



Vol. 37, No. 2 – February 2017

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"In the United States, the majority undertakes to supply a multitude of ready-made opinions for the use of individuals, who are thus relieved from the necessity of forming opinions of their own."

— Alexis de Tocqueville

QFA's Farm Food Forums

Thursday, February 23

"Knowing Your Cost of Production"

See page 2 for details.

Pierre Paradis dismissed over sexual misconduct allegations



PASCAL RATTHE/ARCHIVES TON

Pierre Paradis, now the former Quebec minister of agriculture, has been kicked out of the Liberal cabinet after an employee lodged a complaint against him for making "inappropriate gestures" of a sexual nature. This is the second time a member of the Couillard government has been dismissed over allegations of sexual misconduct.

Andrew McClelland
Advocate Staff Reporter

The Quebec Liberal Party's star cabinet minister, Pierre Paradis, has been dismissed of his duties and kicked out of cabinet after the Sûreté du Québec (SQ) announced that it was launching an investigation for sexual misconduct regarding the former provincial minister of agriculture.

Paradis, who had been the head of the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ) since the Philippe Couillard government came to power, has been temporarily replaced by Laurent Lessard, who served as minister of agriculture under Jean Charest.

But the reasons for Paradis's dismissal are hardly clear. And neither has the communication regarding the matter been held in a transparent nature by the Quebec Liberal Party.

The investigation by the SQ into Paradis's behaviour centres on "inappropriate gestures" of a sexual nature involving an employee. On January 24, the premier's office received a letter from the alleged victim, offering details about the complaint. Police were still looking into the matter, but the premier decided Paradis would leave his cabinet post temporarily.

However, on January 25, Premier Couillard's office gave a very different reason for Paradis's dismissal, saying that the 66-year-old

MNA for Brome-Missisquoi suffered a mild concussion after falling from a horse while horseback riding. A spokesperson for Paradis, Laurence Lemieux, described the concussion as mild. "He's been horseback riding for many years," she told the *Montreal Gazette*. "There's no reason to worry; it's not something major."

But the very next day, the SQ told a different story, announcing that it had begun an investigation into Paradis and had alerted the Liberal Party's chief of staff on January 19.



On the cover

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Suspicious

The investigations and dismissal come at a trying time for relations between the former minister of agriculture and Quebec producers. Paradis had been criticized for his perceived inaction regarding the Programme de crédit de taxes foncières agricoles, the provincial regulation that calculates the amount of tax farmers pay on their land and farm buildings.

To say that the Union des producteurs agricoles (UPA) and Paradis didn't get along would be something of an understatement. The former minister was

The Parti Québécois (PQ) raised concerns over the way the Liberals handled announcing the truth of the situation.

greeted with jeers and hissing when he made an appearance at the UPA's Annual General Meeting in Quebec City in December 2016.

UPA President Marcel Groleau greeted Lessard's appointment to take over from Paradis enthusiastically, saying, "When Mr. Lessard was minister of agriculture, he was there with us on the ground. Mr. Lessard took the time to listen to people and surrounded himself with a staff that worked to move issues

forward. It wasn't always easy, but we came to agreements together. Under the Charest government, he remained very open to the concerns of the UPA."

The Parti Québécois (PQ) raised concerns over the way the Liberals handled announcing the truth of the situation. PQ MNA Agnes Maltais said that there were "holes" in the chronology of events regarding Paradis's dismissal and how much the Couillard government knew about the allegations.

Maltais criticized Couillard's office for exhibiting "the opposite of transparency" by announcing that Paradis was leaving the cabinet for health reasons. "It is clear that the premier has not been clear in the last days. He tried to spare his minister or the government," she commented.

Maltais added that it "takes great courage" for any employee to bring allegations of this nature against a government minister.

Disrespect towards women

This is the second time a member of Couillard's government has been dismissed for allegations of sexual misconduct.

Gerry Sklavounos, who was elected as a Liberal, was asked in October by the premier to sit as an independent, following Alice Paquet's allegations she was sexually assaulted by the MNA at a restaurant where she worked as a hostess. In that case, Quebec's director of criminal prosecutions recently



YVES CHARLEBOIS

Paradis has been temporarily replaced by Laurent Lessard, who served as minister of agriculture under Jean Charest from 2010-2011.

announced that it "concludes that no criminal act had been committed."

Paquet, however, maintains that the version of events she testified to are true and that police investigating the case suggested to her that she would have to have the alleged incidents on camera to bring it to trial.

Manon Massé, MNA for the Quebec Solidaire party, described the situation brought about by the dismissals

of Paradis and Sklavounos as "deplorable."

"For me, one thing is obvious," said Massé. "For a second time in your cabinet, in important positions, there are men who believe that they have latitude to be able to degrade relations with women. It's harassment and intimidation. And it's unacceptable."

Paradis has been released from hospital and is now recovering at home.



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FARM MANAGEMENT CANADA





Fair-weather friends: The Conservative Party and supply management

Andrew McClelland
Advocate Staff Reporter

Quebec farmers following the leadership race for the Conservative Party might be wondering what they're looking at these days. What would a post-Harper Conservative Party hold for agriculture in Canada and in the province were it to come to power?

After all, the Conservative Party has often captured the votes of Quebecers when it seems least likely—such as with Brian Mulroney's first election victory in 1984 and Stephen Harper's victory in 2006.

With a whopping 13 would-be Conservative Party leaders currently vying for the top spot in the leadership race, Quebec has surprisingly become a key issue.

That's thanks to the perennially touchy issue of supply management in agriculture. With Quebec being a dairy stronghold in Canada, along with being a top producer of poultry and eggs, supply-managed industries are wise to wonder if they can rely on the Conservative Party's support in an era when the "free economy" has so many governmental supporters worldwide.

The issue came to a head on January 17 when Conservative Party leadership



Maxime Bernier

quotas, which would cost anywhere from an estimated \$18-billion to \$28-billion.

"A temporary levy on these products would be raised to compensate farmers for the value of their quota," said Bernier in an official statement published in the *Financial Post*. "After that transition period, we would have a free, open and fair system for all, with lower prices, innovation, and more growth in the whole agricultural sector."

Bernier has acknowledged that his stance on the issue goes against official Conservative Party policy. When asked

"After that transition period, we would have a free, open and fair system for all, with lower prices, innovation, and more growth in the whole agricultural sector." — Maxime Bernier

hopefuls met for a French-language debate in Quebec City. MP Steven Blaney, a Francophone who represents the riding of Lévis—Bellechasse, criticized Maxime Bernier for his well-known stance for abolishing supply management.

Blaney suggested that Bernier doesn't understand the lives of agricultural producers, saying that they work hard while Bernier likes to "go jogging."

"They (farmers) are not in the room tonight because they are working," Blaney said.

