In the last handful of years, I have tried to be better than myself yesterday, whether that be in judging animals in the ring, public speaking or judging competitions. That is what has made me stronger at life. I started improving my reasons, and I started improving on the microphone. Looking at how I got interested in this, I know that it was thanks to 4-H. I would like to be a role model for future 4-H'ers or future young judges in the industry."

Alumni coming back to judge is not a new trend; many have been doing it for years. Many of these alumni link judging to the opportunities the association brought to them. Douglas Morrisson, a Quebec Young Farmers (QYF) alumni, has been judging for years and recently

judged at Sawyerville 4-H's achievement day. "I have a passion for Holsteins and judging is a natural part of that passion. When I judge 4-H shows now, I know a lot of the participants' parents, which is really neat." Morrisson sees these shows as an opportunity for members to make connections: "Going to events, whether it be 4-H ones now, or QYF ones in my time, you make friends for a lifetime. I still keep in touch with people from Calf Rally 35 years ago. A lot of alumni still move in the same circles, so those still in the agriculture industry still see a lot of each other." Peter Griffith, QYF president in 1979, recently judged pigs at Richmond 4-H's achievement day, where he said he had a lot of fun: "I was really involved in the association when I was younger and we have a lot of great volunteers in this area, so I like to help them out when I can."

From learning to show as members, to participating in judging competitions, to judging the shows, 4-H members and alumni have the opportunity to make connections and improve their communication skills. Through these wonderful judges, 4-H'ers have the opportunity to gain new knowledge, which will likely be passed on to future generations.

Carolyn Coddington is a 4-H Quebec Association summer student serving the function of Public Relations Assistant. She is also a long-time member of the Richmond 4-H club, having shown dairy and participated on the square dance team.



Jesse Bradley of Lachute 4-H shares his love of dairy with younger members of the Shawville 4-H club at their achievement day.

Separating sense from nonsense



Dr. Joe Schwarcz
Scientist and author

Where would you go to see the largest illuminated advertising sign in the world? Times Square? Piccadilly Circus? No. You would have to hop over to Leverkusen, Germany, to be amazed by the 120-metre-high, 51-metre-diameter aspirin tablet atop the Bayer Company's headquarters. The 1,710 light bulbs that make up the famous Bayer cross on the giant tablet are meant to call attention to the shining history of the Bayer Company. But there is reason to take a dim view of some aspects of that history.

There's no question that Bayer has a very colourful past, beginning appropriately enough with synthetic dyes, its first commercial product. Friedrich Bayer was a paint and dye salesman before partnering with master dyer Johann Friedrich Weskott to establish a factory in 1863, hoping to get in on the mushrooming synthetic-dye business.

A rainbow of synthetic colors soon appeared, with German companies such as Bayer taking the lead. Competition was fierce, forcing the companies to

Skeletons in the closet

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 been publishing extracts from scientist and educator Dr. Joe Schwarcz. We hope you enjoy this thought-provoking read.



Bayer, the German-based inventors of aspirin, have a checkered past to say the least. But the company has also made a number of discoveries that enhance the lives of many in the developed world.

diversify. If dyes could be produced synthetically in the laboratory, why not pharmaceutical products? Why not indeed. By 1883 Hoechst had produced antipyrine, the first fever- and pain-reducing drug, and Bayer waded into the waters with phenacetin in 1888. Then

in 1898 came Bayer's big breakthrough with aspirin, marking the beginning of a long string of spectacular achievements as well as disturbing controversies.

The nineteenth century ushered in the modern era of chemistry, with its powerful tools of isolating, identifying and synthesizing compounds. One of the main areas of interest was the isolation of physiologically active substances from natural materials. By the middle of the century salicin and salicylic acid had been isolated from willow bark and were widely marketed for the reduction of pain, fever and inflammation. Attempts were also made to produce synthetic derivatives of the compounds found in willow bark and one of these was acetylsalicylic acid, synthesized by Charles Frédéric Gerhardt in 1853. Gerhardt did not investigate the medical properties of his novel compound. It remained for Felix Hoffmann, a chemist working for the Bayer Company, to put the final punctuation mark on the drug that would become known as aspirin.

Bayer coined the term aspirin from the Latin "a" for "from" and "spir-saure," the German for "salicylic acid." That term derived from *Spiraea ulmaria*, the botanical name for meadowsweet, which is rich in salicylic acid. This account of the discovery of aspirin, repeated in numerous articles and texts, was first publicized by Bayer in 1934, a year after the Nazis came to power.

During World War II, Bayer merged with other chemical companies to form

IG Farbenindustrie AG. Not only did this company produce the notorious Zyklon B used in the gas chambers as well as the nerve gas sarin, it used slave labour in its factories and played a large role in the horrific drug experiments on human subjects in Auschwitz. The history fact sheet on the company's website describes these events thus: "As Germany's most important chemical company, IG Farbenindustrie became involved in events during the Third Reich."

Curiously, Bayer's marketing of heroin from 1898 to 1913 fails to appear in its official history. This compound was also synthesized by Hoffmann at virtually the same time as aspirin. Bayer's tests showed that subjects taking the drug during testing felt heroic and brave, hence the name. It was widely marketed by Bayer as "non-addictive," although that turned out not to be the case. Whether the company actually knew this while it was promoting heroin as non-addictive is still a matter of debate.

Of course there have also been discoveries that have significantly enhanced our lives. Today, Bayer researchers are working on new pharmaceuticals, novel methods of crop protection and ways to use carbon dioxide in plastic production. Indeed they are justifying the company's current slogan, "Science for a Better Life."

Yes, there are skeletons in Bayer's closet. As in those of most big corporations. (And most people's.) Shedding light into the dark nooks is important, since where we go in the future depends on what we have learned from the past. But we also have to ensure that as we illuminate the past we do not cast an unfair shadow on the present.

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. Excerpted from Monkeys, Myths, and Molecules © 2015 by Dr. Joe Schwarcz. All rights reserved. Published by ECW Press Ltd. www.ecwpress.com ISBN: 9781770411913 The book can be ordered by sending a check for \$22 to the following address: Joe Schwarcz PhD, Director, McGill University Office for Science and Society, 801 Sherbrooke St. West, Montreal, QC, Canada. H3A 0B8. 514-398-6238

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Sun safety at work

Canadian Agricultural Safety Association and Sun Safety at Work Canada

The sun is a major occupational hazard for anyone who works outdoors. There are over 264,000 farmers in Canada who spend most of their workday in the sun. This means that Canadian agricultural workers are in the highest risk category for sun exposure, according to CAREX Canada.¹ Sun exposure increases your risk of heat stress, skin cancer and eye diseases – but the good thing is that these conditions are preventable!

Canadian Agricultural Safety Week in March is always a great reminder about the importance of keeping farmers and their families safe, but we don't always focus on sun safety. Sun Awareness Week from June 6-12, 2016, is about raising awareness of sun safety at work and in your free time. Addressing the sun as a workplace hazard for both heat and ultraviolet (UV) radiation is important to keep outdoor workers safe. Skin cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Canada, and heat stress is a common – and sometimes deadly – issue for outdoor workers.