Bernier vs. supply management

Bernier's official stance on supply management is that it's a system that is out of date. The former minister of foreign affairs said Canada should phase out the system over five to ten years. Governments would compensate farmers for the full value of their existing

how he reconciles his point of view with his position in the Conservative cabinet, he's unapologetic.

"There is of course no way to reconcile it. Supply management is a system based on keeping the prices of dairy, poultry and eggs artificially high through the control of production, the banning of imports, price-fixing by bureaucrats, and on preventing competition and entry into the market. It is a cartel. It is the opposite of free markets."

Official policy

During the Harper era, the Conservative Party's official stance was always to support supply management in certain agricultural sectors. But when trade negotiations on a global scale would come around, many farmers were left wondering how heartfelt that support really was.



Steven Blaney

When asked for reassurance regarding Ottawa's official stance on supply management, former federal minister of agriculture Gerry Ritz would be less than resounding in his support for the system.

"As a federal government, we've shown concern for the supply management sector in all of the negotiations that

we've undertaken," said Ritz repeatedly when asked if his government would sacrifice supply-managed industries in Canada if trading partners demanded it.

"At the same time, we have to have a balanced act between the multitude of commodities that are exported."

Conservatives who have come out against supply management have risked reprisal from their fellow party members. Conservative MP Michael Chong—another candidate in the leadership race—said Bernier's "unilateral" move would weaken Canada's position in international trade negotiations.

In an interview, Chong said that in recent trade deals, Canada worked alongside the agricultural sector "to give up some protection in return for major concessions from our trading partners."

Most Conservative Party leadership candidates are holding to the party's official stance to support supply management—or they're keeping quiet. A leader will be chosen at a party convention on May 27.



Farm Safety

Smart, savvy and safe farm kids

Canadian Agricultural Safety Association

The value of hard work, a sense of responsibility and pride in a job well done are characteristics that all parents want to nurture in their children. There is nothing more gratifying than seeing your child accomplish great things through hard work and determination.

Farm kids are lucky because they see first-hand how to accomplish tasks successfully, be stewards of land and livestock, and take pride in hard work. However, raising a successful, smart and savvy farm kid doesn't have to come at the price of their safety.

Discussions concerning the issues of farm safety and children often can be controversial and emotionally charged, but there is one point that everybody agrees on – the death of even just one child is a horrific tragedy.

It's important that parents and caregivers understand that children aren't miniature adults. Even the most advanced eight-year-old is still a child. And these wonderful young people don't have the experience, physical strength or understanding to always make the right choice,



All children do impulsive things, aren't always physically up to the task and sometimes make poor choices. It's up to parents and caregivers to establish boundaries and guidelines.

handle large equipment or be entrusted with complicated farming tasks.

Children grow and progress through different stages of physical, mental and emotional development. Physically, children are different than adults. Some children are big

for their age, that's true, but their stamina, strength, and fine motor skills are still developing. Mentally, children don't always understand consequences of risky behavior. Even the most mature child doesn't have the life experience or critical thinking skills to always make the best choices. Emotionally, children haven't developed the skills to balance impulses against risk or to always know when to ask for help.

Take a critical look at your child. Do they always make the best choices? Are they always physically capable of doing mundane tasks? Do they act impulsively? All children do impulsive things, aren't always physically up to the task and sometimes make poor choices. It's up to parents and caregivers to establish boundaries and guidelines, not just in everyday life, but also when it comes to farm safety.

Risk taking is an important part of growing up. Children that take age-appropriate risks and engage in age-appropriate tasks stand a better chance of growing up into skilled, capable, and confident adults. The North American Guidelines for Children's Agricultural Tasks

is an excellent resource that parents and caregivers can use to guide decisions about what kinds of farming tasks are age-appropriate. These are guidelines, you know your child best, but remember to take into consideration that parents often overestimate their child. Be critical and be truthful about your child's ability when determining what tasks are appropriate.

Children's safety on the farm just doesn't end with assigning appropriate farming tasks. It also depends on their role models and decisions that those adults make regarding safety on the farm. According to the Canadian Agricultural Injury Reporting, there were 248 agricultural fatalities among children and youth in Canada under 15 years of age. Although 71 per cent of the agricultural fatalities among children were work-related, in 8 out of 10 cases, the victim was not actually doing the work. These young victims were killed by someone else who was engaged in agricultural work.

So what can we do to prevent these untimely deaths? First, we have to rethink "tradition." Farmers are often on the forefront of new and exciting

ideas. After all, it was farmers who championed minimal tillage and moved away from the traditional black dirt of summer fallow. The same kind of thinking needs to be applied to safety on the farm. It might be "tradition" to allow extra riders on the farm equipment. And it might be "tradition" to have children around farm machinery, but that doesn't mean it has to be this way.

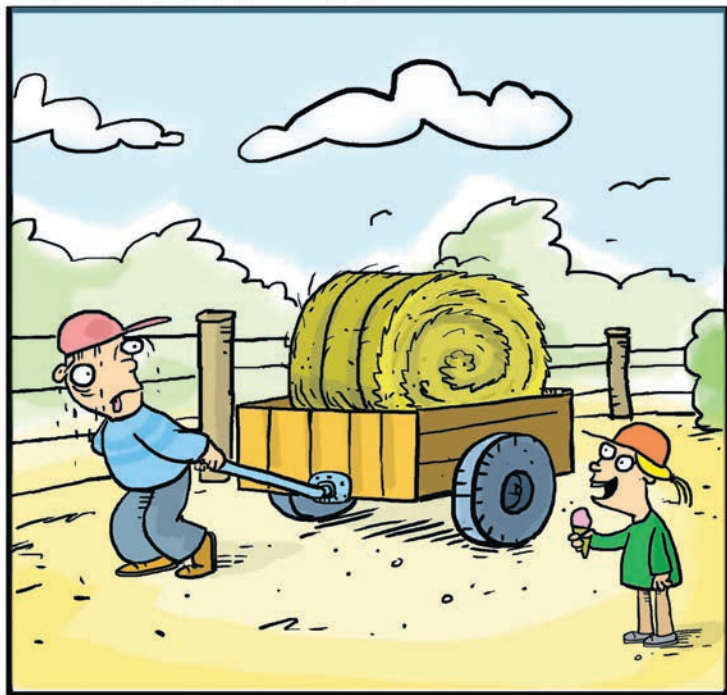
Build new traditions. Talk about the farm equipment, teach children how they work, show them the proper safety gear, explore your farm together in a safe and controlled way. Keeping children safe doesn't mean that they can't be involved in the farm. Instead, it means that your children will be around to be the next generation of farmers, who will in turn carry on the tradition of a successful farming operation.

Our children are our greatest accomplishment and joy. Let them learn, run, jump, play and work. But let's make sure they do it at acceptable risk levels. Take the time to understand the risks farm children face and how to nurture our future farmers in a healthy and safe way.

www.agsafetyweek.ca

the barnders

by gord.coulthart



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



John McCart
QFA President

As we approach Canadian Agricultural Safety Week, held this year from March 12-18, we are called to remember everything we have learned and to seek new ways of improving safety on the farm.