Sun Safety at Work Canada is a



Skin cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Canada, and heat stress is a common – and sometimes deadly – issue for outdoor workers.

national project that is enhancing sun safety for outdoor workers. We know that addressing the sun as a workplace hazard can be challenging. Sun Safety at Work Canada is trialing sun safety programs with 15 outdoor workplaces and developing resources, including a website, to help workplaces (including

farms) enhance their sun safety.

Treating the sun as any other workplace hazard, Sun Safety at Work Canada recommends that workplaces include a sun safety program in their occupational health and safety management system or program.

For farms, trying to control sun exposure by elimination or substitution is simply not possible. Instead, consider engineering controls, such as adding shade structures to equipment like tractors and combines, using air conditioning in rest areas and vehicles, and installing UV protective films to windows. Look for a local service provider who installs vehicle window tinting – you might need to find a company that comes to your farm to apply the UV protective films. Administrative controls that may be possible for farms include conducting regular risk assessments for heat and UV, scheduling work to minimize sun exposure, posting and talking about the daily UV index and humidity, and offering training sessions on sun safety. Farmers should also wear personal protective equipment, such as loose clothing and breathable long sleeves and pants, wide-brimmed hats, UV protective eyewear, and sunscreen.

For Farmers, there are six simple steps for heat safety and six simple steps for UV safety.

To protect yourself from UV from the sun:

- Cover up – wear loose clothing, long sleeves and pants.
- Protect your eyes – use ultraviolet (UV) protective eyewear.
- Cover your head, neck and ears – wear a wide-brimmed hat, hard hat

with a brim, and use a neck flap.

- Take your breaks in the shade – get out of the sun when you can, especially between 11 a.m. and 3 p.m. when UV is the strongest.
- Use sunscreen and lip balm – use at least an SPF 30 broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen and don't forget to reapply.
- Be skin safe – report changes in skin spots and moles to your doctor as soon as possible; early detection is important.

To protect yourself from heat from the sun:

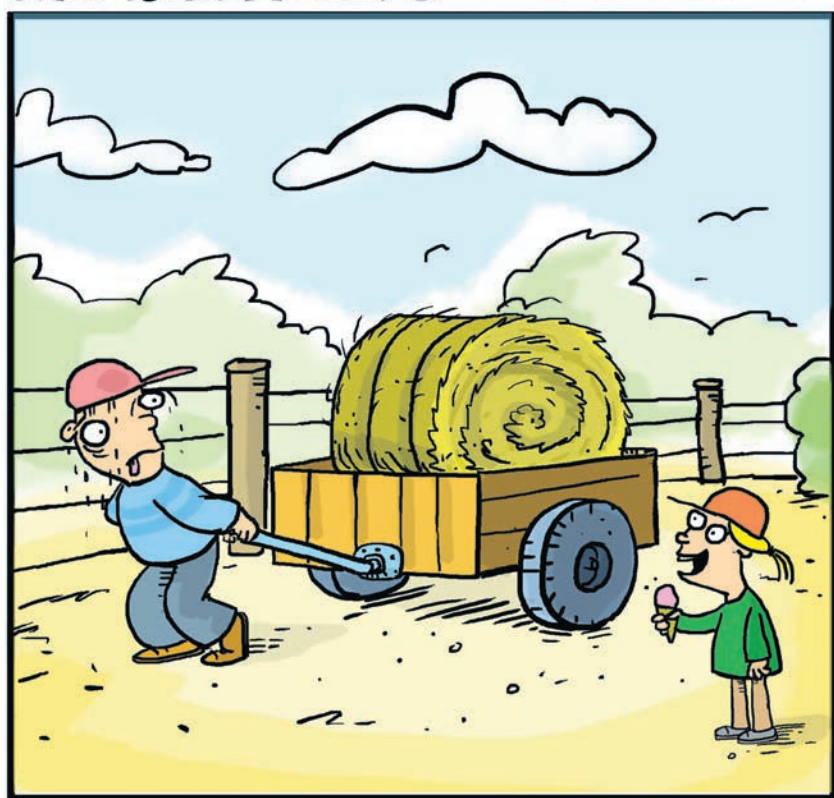
- Know the signs and symptoms of heat stress.
- Watch out for symptoms in yourself and others.
- Wear sunscreen, a hat, and lightweight, loose-fitting clothing.
- Drink water often – avoid drinks with alcohol and caffeine.
- Take breaks in the shade and more often on hot days.
- Know how your workplace deals with heat stress.

To enhance sun safety on your farm, visit occupationalcancer.ca/sunsafetyatwork for examples of resources that are available now. The project website with all resources and step-by-step instructions for implementing sun safety will launch in the summer of 2016. Sun Safety at Work Canada is funded by the Canadian Partnership Against Cancer and Health Canada. Contact sunsafetyatwork@ryerson.ca for more information.

¹ CAREX Canada generates evidence-based carcinogen surveillance for Canada.

the barnders

by gord.coulthart



Oh! I forgot to tell you, Dad says the tractor was fixed this morning.

Soils

Lower P and K levels in North American soils

The International Plant Nutrition Institute (IPNI) recently released its fourth in a series of North American soil sample summaries dating back to 2001.

This 2015 summary has captured information on 7.5 million soil samples and provides a summary of the North American levels of phosphorous (P), potassium (K), soil acidity (pH), magnesium (Mg), sulfur (S), zinc (Zn) and chloride (Cl). For the first time, IPNI has statistically analyzed data for 2001 to 2015 and gives a clear big-picture portrait of the continental soil trend.

From 2001 to 2015, fewer samples now test higher in P and K and more samples test lower. Across the 15-year period, more samples across North America now test in the range of soil acidity where crop growth and nutrient

availability are greatest: pH 6.1 to 7.5.

Fewer years of data are available for other nutrients. Data from 2005 to 2015 indicate an increase in Mg levels for North America. During the same period, the percentage of samples testing low in S has been growing – a trend consistent with lower S deposition from the atmosphere during the same time period.

A free interactive website (soiltest.ipmi.net) has been developed to access data in any combination of states, provinces or territories, and it illustrates some distinct variations across the continent. North American agriculture relies heavily on soil testing to assess soil fertility



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“Producers who have soil that has not been sampled recently have much to gain by getting into the regular practice of soil sampling.”

and health. This data helps guide farmers to take appropriate management decisions based on sound science.

Producers who have soil that has not been sampled recently have much to

gain by getting into the regular practice of soil sampling. With pressures on the agricultural industry from environmental groups and public bodies, it would be wise for those in the industry who are not already in the habit of taking routine soil samples to consider adopting applied scientific methods to their farming practice. Introducing 4R nutrient stewardship and related principles, such as variable rate phosphorous applications, could improve profit margins as well as demonstrate the industry's commitment to best-practice agricultural techniques.

Growing with the garden



Shaina Hayes
Columnist

Highlights from the Macdonald Student-Run Ecological Garden (MSEG)- July 2016

July brought with it more of the warm weather that has allowed the MSEG fields to thrive so far this season. Being from the Gaspésie where the weather rarely allows locals to get their gardens in before June, I was hesitant to believe that anyone farming in Quebec could have enough vegetables ready for baskets and markets before July! This is the norm for horticulture producers in the Montreal region, and with this year's high temperatures, we were in fact able to begin our farmer's markets on June 25—several days earlier than scheduled—with the abundance of summer squash, kale, green onions and leafy greens that were made available.