This past January, I attended the UPA-CNESST Farm Safety Seminar given in Drummondville. The topics this year dealt with hydraulic energy and electricity. An eye witness account of a farm fatality was given, and the emotions in the group ran high as we were given details of the accident and the impact it had on the families involved. The safety stickers placed around a machine are there for a reason and must not be ignored. Machines that chop, grind and mix have little regard for the human body, and there are no exceptions.

Hydraulic energy is a vital source of power on a farm. Every tractor generates it, and almost all implements use it in at least one way. If a tractor is equipped with a front loader or a three-point hitch, then operators must be aware of the dangers. The pressure on a front loader increases as the load increases in the bucket. As the load is lifted higher into the air, the risk of injury also rises. When working on the engine, it is important to lock out the lift cylinders. This can be done by using the switch on the loader lever, or by using cylinder blocks. Pressures can increase from 3,000 to 6,000 to 10,000 psi depending on the load. This can kill or trap if a line blows and the implement falls. The operator must be sure that there is no pressure on the lines when attaching, detaching or servicing the implement. Some newer pieces of equipment have hydraulic compensators that help remove excess pressure.

Another great danger from the hydraulic system comes from leaks. The operator must ensure that all fittings are tight and that they are free from dirt and debris. If there is a potential leak in the hose itself, please do not use your hand to verify its location. This oil is under great pressure and can cause a great deal of damage to the operator's hand and arm. If the farmer needs to check for a pinhole leak, use a piece of cardboard. When working on equipment, lower equipment to the ground, remove the key, remove the PTO shaft, disconnect the hydraulic lines and disconnect the electrical supply.

Controlling energy on the farm



As spring is right around the corner, I urge all farmers to avoid shortcuts, follow safety procedures and heed warning signs and safety symbols.

As many of you know, electricity is also a source of danger on the farm. Please use a certified electrician to make any upgrades or new installations on the farm. Chances are that a friend, neighbour, or brother-in-law might not be aware of all the changes to the code. It is possible to use the services of an apprentice, if he/she is following the rules and codes. When working on machines powered by electricity, or when a machine is not in use, please be sure that the panel and switch are locked out. For example, when a worker is doing maintenance on a silo unloader, the panel must be locked out to prevent another person from accidentally starting it. This practice applies to many other pieces of equipment on the farm. Around the grain drying and handling system, there are numerous dangers, such as automatic augers that feed the dryers. It is important to follow the recommended procedures for closing off equipment. What's more, electric motors must be well maintained and workers must be aware of keeping safe distances around electric panels where an arc may occur.

As spring is right around the corner, I urge all farmers to avoid shortcuts, follow safety procedures and heed warning signs and safety symbols. Let us all have a safe and productive season.

Symbols for Safety

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

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



WARNING:
Live electrical wire
contact.

WARNING:
Hydraulic cylinder
locking device.



WARNING:
Cutting or severing
of fingers or hand,
fan.



Hazard symbols taken from the Association of Equipment Manufacturers.



Marcel Groleau
UPA President

On January 26, to the surprise of all, Pierre Paradis was excused from his duties as agriculture minister and dismissed from the cabinet. The premier named Laurent Lessard as his replacement, at a time when several important issues in Quebec agriculture require immediate attention.

Mr. Lessard is no neophyte. First elected in 2003, he has held a number of positions in different departments—including agriculture minister from 2007 to 2009 and from 2010 to 2011. He's well acquainted with the farming world, which will make for much smoother communication in a context where important decisions must be reached in short order, especially on the issue of farm property taxes. His experience as minister of

Collaboration and action

municipal affairs (2009–2012) is without a doubt an added asset. Better than anyone else, he is able to grasp the importance of having a Quebec farm property tax credit that is adapted to today's needs, for the sake of both municipalities and farmers.

The task before Lessard is to quickly assert Quebec's leadership in the current negotiations for Canada's renewed Agricultural Policy Framework (APF), which will come into effect in 2018. Discussions between the agricultural sector and the federal, provincial and territorial governments have been under way for some time now. We have observed that Quebec has been less active in this negotiation than it has in the past. No need to remind the reader that the stakes are sky-high.

Among Quebec's priorities is enhancing the various cost-shared risk management programs, including AgriStability. The changes made to this program under APF, adopted in 2013, greatly reduced its scope. Canadian farmers feel it is no longer doing its job as a safety net.

We firmly believe that with more active participation from Quebec in current discussions, the case could be made for increasing coverage for reference margins, informed by Quebec's prior experience, including with the Agri-Québec Plus program. Stronger leadership would also open the door to convincing governments at the provincial, territorial and federal levels (the latter seems to need a little convincing) to ensure Canada's farmers have access to an AgriStability program with at least the same level of protection as it had prior to 2013.

The discussions taking place at the moment are based on the current budget. The Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the Union des producteurs agricoles (UPA) and several provinces including Quebec are calling for extra investment to support the next APF. Let's remember that the Harper government cut \$268 million per year with the framework in its current form. The renewal of the agreement in 2018 cannot be predicated

upon a frozen budget. The challenges for agriculture are many, and the investments required to meet the demands of consumers and markets are considerable, in both animal and plant production.

Setting priorities based on the current budget, as the federal government is proposing to do, is an impossible task. Canada is lagging behind its main competitors when it comes to both supporting agriculture and investing in research and innovation. We're acutely aware that research and innovation are the keys to a thriving sector tomorrow. You don't get to choose between investing in adapted risk management programs and competitive programs to foster innovation.

The issues awaiting Mr. Lessard are many, and some require urgent action.

But setting aside the timelines and the issues at play, collaboration from the sector and the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation du Québec (MAPAQ) will be required if we want to reach our goals. The UPA offers the new minister its full cooperation.

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Sam Bourgeois, Advocate
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Citizens share dialogue with federal ag minister

Dougal Rattray
QFA Executive Director

February 10 saw a group of farmers and agri-food stakeholders meet on Parliament Hill with Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Lawrence MacAulay to engage in dialogue regarding current and forthcoming issues in agriculture and food production.

Federal MP Will Amos worked with the QFA to bring the meeting to fruition. Subjects were broad, covering local, provincial and federal issues. The meeting was chaired by Will Amos, who was assisted by Frédéric Seppey (Chief Agriculture Negotiator, Trade Agreements and Negotiations, Market and Industry Services Branch, Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food) and Scott Patterson (Regional Director for Quebec, Department

of Agriculture and Agri-Food). On the agenda were the following topics: agri-stability and the importance of ASRA collective programming, led by John McCart, president of the QFA, and Stéphane Alary, president of UPA Collines de l'Outaouais; inter-provincial trade, led by Ivan Hale, president of Community Economic Development and Employability Corporation (CEDEC), and Sylvain Bertrand, owner of Ferme Aux Saveurs des Monts; local/regional short-chain direct-marketing development, led by Vincent Philibert, director general of Table agroalimentaire de l'Outaouais (TAO); agri-tourism development and outreach in the Pontiac riding, led by David Gillespie, chair of CANAMEX; supporting new entrants to agriculture and the significance of a national food policy, led by Charlotte Scott, co-owner of Ferme Lève-tôt, and

Peter Andrée, president of the Wakefield Farmers' Market and associate professor at Carleton University; US trade and NAFTA negotiations: diafiltered milk issues and milk/beef commodities trading, led by Chris Judd, former president of the QFA, and Robby Beck, president of Pontiac Dairy Producers; and US trade and NAFTA negotiations: grain and corn trade—GMO/non-GMO market development, led by Chris Judd, former president of the QFA, and Ralph Lang, president of the Pontiac Grain Producers.

Dialogue was cordial and informative. Briefs are being circulated to the Minister's office, and it is intended to request further meetings for follow-up. Recognition and thanks are extended to the office of Will Amos, Federal MP for the Pontiac riding, for his show of support in facilitating this meeting. The



agricultural community acknowledges the commitment displayed by Minister MacAulay and looks forward to meeting with him again on March 23 at the Breakfast on the Hill event organized by the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, the QFA and the Union des cultivateurs franco-ontariens.

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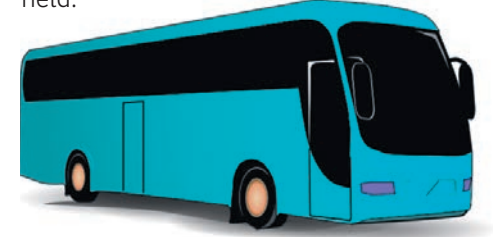
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Crack-ups

Dead politicians

A busload of politicians were driving down a country road when, all of a sudden, the bus ran off the road and crashed into a tree in an old farmer's field.



The old farmer, after seeing what happened, went over to investigate. He then proceeded to dig a hole and bury the politicians. A few days later, the local sheriff came out, saw the crashed bus and asked the old farmer where all the politicians had gone. The old farmer said he had buried them. The sheriff asked the old farmer, "Were they ALL dead?" The old farmer replied, "Well, some of them said they weren't, but you know how those politicians lie."

Banking on it

A farmer wanted a loan for \$500. He approached his local banker. "What have you got for collateral?" queried the banker, going strictly by the book. "Don't know what collateral means." "Well, that's something of value that would cover the cost of the loan. Have you got any vehicles?" "Yes, I have a 1979 pickup." The banker shook his head. "How about livestock?" "Yes, I have a horse." "How old is it?" "I don't know; it has no teeth." Finally, the banker decided to make the \$500 loan. Several weeks later the man was back in the bank. He pulled out a roll of bills. "Here's the money to pay the loan," he said, handing over the entire amount, including interest. "What are you going to do with the rest of that money?" "Put it in my pocket." "Why don't you deposit it in my bank?" "I don't know what deposit means." "Well, you put the money in our bank and we take care of it for you. When you want to use it you can withdraw it." The man leaned across the desk, looking suspiciously at the banker, and asked, "What you got for collateral?"



Here's to the farmer who's willing and able,
Who's at every meal, but not at the table.

Here's to the farmer who cares for the earth,
Who loves every creature and knows their true worth.

Who wears many hats with honour and pride,
With love for their business that shines from inside.

Who respects what they do and how to get through it,
Constantly learning the best ways to do it.

Who's open and honest and willing to share,
With nothing to hide, anytime, anywhere.

Here's to the farmer, who's in every bite,
Feeding the world and doing it right.

Canada's Agriculture Day is February 16th and FCC is proud
to celebrate our wonderful industry.

Here's to the farmer. Here's to Canadian ag. Here's to you.





Young Ormstown farmer hopeful for maple and greenhouse production

Three aspiring farmers were awarded Warren Grapes Scholarships at the QFA's AGM this year. As part of the awards ceremony, the QFA invited each student up to the podium to say a few words. In our past two issues, we introduced you to Mitchell Bazinet and Claudia Meganck and reproduced the speeches these young farmers gave at the AGM. This issue, we're printing the speech delivered by award winner Gregory Bohemen, in which this Farm Management and Technology student speaks of his hopes for the maple industry, greenhouse production and Canadian agriculture in general.

Good morning, fellow students, teachers and agricultural enthusiasts.

My name is Gregory Bohemen. I'm 23 years old and I'm a third-year student of the Farm Management and Technology program at McGill. I was raised on a dairy farm in Ormstown, Quebec, and, along with my three siblings, I represent the third generation on the farm.

I feel very fortunate to have the opportunity to share a few words with you about my perspective on the direction modern agriculture is taking. I feel very hopeful about the future. We're at a turning point in time when lots of progress and technological advancements will be made in the years to come. As you're all aware, agriculture is an industry that relies heavily on what the generations before us accomplished.

Recently, the availability of technology has introduced us to new tools and opportunities that allow us to improve

efficiency and quality of life. A couple of examples of these advancements are conservation tillage and cover crops to reduce soil compaction and erosion, and, in the dairy industry, tie-stall facilities upgrading to free-stalls to reduce injuries and lameness.

That being said, it's also our duty to practice sustainable agriculture to limit the footprint we leave on our precious land. In doing so, we will ensure it remains healthy and ready to pass on to many generations to come, which is the ultimate goal.

One industry that's highly under-rated, in my opinion, is the maple industry. Quebec is responsible for 70 per cent of its global production, and we should be proud of that.

Perhaps the industry showing the greatest potential in the next quarter-century is the greenhouse industry because, to be honest, we have a lot

of catching up to do with our Ontario neighbours and even more in comparison with Europe.

Furthermore, the increase in population combined with the increase in land price makes it ever more beneficial for us to maximize efficiency and profitability per hectare. To do this, we all need to think "outside the box" to diversify and add value to our enterprises.

Like I said, I'm very hopeful about Canadian agriculture since I know that we, the next generation of farmers, will find a way to adapt to consumers' demands while implementing sustainable practices.

Before ending, I'd like to take a moment to sincerely thank all the generous people from the QFA. This bursary is well appreciated and will be well invested.

Thank you.



Warren Grapes award winner Gregory Bohemen receives his scholarship from QFA President John McCart.



Bohemen believes that Quebec has a long way to go to catch up with Europe regarding greenhouse production.

RECOGNIZING WARREN GRAPES AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION FUND DONORS

Every year the QFA receives donations from members and non-members who see merit in supporting agricultural education through the QFA's Warren Grapes Agricultural Education Fund.

This fund, created in the name of one of our long-standing community leaders, has seen a rise in donations over the course of the last few years, and 2016 was no exception. This year we are very happy to announce that we will have close to \$2,000 to disperse at our AGM, which will be held this year on Friday, November 17.