While the warmer and drier weather has certainly allowed many of MSEG's crops to flourish, we have had to be particularly prudent about watering. Like most horticulture farms of its scale (about three acres), MSEG uses drip irrigation lines throughout the fields to provide an easy and consistent water source. The drip lines have allowed us

to ensure that our transplanted crops remain healthy and productive; however, even with the drip lines, it has been a struggle to ensure that the soil remains moist enough for adequate direct seed germination. This has been particularly true for many of our root vegetables, namely carrots and beets. It became clear after patchy germination in the first few plantings of these crops that hand watering would be necessary. We also decided to reallocate future root vegetable plantings to an area of our field that had a less sandy soil type. Sandier soils will have a lower capacity to store water and therefore perpetuate the problem. By shifting these crops to a location with a muck soil type and by hand watering frequently after seeding, we were able to see a significant increase in germination rate.

To get to know the members of the Macdonald Student-Run Ecological Gardens, check out our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/macdonaldstudentgarden) for our Farmer of the Week column, and more. To support the project,




MSEG apprentice Mathieu Ouellet sorts and packages summer squash for market.

stop by either of our markets to pick up some fresh, organically produced vegetables: Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue Market Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., and at the downtown McGill campus from noon to 5 p.m.

IN CASE OF WORK STOPPAGE AT CANADA POST

It is the producers' responsibility to ensure that their payment reaches the Producteurs de lait du Québec no later than August 28, 2016. This may be done through the Internet or telephone banking services of their financial institutions, or by sending a cheque via a messenger service (do not use the regular postal service).

Producers who have not received their Statement of Account or Notice of Sale by mail may view the details of the quota they purchased or sold on the SCVQ by visiting the producers' Extranet site at <https://www.lait.qc.ca>, section "Production and quota" and then clicking on "Quota offered through the SCVQ". You can also obtain this information by contacting your Regional Secretary.



Les Producteurs
de lait du Québec

AUGUST 2016

Fixed Price: \$24,000.00

	Nombre	kg de MG/jour
Offers to sell		
Total	85	522.4
Eligible for allocation	85	522.4
Successful	85	522.4
Reserve		
Quantity purchased (-)/ sold (+)		+ 2.2
Offers to buy		
Total	1,202	8,590.4
Eligible for allocation	1,201	8,583.3
Successful	1,201	524.6

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
1	1.0		< 24,000.00	1	7.1
85	521.4	522.4	24,000.00 ceiling price	1,201	8,583.3

ALLOCATION TO BUYERS AND SELLERS

	Number	kg of BF/day	%
Buyers			
Startup Assistance Program	0	0.0	0.0
Holding of less than 12 kg of BF/day	0	0.0	0.0
Reimbursement of startup loans	10	1.0	0.2
Iteration (0.2 kg of BF/day)	1,201	238.3	45.4
Prorata (3.42%)	1,082	285.3	54.4
6.11% of the offers have been processed		524.6	100.0
Sellers			
Seller who stopped producing 1 or more months ago	0	0.0	0.0
Offers partially processed in the previous month	0	0.0	0.0
Offers in the current month	85	522.4	100.0
100.00% of the offers have been processed	85	522.4	100.0

Careful not to lose control!

René Roy, agr.
Agroeconomist, Valacta

Here we are in August already, and you haven't got a minute to spare now that the field work is underway. This is exactly the kind of situation in which you risk losing sight of your operation's performance.

Last January, when the 2015 fiscal year came to an end, you were surprised to see your concentrate purchases had increased considerably compared to the previous year. And because you weren't able to take advantage of the additional production days in the fall, you didn't get the extra income. To avoid getting caught again this year, you've reviewed your feeding program with your advisor and are monitoring your monthly feeding costs. You've put together a milk production plan that is updated regularly, and you've even drawn up a budget for the year. You are set to achieve your objectives.

When the field work begins, however, time is tight. You need to manage your priorities judiciously and respect the technical constraints to obtain the best results: seeding early to make the most of the growing season, harvesting forage crops at the optimum stage, spreading manure quickly after cutting, starting again 30 days later, harvesting your grains, corn and soybeans... not to mention getting in that third milking to capi-



talize on the fall incentive days.

Under these conditions, is it any wonder that you lose track? If you're not monitoring your performance indicators regularly, you may be in for a surprise come fall.

Set up an effective early warning system

There's no time to do an in-depth analysis of your operation's results on a monthly basis, so you need a system that warns you when a problem arises. To set up an early warning system, you first need to identify your major indicators: milk shipped, fat shipped, concentrate consumption, SCC, pregnancy rate, cash situation, etc. Next, you need to decide

what sources of information you will use to monitor these indicators, and then you need to define your warning thresholds. In the case of milk and fat shipments, the website for Les Producteurs de lait du Québec provides information on the utilized margin of tolerance, which you can use as an indicator. You then decide on the difference between planned and actual milk production that will trigger a warning; for example, when actual production is 100 kg under or over the target.

Repeat this exercise for all your indicators. If the cost of concentrates per hL of milk shipped is an indicator, the warning threshold could be when the target price is exceeded by five per cent. For

your cash situation, you can use your credit margin as an indicator by setting a maximum balance for each month. The best method is to work with a monthly budget, but monitoring a few specific indicators is an adequate approach.

Let the "sentinels" do the job

It is important to have access to up-to-date information to analyze a situation rapidly and react in a timely manner. A budget is of limited use if your book-keeping is three months behind. So how do you stay on track when time is a rare commodity?

One solution is to adopt the military commander's approach and let the sentinels take care of camp surveillance. If you want your sentinels to provide the support you expect, however, they will need to be informed of your major indicators and the applicable thresholds.

Your veterinarian can play that role for reproduction, if you already have a good preventive medicine program in place and maintain a sufficient number of visits throughout the season. Your Valacta advisor can act as a sentinel for milk production and concentrate costs. Your Valacta technician can also get involved in monitoring some of the major indicators on your milk recording reports, such as SCC, urea, Ketolab and Transition Cow Index®. An example of a herd performance indicator overview report is shown in Figure 1.

HERD PERFORMANCE INDICATOR OVERVIEW			
Farm name:	Patrick Producer Farm Inc.		
Test date (YYYY-MM-DD):	2015-05-15	Herd no.:	99999
1. SCC – TARGET : below 150, 000			
Actual value	Excellent!	212, 000 Careful!	Danger!
% of cows over 200, 000 : 18			
Comments : Cows with high SCC: Cocotte 850, 000 and Juju 645, 000. Percentage of cows over 200, 000: requires monitoring			
2. MILK UREA – TARGET :			
Actual value	11 Excellent!	Careful!	Danger!
% of cows in the herd within the desired range (target ≥ 85%) : 68			
Comments: Group 1: 55% of the cows are within the optimal range.			
3. KETOLAB – TARGET :			
Number of positive cows : 0	Excellent!	Careful!	Danger!
Comments : 2 suspected cows: Lisa and Juju			
4. TRANSITION COW INDEX – TARGET:			
Average at last test: 325	Excellent!	Careful!	Danger!
Comments : Last test: 3 cows out of 3 had a positive TCI; the situation is improving.			