In recognition of this kindness and support, we wish to thank all donors for their contributions

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------|
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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.

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President, Fédération d'agriculture
biologique du Québec

At its last general assembly in February 2014, the Fédération d'agriculture biologique du Québec (FABQ) suspended its activities in order to collaborate in assembling the Table de développement de la production biologique (TDPB), with the support from the Union des producteurs agricoles (UPA). Restructuring our representation within the Union entailed that all affiliated groups invest in developing organic production within each sector, each region and in each community. More than two years since the establishment of the TDPB, here is a look at the current state of affairs.

Organic representation and development: From talk to action

In our fight against genetically modified (GM) alfalfa, which threatens our value-added animal and forage productions, the UPA and Les Producteurs de lait du Québec (PLQ) have provided strong support in ensuring that our voices are heard at the federal level, in partnership with other Canadian farmers' groups. For their part, the Saguenay – Lac Saint-Jean and Bas Saint-Laurent federations have adopted motions asking seed distributors to commit to not selling GM alfalfa seed, and encouraging producers not to sow it. This demonstrates the vital role that our regions play in our Union's action.

The Producteurs de grains du Québec (PGQ) and the Syndicat des producteurs de grains biologiques du Québec (SPGQ) have undertaken collaborative efforts to present our demands to the Financière

agricole du Québec (FADQ), resulting in the recent announcement that crop insurance reference prices will be increased by 50 per cent for all organic grain in 2017. In comparison, this increase was only 20 per cent for the 2016 season. Unified action leads governments to take into account our market realities when developing support programs.

In dairy production, the Syndicat des producteurs de lait biologique du Québec (SPLBQ), the PLQ and other stakeholders (processors and distributors) have recently adopted a strategic development plan for 2017-2024, working towards increases in production and further market development. We can define this as a specialized value-chain approach. We foresee that other sectors will see advantages to adopting this approach.

Other groups, such as maple producers and producers of fruits and vegetables for processing, have put the development of organic production among their priorities, and are working to bring together organic producers to pursue common goals. It is only by working collaboratively and strategically that organic agriculture will continue to flourish in "la belle province." Increasing our share of niche markets will strengthen our rural communities and create greater social cohesion. This calls for producers to get involved. In your commitment to the QFA, you partake in the evolution of the entire agricultural landscape. All affiliated groups of the UPA need organic producers to make their needs known within the Union, in order to grow their businesses and their livelihoods.



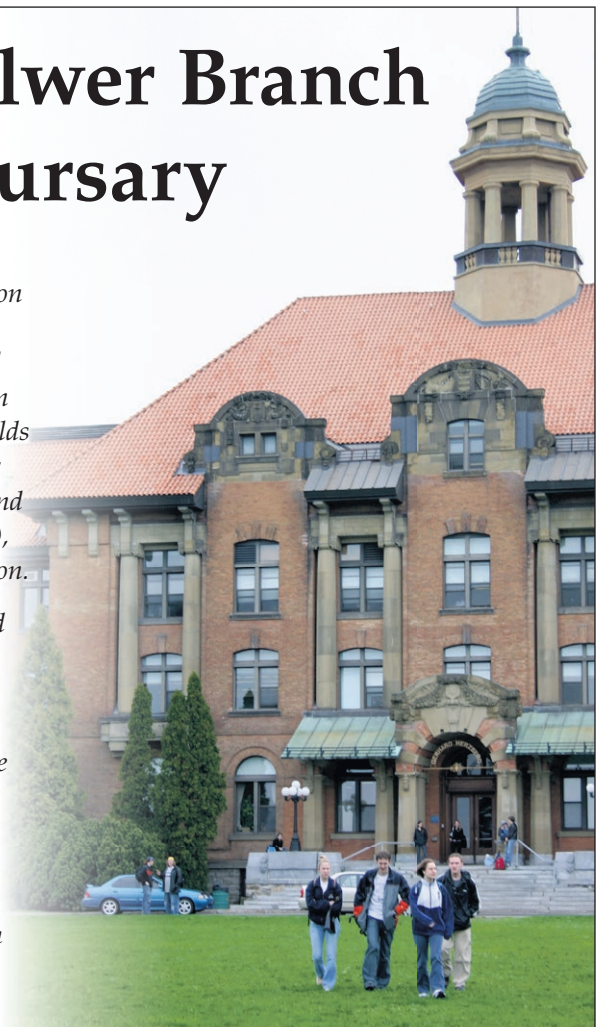
The Quebec Organic Production Roundtable (Table de développement de la production biologique) represents the organic farming sector's interests and seeks to better meet farmers' needs through creating more synergy among the different commodity and regional groups within the UPA. It strives towards the efficient use of available resources in order to give the organic sector better development and coaching tools.

AJOUT
PHANEUF
75x2

QFA Bulwer Branch offers Bursary

The Bulwer Branch of the Quebec Farmers' Association is offering a bursary to students currently enrolled in post-secondary education in agriculture or related fields living in the area served by Bulwer Branch (in or around Sawyerville and Cookshire), Quebec Farmers' Association.

To be considered, interested applicants can send their names with details of current studies and a few sentences about their future aspirations to: Mrs. Theda Lowry, 30 High Forest, Sawyerville, Quebec, J0B 3A0. Applications should be received by no later than March 17, 2017.



Grains sector holds knowledge transfer symposium

On January 24, the Producteurs de grains du Québec (PGQ) held a symposium in Drummondville on knowledge transfer in the grain sector. The event brought together a variety of actors involved in grain research, advisory services and production. Attendees had an opportunity to reflect on how best to optimize the dissemination and uptake of scientific knowledge about grain production.

Two speakers at the symposium, Michel Trépanier, a professor at the Institut national de la recherche scientifique (INRS) and the University of Québec at Trois-Rivières (UQTR), and Gisèle Bertrand, a communications and knowledge mobilization advisor at the Quebec Reference Centre for Agriculture and Agri-Food (CRAAQ), played a front-and-centre role in presenting the results

of their research on the principles and methods of knowledge transfer.

The day's proceedings yielded a number of findings. Generally speaking, it seems that there is better transfer and greater uptake of knowledge in the grain sector if two conditions are met: research meets the specific needs of users, and producers play an active role in giving direction to research activities.

A report summarizing the main takeaways of the day's activities will be published in the weeks following the symposium.

2017 AGM

The PGQ is pleased to invite you to attend its Annual General Meeting (AGM) and the AGMs of your regional

and specialized syndicates, which will take place in February and March. These meetings are intended not only to give an update on the progress made in 2016, but also to provide a platform for discussing the issues that will be important in the coming months. Your participa-

tion is crucial to the success of our work and helps ensure that our initiatives improve the business environment for the grain sector. Please visit www.pgq.ca to find out the date of your regional syndicate AGM.

Enjoy the meetings!

The February USDA supply and demand report



At first glance, the US supply and demand dispositions are basically unchanged for corn and soybeans, with the exception of a 25 million bu (Mbu) increase in corn use for ethanol production. The market was expecting higher US corn and soybean 2016-17 export forecasts as sales commitments through January are significantly higher than a year ago. But the USDA left the estimates unchanged as competition from expected record South American exports will limit US shipments over the remainder of the year. On the other hand, US wheat exports were raised by 50 Mbu, resulting in a 4 per cent decrease in 2017 US wheat stocks.

Midpoint grain price forecasts are unchanged from last month for corn (US\$3.40/bu FOB farm) and soybeans (US\$9.50/bu), and are up by 5 ¢ for wheat at US\$3.85/bu.

The international grain outlook is improved from January. Although they are still higher than the 2016 levels, world 2017 stocks have been revised lower for the three major grains. Stocks are forecast at 248.6 million tons (MT) of wheat (-4.7 MT), 217.6 MT of corn (-3.4 MT) and 80.4 MT of soybeans (-1.9 MT).

Over the next few weeks, the USDA will hold its annual Agricultural Outlook Forum that will provide the first 2017-18 forecasts, and the size of the South American soybean crops will be known. Then the market will wait for the March 31 US seeding intentions that will set the table for the spring.



Generally speaking, it seems that there is better transfer and greater uptake of knowledge in the grain sector if two conditions are met: research meets the specific needs of users, and producers play an active role in giving direction to research activities.



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.



Young Farmers



Shaina Hayes
Columnist

Jackie Lamb (30) and Shawn McNamee (29) got their start in organic sheep farming in 2011. The couple began their operation alongside Lamb's family's existing grain-fed veal production in Godmanchester, Quebec. Together, Jackie, Shawn, Carolyn and David (Jackie's parents) began converting much of the farm's infrastructure to sheep production, and they began installing fencing that would facilitate their now-impressive rotational grazing system. Today, the farm is host to 230 organic Rideau-Arcott ewes averaging 2.3 lambs to market, and still maintains a dozen head of organic beef cattle. The family raises organic corn, soy, barley, hay and pasture for cash crops and their own livestock feed, and also partners with an organic flour mill, Valgrain.

When asked about the main challenges they were faced with during the farm's infancy, Lamb and McNamee point to the veal-lamb transition. "In our experience, veal production is all about weight gain and health maintenance, while we feel that lamb production is dealing with births and udders. Weight gain and feed conversion are also very important [in lamb production], but the first two days of a lamb's life will most likely determine the health and growth for the next year." This meant that lambing season would require a kind of diligence and attention that the two had not quite anticipated. The recent sudden loss of Lamb's father, David, a key partner in the business, was also a major challenge for these farmers. This said, Jackie, Shawn and Carolyn have persevered and are now beginning to grow the farm. In the last two years, they have purchased 50 additional acres of pasture and 30 of tillable land (bringing them to a total of 300 acres), and also hope to increase to 300 ewes in the coming years.

Shawn graduated from McGill with a B.Sc. in Environmental Biology, and Jackie has a DEP in Wildlife Management and studied Agricultural Sciences with a specialization in Ecological Agriculture. Lamb points to her love of country living and the farming lifestyle as having drawn her back to the farm, and Shawn's love of the outdoors played a big role in his deci-

Young farmers: Jackie Lamb and Shawn McNamee



Jackie Lamb displays her farm's rotational fencing system to a group of Macdonald Campus students.

sion. It is clear in the way that these young farmers approach their farm and the resources they depend on that their respective educations have helped them strive for an ecologically responsible production system. This is apparent in the fact that the farm adheres to organic regulations, but also in its use of the

A final feature of these ambitious young farmers is their desire and willingness to share their knowledge and the inner workings of their business with those interested in agriculture.

rotational grazing system. This practice of regularly moving the sheep through a highly organized system of temporarily sectioned-off pastures not only maintains soil and pasture health by preventing under and over-grazing, but can be an effective tool in minimizing livestock pests and parasites that can take refuge in the pastures. Creating specific time intervals between full rotations allows the sheep to avoid these parasites at certain stages in their lifecycles, and it also allows the pasture to grow back to an ideal height before being re-grazed, ultimately minimizing the need for anthelmintics (parasiticides) and synthetic crop inputs.

When asked about how they feel Canadian agriculture has changed for our generation, increases in technology and paperwork take precedence for this couple. "With the internet available 24/7, information about markets, machinery prices, seeding rates, global weather and animal health is only a click

away. This all helps with decision making and hopefully farm viability." While they acknowledge the benefit of many of the regulations and ministries that they deal with, like most farmers today, Jackie and Shawn cannot help but lament the volume of paperwork that comes with it! They also state, "We see the availability and viability of different crops in our area due to plant breeding and global climate change as a major game changer as compared to two generations ago when the crop rotation was much different than it is today." In looking towards the future of agriculture, the two anticipate and hope for innovation from both larger and smaller players. "Monsanto

and BASF have some great products and their R&D sector is amazing. However, I hope that small-scale and organic agriculture can continue to grow and influence the way farming can be done."

A final feature of these ambitious young farmers is their desire and willingness to share their knowledge and the inner workings of their business with those interested in agriculture. The couple often gives tours to groups of students from various agricultural classes at Macdonald Campus, teaching them about the ins and outs of organic sheep production. Having been a student in a handful of these tours, I can speak to the devotion and patience that these two farmers exude, as well as the thoughtfulness that goes into all that they do. Jackie and Shawn's advice to new farmers is this: "Talk to a fiscalist, notary and your FADQ liaison. We found these people to be very helpful and honest. If they feel your plans will not work, they will let you know! No rose-coloured glasses in those offices."

The majority of the lambs produced at Jackie, Shawn and Carolyn's farm are available through Les Fermes Valens. For more information, you can visit their website: www.fermesvalens.com.



Leilak Anderson
Certified Arborist
Advocate Arboriculture Columnist

Using trees effectively for buffer zones

Why do farmers often wear suspenders? Because they forget about their tree belts!

Trees and farmers have a dynamic relationship, whether it's working from virgin land that must be cleared for fields, to fully developed and functioning farms that work with and around woody plants. When strategically planted or left standing in belts along contours perpendicular to prevailing winds, tree canopies are natural wind breaks that protect soil from erosion, moderate soil temperature and relative humidity, and improve snow distribution, while the roots work to maintain soil integrity and absorb pollutants and runoff.

On the flip side, trees negatively affect crop yields. Tall canopies win competition for sunlight and cast shade, while wide and deep root systems win water wars with surrounding vegetation. Researchers have been experimenting with tree buffers in order to gain maximum benefits while maintaining precious crop yields. Tree root pruning has been effective only with underground

competition, as shade remains a problem for nearby crops.