Figure 1: A report for busy people

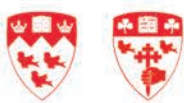
Relying on a sentinel for your accounting could be a little more complicated, particularly if you enter the data yourself. But by entrusting the job to someone with the right training, you'll benefit from knowing where you stand at all times. You obviously don't have time to go through a pile of reports to make your decisions. You need a message that is short and sweet: "The credit margin is \$3,000 higher than planned – what do we do?!"

Know where you stand... at all times

If, despite careful planning, your results have not been meeting your expectations, the problem may be due to a lack of follow-up, simply because your day-to-day operations take up so much of your time. The most important role you have is to make decisions at the opportune moment. And to do so, you need the right information. So don't hesitate to get help. It may cost you a few dollars, but the control you gain is certainly worth it!

Macdonald

Reports



The many faces of agriculture

Caitlin MacDougall

Liaison Officer

*Farm Management and Technology Program,
Macdonald Campus*

Each summer, first- and second-year Farm Management and Technology (FMT) students go out into the world to complete summer internships that will help them apply what they are learning in the program and gain new experiences. This summer, 78 students carried out their internships (commonly referred to as "stages") across Quebec, Ontario, Western Canada, PEI and California, not to mention overseas in Switzerland, the Netherlands and Australia.

We will introduce you to two of our students, both entering their second year of the program, Stéphanie Bisaillon and Craig Waddell, who are working in positions where they get to experience a different side of agriculture than what they are familiar with on their home farms.



Stéphanie Bisaillon learned how to use many new technologies while working for Monsanto this summer.

Stéphanie Bisaillon – Intern at Monsanto research station

Stéphanie Bisaillon, a 20-year-old from a family cash crop farm in Saint-Jacques-le-Mineur, QC, decided to spend her summer stage working at the

Monsanto Canada research station in Saint-Hugues, QC. This experimental farm currently grows corn, soybeans, sweet corn and barley. Stéphanie has had the opportunity to gain a better understanding of what goes into the development of different crop varieties and the importance of science and research in agriculture.

"I have found that this experience is life-changing," she says. "We need to know all the advantages and disadvantages to gain new knowledge and new products to push agriculture even further. The goal is to be able to produce more with less due to the increase in population. I find this [work] essential because it will permit farmers to continue to feed the world."

She has also become adept at using various technologies. Monsanto has a number of technologies, apps and programs for staff to use on a daily basis. Stéphanie and another student colleague regularly visited plot sites to check the plants for emergence and vigour. Using the iPad provided by Monsanto, they graded the pre-selected GPS locations on a scale of one to ten.

In terms of her expectations for the summer, Stéphanie states that her "learning objectives have been exceeded. I have gained a great amount of knowledge and experience during my stage. I will be able to become a sales representative for our family farm and use the information I have acquired to be able to boost the yields and our production. This stage has also [given] me new ideas for the future of our farm and how to put them in practice," she reflects.

Craig Waddell – Intern at Mapleton's Organic Dairy

For his agricultural internship, Craig Waddell, a 21-year-old from a dairy farm in Edwards, Ontario, decided to learn more about on-farm processing and organic dairy production. He has spent his 13-week-long stage at Mapleton's Organic Dairy in Moorefield, ON.

The de Groot family owns a herd of 70 organic cows, milked with two Lely A4 Astronaut milking robots. The family also cultivates 300 acres of organic crops, and processes their own milk to turn it into ice cream, yogurt, frozen yogurt and ice cream cookies that they sell from the on-farm shop.

Craig says, "I purposely looked for a farm operating organically because I wanted to be able to experience and learn firsthand what it might look like on my own family farm." He also chose Mapleton's so he could learn more about the possibility of on-farm dairy processing as a potential project.

He has been involved in all aspects of the business: completing field work in the spring, handling calf and cow care, assisting in the production and packaging of frozen treats, and contributing to the visitor experience by giving tours, maintaining the grounds and facilities, and educating the public about agriculture.



Craig Waddell fills tubs of ice cream at Mapleton's Organic Dairy as part of his agricultural internship.

Craig has been surprised by the number of visitors to the farm, which also boasts a demonstration barn with a wide variety of animals. Mapleton's identifies this as one of the big attractions for consumers. The dairy also employs a social media manager to maintain the image of the business in a consistent way and on a regular basis – which is essential for businesses focusing on direct-marketing.

Craig reflects on his stage: "It certainly has been rewarding! I'm learning such a wide range of different ideas and methods. I know that the work I'm doing will prove helpful for my farm back home and the furthering of my knowledge for the FMT program."





Cookin' with the Advocate

Lemon Curd



CYNTHIA GUNN

Ingredients

- 1 TBSP plus 2 tsp. grated lemon zest
- 1 cup fresh lemon juice (3 to 5 lemons)
- 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ cups sugar
- 4 large eggs
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cold unsalted butter, cut into 12 pieces

Preparation

Whisk together zest, lemon juice, sugar, eggs, and a pinch of salt in a heavy two-quart saucepan. Add butter all at once and cook over moderately low heat, whisking constantly, until curd is thick enough to hold marks of whisk and bubbles appear on the surface, about ten minutes. Immediately pour through a fine sieve into a bowl. Cover and chill. Keeps one week.

Source: *Gourmet*, April 2001, p. 116.

Summer lemons

Cynthia Gunn
QFA's Food Writer

The only thing standing between me and a lemon tree in the yard is a few numbers on the hardiness growth chart. We're Zone 4a, as many of you are, which doesn't quite come up to the mark. Ah well, I don't think I'd want to live in a tropical climate anyway. This past summer will have been just enough, once it winds down. Besides, lemons are good travellers, and store easily, so are obtainable just about anywhere.

Good thing, too, because lemons are almost as indispensable in the kitchen as onions and garlic. They are equally at home in sweets and savouries, though in the latter are often added with a lighter touch, just to enhance the dish with a hint of freshness and sprightliness, if I may use such a word.

Lemons, and particularly one of its parent plants, citron, are ancient in origin. According to the *Annals of Botany* (2015), *Citrus medica* contributed to all limes and lemons and was the direct male parent for the main sub-groups. So there you have it. Originating in Asia, likely Northwestern India and Pakistan, lemons have been cultivated for thousands of years. They caught on relatively late in Europe, with substantial cultivation beginning in parts of Italy in the middle of the 15th century, and not until the 19th century in Florida and California, the main source of our lemons today.

Going by reactions at a recent food fair I participated in, it's a rare soul that doesn't approve of a lemon dessert in the summer. What's not to like about a cool, sweet, velvety smooth lemon curd on a hot summer day? Eating it reminds me of sepia-coloured childhood summer days, even though I don't recall ever eating it, except once a year in Grandpa's birthday lemon meringue pie. Such is the heady power of the aroma and taste of lemon that it conjures memories that don't even exist.

Quick, before summer is over, pick up a few lemons and make this lemon curd. It is the best I've tasted, and it's easy to make. Eat it straight, with a dollop of whipped cream, or spoon it into some crisp tart shells

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.



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Are you a QFA member?

Message to readers

When the UPA Regional Federations corresponding to the linguistic minority decided at the close of 2015 to stop funding translations going into the *Advocate*, they each kept a budget aside for our distinct sector of Quebec's farm community. Regional offices of the UPA are seeking ways to fulfil the needs of English-speaking producers, and administrators and elected officials wish to hear from members about how best to service their needs. Please share any ideas you may have with either the QFA or your local UPA representative.

The UPA English committee in the Montérégie Ouest initiated a project earlier in the year that seeks to better address public understanding of the agricultural industry. The QFA recognizes this leadership and welcomes and supports these efforts. The QFA approached the Outaouais Laurentide UPA regional office, and local syndicates in the Pontiac and Argenteuil have passed resolutions to ask for funds to be released at the regional level. The regional offices in the Gaspé and Estrie have still to be approached about supporting this meaningful project, and this is one of the QFA's priorities over the coming month. Further coverage will be reported in the September issue.

We are in the final stages of building a new, more navigable website due for launch at the end of September or October. We are present at the Shawville Fair again this year with an information booth and farm safety workshops and activities directed at kids. We will also be at Richmond Fair on September 10 where we will be asking farmers about their needs and the agricultural industry. Plans and organizing for the forthcoming Forum season are underway, and the program will be announced in the September edition. Advocacy work that seeks to support our more senior community demographic is ongoing, and significant meetings will be held at the end of August and beginning of September. Dialogue was initiated in the spring with the Quebec Women's Institute (WI), and the QFA is seeking to provide new exclusive space for WI announcements and events promotion adjacent to the Quebec 4-H space at the back of the paper. It is hoped this will begin with the September or October issue.

President John McCart and Executive Director Dougal Rattray attended the UPA's annual summer get-together, and there will be a report in the September issue to bring readers up to date on priority issues. Join the QFA's Facebook group to keep updated. The group has doubled in size since this time last year and is now up to 300. Our translations service did not slow down over the summer. Most notably, our specialized translations service helped support the Quebec Strawberry and Raspberry Producers who were hosting an international seminar.

Files show that there are around 1,500 English-speaking farmers paying their dues to the UPA. ALL 1,500 receive the QFA's *Advocate*. Despite this, only one quarter of potential members give money for production of the *Advocate* and to help support other services. Please consider becoming a member. Your support goes a long way. Unfortunately, processing of welcome letters has been delayed, but packages will be delivered very shortly. Management takes responsibility for this and thanks you for your patience.

Below is a list of new and recently returning supporters. We thank you for making a difference.

Edwin Baily

Wallace Barber

Gordon Boa

David and Donna Boychuk

Stanley and Cheryl Christensen

David Cosman

Bob Dalton

Charlotte Davies

Blake Draper

Michael Duncan

Susan Foley-Hogan

Harold Gillis

Ben and Katherine Hammond

Hugh Hammond

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Richard Hornby

Scott Judd

Agnes Keenan

Pierre Laframboise

Brian and Neil Lamb

Mike and Troy Leahy

Clyne MacDonald

Neil and Cinthya MacLaren

Elliot MacLeod

Rachel Mahannah

Brian Maloney

Irvin McCartney

Neil McComb

Kevin McKell

William and Ingrid McMahon

Gary Merrifield

Danny Morin

Joseph and Judith Morris

Lorie Nesbitt

Vincent Olmstead

Malcolm Orr

Brian Pegg

Chris Rawlings

Mark Richardson

Richard and Jean Ryan

Fred Sundborg

Dale Sutton

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



Climate of change



Mitchell Beer
President, Smarter Shift

Healthy School Food Program creates “teachable moment” for QFA

A coalition of more than 30 national and provincial organizations is urging the federal government to introduce a Universal Healthy School Food Program, so that every student in the country has access to a nutritious meal or snack every day.

If that happens, watch for coalition members to emphasize local products and producers as an integral part of the supply chain for schools across the country.

Canada is one of the last industrialized countries with no national school food program, and the “current patchwork of school food programming reaches only a small percentage of our over five million students,” states the Coalition for Healthy School Food (CHSF).

“Only federal government policy can ensure universal coverage of the population,” the Coalition stresses. That matters because “we need to lay the foundation for healthy eating habits that will last a lifetime, and ensure that learning is not hindered by a lack of access to good food.”

Connecting farm to table

The Coalition’s connection between good nutrition and success at school is an old enough story that no one should still have to tell it.

In the early 1990s, as a volunteer school budget analyst with our local school board, I helped make the case that school breakfast programs were one of our community’s most important investments. In the end, facing a wide-ranging tax revolt by school ratepayers, the board handed its breakfast programs over to a local business association in a desperate (though successful) effort to protect them.

Fast forward a quarter-century, and the CHSF still has to remind elected officials of some common-sense connections: kids can’t learn when they’re hungry, and a society can’t thrive if kids can’t learn. To its credit, it looks like the Coalition is also taking the opportunity to connect local food consumers with nearby producers.

“A Universal School Food Program in Canada has the potential to create thousands of new jobs in communities across Canada,” the CHSF brochure states. “When local food is served, the local



Kids can’t learn when they’re hungry, and a society can’t thrive if kids can’t learn.

multiplier of the increased local food purchases will impact regional food production, household and business earnings, long-term gross domestic product, and part-time jobs created or sustained.”

That statement appears at the end of the brochure, not toward the beginning.

“Canada is one of the last industrialized countries with no national school food program.”

But it made the page, thereby connecting dots to a program the QFA is already putting together for early 2017.

It starts with agricultural literacy

In March, the QFA will be taking advantage of Canadian Agricultural Literacy Week to deliver classroom educational materials produced by Agriculture in the Classroom Canada, a non-profit working to facilitate a national agriculture education strategy.

Compared to the CHSF—and the QFA’s own positions—Agriculture in

the Classroom is oriented somewhat more heavily toward an industrial model of food production and somewhat less toward healthier food choices and more diverse farm economies. But Canadian Agricultural Literacy Week is still an opportunity to raise basic aware-

ness of where food comes from and why that matters, while supporting the drive toward locally focused, resilient food systems.

Along the way, the QFA may want to build on the notion that many of us—including many decision-makers—learn best by experience.

Last month, the *National Post* reported that the Ottawa Hospital board agreed to revamp their menus “after choking down ‘appalling’ patient food for a week.” Many of us have known for decades that “hospital food” is mostly a

contradiction in terms. But in this case, a little bit of hands-on learning went a long way.

“Thank you for raising your concerns with me,” hospital CEO Dr. Jack Kitts wrote to a local woman whose complaint sparked the board’s culinary experiment. “Our management team has recently eaten hospital food for a week and agrees with your observation that we need to improve the presentation and taste.”

When it comes to connecting farm to table—whether it’s for school food, hospital food or all food—many consumers already see the benefits of local production. That creates a brilliant teachable moment for the QFA. And it makes the campaign for a Universal Healthy School Food Program a great opportunity for wider awareness and change.

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.