Following extensive research, scientists at the University of Missouri have found that creating a buffer zone between trees and prized crops is the most effective way to maximize the benefits of tree belts. For instance, corn

performs poorly when planted directly alongside trees, but soybeans seemed unaffected. The buffer zone did depend on the height of the trees, so for 20-foot high canopies, researchers suggest a buffer of 6 to 9 feet wide of hardy vegetation between the main crop. Ideally, farmers can plant a buffer crop that can

still produce income while allowing the trees to provide all the protection benefits for soil and main crop yields, especially if acreage space is an issue.


Leilak is the 2016 North American tree-climbing champion, and proudly represents Quebec in the international arborist scene. Leilak runs a tree-care company in the Outaouais and National Capital Region. When he's not climbing trees, he's a volunteer firefighter. You can read more of his articles at www.leilak.info

Researchers have been experimenting with tree buffers in order to gain maximum benefits while maintaining precious crop yields.



Tree belts help above and below ground: canopies provide natural wind breaks while roots maintain soil integrity and absorb pollutants.

This vegetable farmer has planted a row of small cedars that may take a while to grow, but will create a great barrier in the future.



**Les Producteurs
de lait du Québec**

FEBRUARY 2017

	Nombre	kg de MG/jour
Offers to sell		
Total	149	951.4
Eligible for allocation	149	951.4
Successful	149	951.4
Reserve		
Quantity purchased (-)/ sold (+)		+ 1.3
Offers to buy		
Total	879	7,783.7
Eligible for allocation	878	7,769.3
Successful	878	952.7

Participation on a prorata basis in any unprocessed offer to purchase equal to or higher than 0.9 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
4	51.7		< 24 000.00	1	14.4
145	899.7	951.4	24,000.00 ceiling price	878	7,769.3

ALLOCATION TO BUYERS AND SELLERS

	Number	kg of BF/day	%
Buyers			
Startup Assistance Program	1	14.5	1.5
Holding of less than 12 kg of BF/day	2	0.5	0.1
Reimbursement of startup loans	10	1.0	0.1
Iteration (0.6 kg of BF/day)	875	504.9	53.1
Prorata (5.96%)	771	431.8	45.2
12.26% of the offers have been processed		952.7	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	149	951.4	100.0
100.00% of the offers have been processed	149	951.4	100.0

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QFA celebrates 60 years

QFA is celebrating its diamond anniversary this year, and we have a wealth of old photos sitting in the vault. Not wishing these to remain unseen, every month of our jubilee we will be publishing a collage of bygone days.

To encourage our sense of community, every month we are offering readers one free membership every month for the best story that tells us about one of the images. Stories will be entered into a draw to receive a free membership and the story will be published in forthcoming issues of the *Advocate*.

To share your story and be entered into the draw, please contact us: qfa@upa.qc.ca or 450-679-0540 Ext. 8536



*"Erskine McClintock cutting hay."
We have no record of the date, but it certainly
looks like a great cropping year.*



*We have no information about this photo on file, but felt it was
such a great shot we would include it this month anyway.*



*From the vault. The only
note we have on the back of
this image is "Gord Hardy
of 'Voice of the Farmer'."
It looks like a trial or an
interview. We are not sure
about the where or when,
but thought it might jog
some memories amongst
members.*



*Here's a great shot from 1982 showing Doug Griffith, and Angus and Helen
Mackinnon at a 'Pre-Riggery' BBQ at the Mackinnon Farm.*



*This photo from 1997 shows a couple of young lads messing around at one of the local
Eastern Township fairs – Andrew Carigan-Jackson (then aged 4) from Greenwood,
Nova Scotia, and Christopher Soles (then aged 6) from West Brome.*

Highway regulations and farm machinery on the road

Dougal Rattray

There was a strong turnout on February 2 for the Forum on highway regulations and farm machinery on the road. Final numbers are still coming in, but indications suggest that there were over 60 farmers in attendance. Highway officers from Contrôle routier Québec, Marc Côté and Mario Sekinger, came armed with an array of various codes, guides and regulations, as well as their own personal experiences and knowledge. They gave an extremely informative talk. Questions were tabled and attention was drawn to recently introduced regulations.

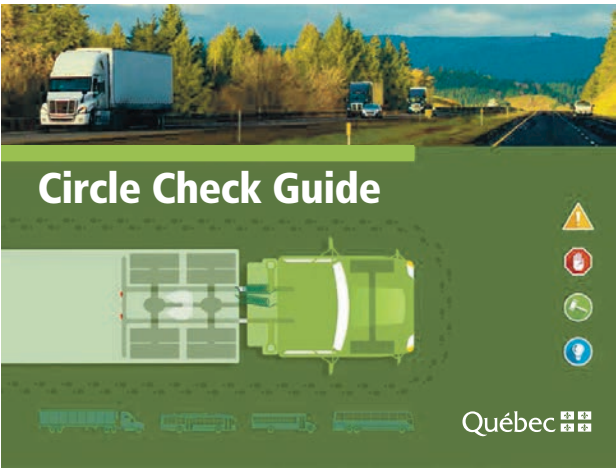
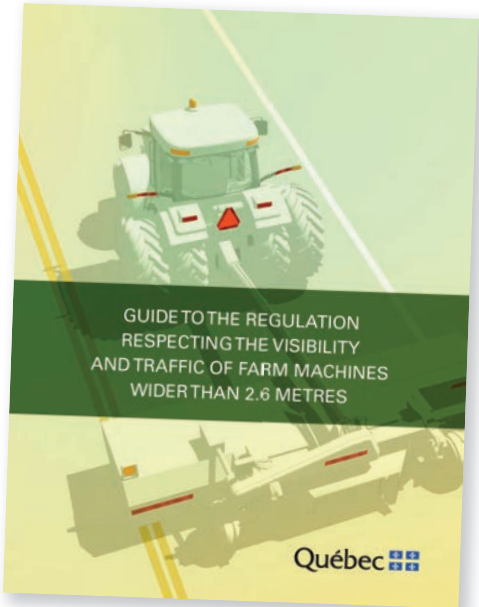
The new “circle check,” which targets heavy vehicles, came into effect November 20, 2016. Defects related mainly to brakes, tires, wheels and coupling devices are a determining factor in more than 10 per

cent of heavy vehicle accidents and also cause a significant loss of productivity in the transportation industry. Most of those defects could have been detected during a proper inspection of the vehicle before it was used. Before getting behind the wheel, drivers must make sure that a circle check of their vehicle was completed within the previous 24 hours. Either the driver or a person designated by the operator must perform the vehicle inspection in order to ensure that it complies with the standards.

The purpose of the circle check is to ensure that:

- the principle components of the vehicle are in good condition;
- the vehicle’s owner and operator are informed of the repairs to be made; and
- no vehicles with major defects are operated on public roads and highways.

The ultimate objective is to improve safety for all road users.