Community Health

Mixed portrait for access to health and social services

The most recent appraisal of access to health and social services in English in Quebec paints a mixed portrait, says the Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN). The 2015-16 CHSSN/CROP survey on community vitality notes some improvement in service availability and a steady and strong contribution from community organizations. However, it also highlights some genuine areas of concern, particularly for seniors and youth.

Some 3,000 English-speaking residents of the province responded to a questionnaire designed to solicit perceptions and experiences relating to a wide spectrum of matters affecting their lives and communities. The questionnaire was created through consultation with community organizations and stakeholders from key sectors of society: health and social services; education; justice; arts and culture; employment and economic development; and social participation.

"Language barriers continue to rank as a key issue in the wellbeing of minority

language Quebecers," says Joanne Pocock, the CHSSN consultant who wrote the report. "It is predominant in the delivery of health and social services, and it is also a strong concern in the area of education and employment."

"I don't think it's a discrimination thing, but I think some members of the staff feel intimidated when they have to speak English to a patient, so maybe they avoid them."

Anecdotal evidence that expresses some feelings from within the linguistic minority

One stand-out issue is that, over the past five years, there has been a notable decline in information available from the public health institutions on health promotion and prevention programs. "We can only speculate as to why," says Pocock. "There was a change in government and, then, a major overhaul of the health system."

During the same survey interval, community organizations held their place as an important source of healthcare

information, especially for seniors. And concern grows about the advanced rate of aging in that demographic. "Quebec as a whole faces that issue," says Pocock, "but English-speaking seniors are well ahead of the growth curve. Nearly a third of respondents expect to need public homecare services, for themselves or someone they know, within five years."

QFA continues to support community efforts to alleviate the problems of social isolation, and further content covering the national campaign Reach Isolated Seniors Everywhere will appear again in the September issue of the *Advocate*.

Some responses from linguistic minority Quebecers to the CHSSN/CROP survey

- 66% see no improvement in their situation over the last 20 years, while 40% of younger respondents see improvement over the next 20 years.
- 74% had not received information on public health prevention and promotion in English in the past two years.

- 32% of seniors rely on community organizations for health prevention and promotion information.
- 94% believe English school boards are important to the future of the English-speaking community of Quebec.
- 78% feel lack of French-language skills reduces employment opportunities.
- 43% feel that French-language training is insufficient.
- 88% would support creation of an office of Anglophone affairs within the government of Quebec.

The Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN) was formed in 2000 to support English-speaking communities in the province of Quebec in their efforts to redress health status inequalities and promote community vitality.

The aim of CHSSN is to contribute to the vitality of English-speaking communities of Quebec by building strategic relationships and partnerships within the health and social services system to improve access to services. To find out more go to: <http://chssn.org>.

GIVE. TO A YOUNG FARMER.



QFA Board Member Mark Boyd presents Macdonald Campus student Amelie Sarrasin with her scholarship from the Warren Grapes Fund at the QFA's 2014 annual general meeting.



The QFA's Warren Grapes Agricultural Education Fund helps to promote agricultural and silvicultural education and learning among the English-speaking farm community of Quebec. Bursaries are distributed to post-secondary students of agriculture each fall.

Support the young farmers of tomorrow and give to the Warren Grapes Fund!

Please make cheques payable to "Warren Grapes Agricultural Education Fund". Receipts will be issued for all donations of \$25.00 or more.

WARREN GRAPES FUND
c/o Quebec Farmers' Association
555 boul. Roland-Therrien, Office 255
Longueuil, QC J4H 4E7

Photos of the month



QFA is now accepting photos to be shared with readers each month in the Advocate. Ideally, these would be 1MB in size or of similar quality and depict a seasonal rural scene. Please send to qfa@upa.qc.ca.

This month, Ben Nichols sent in some photographic evidence of the dry conditions in the Townships:

"As you can see we are not getting a lot of rain, there are a few areas that get rain just barely when they need it, but farms like mine aren't getting any or little. Even the towns are facing problems with water shortages and they are putting in water restrictions now."



A dried-up registered waterway near Ben Nichols farm in Compton, QC.



A corn field of wetter land which is also drying up.

BEN NICHOLS & ANNIE GRUBB

Organic Agriculture Centre of Canada

In general, organic farming is more profitable than conventional farming. This is the conclusion of a paper published by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization in 2009. The author, Noémi Nemes, examined the results of more than fifty studies that compared the economics of organic and conventional agriculture.

In the US and Europe, organic farms are generally more profitable because of higher prices and/or lower input costs than conventional farms. In developing countries, the profit margin is greater for organic farms because they have greater yields and higher prices than their non-organic counterparts.

Yields

Yields in well-established organic farms are most often lower than yields from conventional farms. However, American studies showed that in wetter areas (e.g., the Corn Belt), conventional yields are higher than organic ones, while in dry areas, organic yields surpass conventional yields. In developing countries, organic yields are generally higher than conventional yields, but are much higher under less favourable conditions (e.g., drought).

If yield comparisons took into account the quality of the target crop, this could compensate for lower yields of organic farms in industrialized countries. When comparing relative yield and composition of vegetables over 12 years, conventional farms yielded 24 per cent more, but organic vegetables had 28 per cent higher dry matter. Also, organic produce has been found to have higher levels of vitamins, minerals, healthy fatty acids and phytonutrients.

Production costs

Production costs are generally lower for organic farms. Most European studies found that variable (operating) costs are

60 to 70 per cent lower, but fixed costs were higher, compared to conventional farms. Overall, the total production costs of organic farms are lower.

Data are based on relatively cheap input costs. The increase in the price of fossil fuels is creating an increase in the cost of related inputs. This will likely have the greatest effect on conventional farms, particularly those that rely heavily on fuel, synthetic fertilizers and pesticides. Among organic farms, the operations that are highly mechanized and dependent on the use of plastic mulch will be most affected. Production costs vary with regions. For example, in the US, organic dairy farms in Wisconsin have lower feed and labour costs than similar New England farms, and are consequently more profitable. Throughout North America, the higher cost of organic feed creates the greatest difference in the economic performance of organic and conventional dairies.

Labour costs, however, are often greater on organic farms. European studies found labour costs to be 10 to 20 per cent greater than on comparable conventional operations. Interest on loans is not often considered in calculations of production costs; however, conventional farmers have significantly higher debt loads than organic farmers, particularly those in developing countries.

Profitability

Organic farms have lower yields than conventional farms, but this is compensated for by lower costs of production and higher prices for organic products. In some cases, the organic price premium is needed to provide greater gross margins. Nemes writes, "Reliance on price premium may jeopardize the long-term economic viability of organic farming. Since the market for



Organic farms have lower yields than conventional farms, but this is compensated for by lower costs of production and higher prices for organic products.

ARCHIVESTON

high-value crops can get saturated, and premiums can fall as a consequence, a strategy of diversification is advised..."

Profitability, Nemes argues, goes beyond the balance sheet. Farming incurs environmental, health and social costs. The environmental costs include damage from soil erosion, water pollution and destruction of wildlife habitat. In general, conventional agriculture contributes more to these problems but does not pay the associated costs incurred by society at large.

Conclusion

"Organic agriculture," Nemes concludes, "faces an unfair competition in the marketplace due to:

- the distorting effect of current subsidy schemes that favour conventional production;
- the unequal availability of research and extension services; and
- the failure to capture the real environmental, social and health externalities in market prices of conventional foods."

If subsidies and extension services were less biased towards conventional

production, organic yields may increase and organic farming could become even more profitable. If the actual costs (i.e., environmental, social and health consequences) of agriculture were considered, the true profitability of organic farming could be measured.

Reference: Nemes, Noémi. 2009. "Comparative analysis of organic and non-organic farming systems: a critical assessment of farm profitability." Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. Natural resources management environment department. <ftp://ftp.fao.org/docrep/fao/011/ak355e/ak355e00.pdf> [PDF - 455 kB]

This article was written by Janet Wallace on behalf of the OACC with funding provided by Canada's Organic Science Cluster (a part of the Canadian Agri-Science Clusters Initiative of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada's Growing Forward Policy Framework). The Organic Science Cluster is a collaborative effort led jointly by the OACC, the Organic Federation of Canada and industry partners. For more information: oacc@dal.ca or 902-893-7256.



Leilak Anderson
Certified Arborist

Advocate Arboriculture Columnist

The codling moth is a real nuisance in Quebec orchards, and apple producers have to spend time and money protecting their crops from the larvae of the moth that burrows into untreated apples.

But a new technology is available and is being introduced in pilot programs all around Quebec. Plastic rings are being installed in apple trees, creating a cloud of pheromones that restricts the male and female moths from finding each other and reproducing. It doesn't kill any of the moths, but it does sexually frustrate the insects and prevents their spawn—the larvae that does the actual crop damage—from arriving.

This is one case where abstinence really does work. The only downfall for the producers is the cost of the pheromones: about \$500 per hectare. However, the province has set up funding of up to \$10,000 a year in subsidies, and the producer response has grown from 30 participating orchards in Quebec in 2015 to 100 this year.

Not only is the pheromone treatment better for the environment, but it

Saving Quebec's apples with sexual frustration



Apples are being protected by engineered pheromones, which sexually frustrate codling moth and disrupts mating behaviour.

also protects workers with a reduced exposure to pesticides. Apple producers routinely spray insecticides five to six times a year in order to keep the moths at bay. Similar programs have been rolled out with great success in

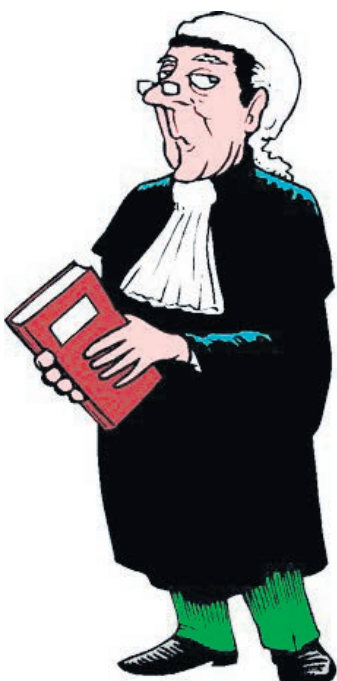
the Maritimes, Ontario, BC, and even outside Canada in Washington State and Italy.

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 fire-fighter. You can read more of his articles at www.leilak.info.

LEILAK ANDERSON

Crack-ups



Deathbed lawyer

A lawyer was on his deathbed in his bedroom, and he called to his wife. She rushed in and said, "What is it, honey?"

He told her to run and get the bible as soon as possible. Being a religious woman, she thought this was a good idea. She ran and got it, prepared to read him his favourite verse or something of the sort. He snatched it from her and began quickly scanning pages, his eyes darting right and left. The wife was curious. "What are you doing, honey?" she asked.

"I'm looking for loopholes!" he shouted.

Hunter without a gun

There's this guy who shows up at

a cabin where these hunters have gathered to hunt bear. Only he shows up without a gun.

The other hunters are very curious. "How you gonna get a bear without a gun?" they ask.

"Do you have a knife?"

"No," says the guy.

"Do you have a club?"

"No," says the guy.

"Don't you worry. I'm gonna get myself a bear. Just wait right here and see."

The guy leaves the cabin and disappears into the hills for several hours.

Eventually he happens upon a bear asleep in his den and he kicks the bear and gets it really angry. As the bear wakes up, he starts to chase after the guy, so the guy

starts running back towards the cabin.

Finally the hunters hear him running down the hill and yelling, "Open the cabin door! Open the door!"

They open the door and the guy runs into the cabin and holds the door open behind him. To the terror of the other hunters, an angry bear follows close behind, running into the cabin, too.

Then the guy slams the door shut, and says, "You skin that one. I'll go get another."

Macdonald campus graduation

The FMT graduating class of 2016



A panoramic view of the full house at the afternoon convocation ceremony on Macdonald Campus on June 3.

PHOTOS : CAITLIN MACDOUGALL



The FMT graduating class of 2016 was honoured to pose with Maria Labrecque Duchesneau, who received her honorary doctorate from the Faculty of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences (FAES), as well as Suzanne Fortier, principal of McGill University, and faculty lecturers.



The FMT graduating class of 2016. Twenty of 25 students were present at convocation.



FMT students pose with a friend from the BSc(AES) program during the outdoor reception.



Left to right: FMT Director Peter Enright poses with graduate Matthew Burns, his father, Neil Burns, and brother, Cameron Burns, who is entering his final year of the program in September.

Macdonald campus graduation



Matthew Morin, Matthew Burns and Shelby Drew, all from the Eastern Townships, pose before the ceremony begins.



Emmanuel Brisson (Sainte-Barbe, QC) and Alana McKinven (Canton de Hatley, QC) look very happy to be receiving their diplomas.



Maria Labrecque Duchesneau receives her honorary doctorate from Michael A. Meighen, McGill's chancellor.



Sebastien Latraverse (Montreal, QC) is flanked by FMT Director Peter Enright and faculty lecturer Chris Molgat. Latraverse plans to start a dairy farm in Vermont.



June 3 was a beautiful hot day, perfect for convocation at Macdonald Campus. A reception was held outside afterwards.

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NI 5215 for parts. Also have trans-

mission JD 5250 Seed Drill 18 run - grass seed box, hyd. lift, very good condition - \$3,500

Patz 305 TMR mixer. 540 Pto w/ scale & belt unload - \$4,500
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Jennifer Gagnon at 613-602-7750 or 819-689-2300



QFA MEMBER BENEFITS

HEALTH INSURANCE - There is strength in numbers and the QFA has negotiated a competitively

priced comprehensive group insurance plan for its members. Call the plan administrator toll free for further information: 1-800-268-6195.

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

County Fairs of the Eastern Townships

A commemorative book of photos

and recollections of County Fairs of the Eastern Townships for nearly 200 years. Available at the Cookshire, Ayer's Cliff, Brome and Richmond Fairs; The Record office (1195 Galt St. East, Sherbrooke); Q.A.H.N. office (257 Queen St., Sherbrooke). \$15 plus shipping and handling. Limited number available. For more information or to order a book, call The Record at 819-569-9528 billing@sherbrookerecord.com



Rural Community Better Together



REGIONAL NEWS & EVENTS

Eastern Townships:

Hatley 4-H Club Turkey Auction
When: Sunday, August 28, 1:30 p.m.
Where: Ayer's Cliff Fair
What: Hatley 4-H Club annual turkey auction to benefit Make a Wish Foundation

4-H Shows

Ayer's Cliff Fair - Friday, August 26
Brome Fair - Monday, September 5, 9:00 a.m.
Richmond Fair - Sunday, September 13, 9:00 a.m.

Montérégie

Howick 4-H Club Achievement Day
When: Sunday, August 28. There

will be judging and shows throughout the day until 3 p.m.
Where: Terrace Bank Farm.

4-H Show at Havelock Fair

When: Saturday, September 10

Huntingdon 4-H Club Zucchini 500

When: Saturday, September 10

Where:

Prince Arthur Park, Huntingdon
What: Construct and race cars made out of zucchinis to benefit Habitat for Humanity Info: Mégan Surprenant (450-264-3456)

Note of Thanks

The Huntingdon 4-H Club thanks the Chateauguay Valley Career

Education Centre for its generous donation of a garden shed which the club has turned into their new ice cream booth. The club also appreciates other contributions from the community which have helped with this project. Members look forward to giving back by raising funds for Habitat for Humanity.

QUEBEC 4-H ASSOCIATION

Back to School Pizza Party

- When: Wednesday, September 7
- Where: Harrison House, Macdonald Campus
- What: 4-H Quebec will host its annual Back to School Pizza Party. All members are encouraged to attend and bring their friends for an afternoon of fun! The event is free for members and \$5.00 for friends. Let us know if you're coming by the morning of September 6.

Intermediate Leadership Camp

- Open to: 4-H members aged 13 to 15
- When: September 23 to 25
- Where: Camp d'action biblique, Richmond

4-H Quebec Online Auction

4-H Quebec will once again be holding an online auction fundraiser. If you have any items that you would like to donate, please contact office@quebec4-h.com. We appreciate your support! This auction will be open from September 1 until November 2. Don't forget to log on and bid on some cool items.

Journey 2050

4-H Quebec and its clubs will be exploring the topic of sustainable agriculture and are looking for farms to visit and guest speakers. Please contact the program@quebec4-h.com if you have ideas or something to share.

Annual General Meeting

When: Saturday, November 26
Where: Macdonald Campus, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue

Kids Helping Kids

Collect aluminum drink can tabs for the Ronald McDonald House; ask a 4-H'er in your community to pass them along to a 4-H Quebec staff member any time on or before the Annual General Meeting on November 26, 2016. Tabs will go to Ronald McDonald House for sale to aluminum to recyclers, helping to fund their facilities where families can stay nearby their children while they're in the hospital.

4-H CANADA

FCC 4-H Club Fund

The FCC 4-H Club Fund is back! Thanks to Farm Credit Canada, 4-H clubs across Canada can apply for grants up to \$500 towards events, supplies and more. Full details for eligibility are available on the 4-H Canada website, along with directions on how to apply. These grants are awarded on a first-come-first-serve basis, so please apply as soon as possible!

Growing Forward 2 4-H Canada Outreach Fund

Is your club looking for ways to do 4-H outreach in the community? Maybe you need new signs that show off your club logo, or new display and promotional materials for fairs or community events? Or maybe you are looking for ways to recruit new volunteers and build capacity for your leaders? Growing Forward 2 4-H Outreach Fund can help! Any Canadian 4-H Club is eligible to apply for grants up to \$1,000 depending on the size of their project and number of 4-H members that it will represent. Applications for this fund close on October 31, so do not delay!

4-H Canada Science Fair

This opportunity launches September 1, 2016. The summer break is an excellent opportunity for 4-H youth in grades 7 through 11 to start thinking about their science fair projects. Encourage 4-H members to explore their surroundings or use their interests to discover, create and get curious! Projects can be in the form of an experiment, innovation or study. Training opportunities are available for our leaders. New volunteers are welcome!

Global 4-H Network Summit

In 2017, the Global 4-H Network Summit is coming to Ottawa! This will be a chance for members and leaders from around the world to meet others who are passionate about the 4-H movement. Keep an eye out for further details about this great opportunity!

For more information about 4-H programming and events, contact 4-H Quebec:

program@quebec4-h.com
514-398-8738

Summer Fairs!

High and dry at the Ormstown Fair!

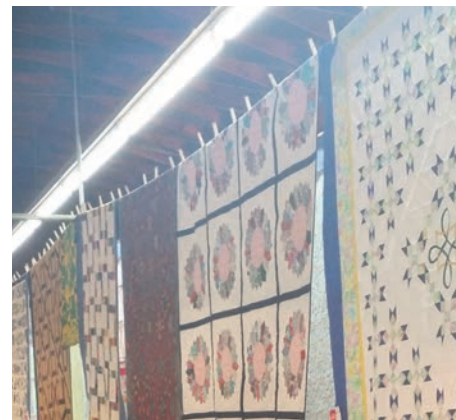
The 102nd edition of the Ormstown Fair was held from June 9 – 12 this year. The QFA was there to enjoy the dry and sunny weather and help celebrate the community. Thanks to all the organizers and volunteers for a great time!



DOUGAL RATTRAY



PHOTOS: DOUGAL RATTRAY



PHOTOS: ANDREW HICKEY

Farm Safety Treasure Hunt proves popular at Lachute Fair

Dougal Rattray
QFA Executive Director

Farm safety was high on the list of priorities for the fair board at the July Expo Lachute Fair, and with over 65 enthusiastic kids taking part in the newly inspired Farm Safety Treasure Hunt, it proved to be a popular feature with visitors. "What a great way to get the message across," commented QFA President John McCart, who spearheaded the project. In his true leadership form, he added, "and it's incredible what can be achieved when we all pull together."

Along with dedicated financial support from the Union de producteurs agricoles (UPA) Outaouais Laurentide Regional Federation, the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ), and local John Deere dealer JLD-Laguë, the QFA was able to create a series of five bilingual farm safety posters and manage the activity that

animated critical elements relating to farm safety.

"Kids taking part in the treasure hunt had to follow clues that brought them around the show grounds and, unconsciously, they were being educated about safety issues facing farmers," said Fair Board Vice-President Scott Lees. The activity educated participants about tractor safety, livestock handling, farm chemicals, ATV driving and horse riding safety.

On successful completion of the treasure hunt, all participants received a prize donated by the local John Deere dealer and names were entered into a draw for free passes to the midway, which is a star attraction for youth.

In its 191st year, the Expo Lachute Fair is one of Canada's longest running agricultural shows and the oldest in Quebec.

Referencing the Farm Safety Treasure Hunt, QFA Executive Director Dougal Rattray observed, "For a relatively small investment that can be spread



JOHN MCCART

over years and also be built upon in subsequent years, other boards across the province could borrow from this example and run similar events of their own. This is a fun, family oriented feature that engages members of the public in a meaningful way to raise

awareness about some of the hazards associated with growing food." If fair boards wish to know more about what is involved in creating their own Farm Safety Treasure Hunt, they are invited to contact Rattray (qfa@upa.qc.ca or 450-679-0540 ext. 8536).



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