- Road vehicles, whether they are independent, trailed or not, must not exceed 19 metres measuring bumper to bumper.

The message received from Côté and Sekinger was to familiarize yourself with the various regulations. If highway officers are treated with polite respect, this attitude will be reciprocated in most cases.

Clearly, the information regarding farm vehicles and machinery on the road is exhaustive. If you wish to learn more about the new regulations or farm machinery on the road, please visit the following websites:

<https://saaq.gouv.qc.ca/en/transportation-goods/heavy-vehicles/mechanical-inspection-and-maintenance/safety-standards-road-vehicles/circle-check/>

<https://saaq.gouv.qc.ca/en/saaq/documents/publications/sujet-document/279/>



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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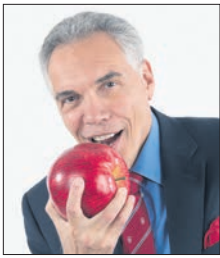
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- voting privileges at the QFA Annual General Meeting

Quebec Farmers' Association
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Longueuil, Quebec J4H 4E7
Receipts are issued upon request. Memberships are valid for 12 months from month of purchase.

Signature



Separating sense and non-sense



Dr. Joe Schwarcz
Scientist and author

*"O sleep! O gentle sleep!
Nature's soft nurse, how have
I frightened thee,
That thou no more wilt weigh
my eyelids down
And steep my senses in forgetfulness?"*

Henry IV, Part II is not one of the Bard's most memorable plays. I think it once lulled me to sleep. But these lines speak of insomnia, a common problem that begs for a solution. There is no shortage of advice. Count sheep. Drink warm milk. Feast on turkey. Take melatonin pills. Mix up a drink from a special powdered blend of pumpkin seeds and dextrose. Relax on a Polar Power Mega-Field Slumber Pad designed by Dr. William Philpott, whose last name rhymes with a term that can be used to describe his ideas about treating disease.

Virtually all diseases, Philpott maintained before he left us, could be managed or reversed with magnet therapy. Of course you had to have the right type of magnet. Only those that were capable of producing a "negative magnetic field" were therapeutic since "only these can promote an oxygen-alkaline rich environment within the body." That environment doesn't come cheap. Philpott's miraculous pads are still being sold for hundreds of dollars. But instead of focusing on the claptrap of negative magnetic fields, let's look at something that may actually have a positive effect. Like that mixture of pumpkin seed powder and dextrose.

First we need to do a little travelling back in time to the 1970s and the lab of MIT neuroscience professor Richard Wurtman. Unlike Philpott's random ramblings, Dr. Wurtman's research is backed by hundreds of peer-reviewed publications that have established him

O Sleep! O Gentle Sleep

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 so-called "alternative facts." In an effort to provide science-based, balanced content that values a healthy public discourse, the Advocate is publishing extracts from scientist and educator Dr. Joe Schwarcz. We hope you enjoy this thought-provoking read.

as one of the world's leading authorities on chemical activity in the central nervous system. It was Wurtman who demonstrated that levels of the neurotransmitter serotonin in the brain respond to dietary manipulation. This is important because higher serotonin levels have been linked with anti-anxiety effects, appetite suppression and sleep enhancement.

Serotonin is formed inside cells from the amino acid tryptophan, a component of most dietary proteins. When tryptophan-containing food is coupled with a source of carbohydrates, levels of tryptophan in the brain, and consequently serotonin, will rise. However, while serotonin may have a calming effect, it doesn't actually induce sleep.

But the hormone melatonin does! And it is made in the brain's pineal gland from serotonin. This reaction, however, is inefficient as long as the eyes are stim-

ulated by light. But with darkness, conversion of serotonin to melatonin begins and drowsiness sets in. The formula for sleep would then appear to be coupling darkness with a source of tryptophan and a carbohydrate that stimulates quick insulin release.

Wurtman's research prompted Canadian psychiatrist Dr. Craig Hudson to investigate the possibility of a commercial product designed to increase melatonin levels. He knew that melatonin supplements were available, but evidence indicated that when taken in a pill form, the hormone has a short half-life. Hudson's idea was to try to induce a normal sleeping pattern with a more continuous release of melatonin. First, he needed a good source of tryptophan and found it in pumpkin seeds. He then mixed the powdered seeds with glucose, the archetypal insulin releaser. A bit of natural lemon or chocolate flavor, and Zenbev

sleep-enhancer was born. It hit the market after a double-blind placebo-controlled clinical trial showed that subjects with sleep problems were able to reduce the time spent awake during the night.

And if Zenbev doesn't lull you to sleep, you can indulge in a cup of decaffeinated Counting Sheep Coffee. It contains valerian root extract, which does have a history of use as a sedative. As far as this coffee goes, however, we just have to take the marketer's word for its sleep-inducing effect. That, though, coupled with an appearance on television's *Dragon's Den*, seems to have been enough to perk up sales. And that should make the investors in Counting Sheep Coffee sleep better.

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.



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Membership


Are you a QFA member?

Files show that there are around 1,500 English-speaking farmers paying their dues to the UPA. ALL 1,500 receive the *Advocate*. There are around 450 members of QFA who contribute to the organization which helps to produce and deliver the *Advocate* and support other services. If you do not currently contribute to the QFA, please consider becoming a member. A little goes a long way.

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


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



QFA IS RECRUITING

SUMMER STUDENT EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY



POSITION: Memberships and Events Assistant

Duration: 15 weeks

Wage: \$12 per hour, 30 hours per week

Start and End Dates: May 8 - August 25, 2017, with first week of July off

Deadline for Applications: Friday, March 31, 2017

Applicants must be eligible for Service Canada's Canada Summer Jobs program.

Self-motivated, discrete, enthusiastic and confident, candidates must be intuitive communicators with pleasant, respectful and polite manners, have Microsoft Office experience and have positive, professional attitudes.

Demonstrating strong communication abilities, the successful applicant will be a team player, but also have the aptitude for working on his/her own. Capacity in English and French language is sought. Ideally, you will work from the QFA office in the Maison UPA in Longueuil.

The Membership and Events Assistant will have three principal duties:

- Help design, conduct and analyze questionnaire phone surveys with QFA's constituency and report on findings.
- Collaborate with QFA's executive director and team to produce promotional and resource materials for its videoconferencing Forum program, identifying partners and building target groups.
- Collaborate with QFA's executive director and team to plan and support QFA's Information Day/ Annual General Meeting and other events.

Please send a CV with covering letter demonstrating how and why you would be a good candidate for this position.

Write *QFA Summer Employment – Memberships and Events Assistant* in the subject line.

qfa@upa.qc.ca

For further enquiry please call: 450-679-0540 Ext. 8536

POSITION: Summer Journalist

Duration: 15 weeks

Wage: \$12 per hour, 30 hours per week

Start and End Dates: May 8 - August 25, 2017, with first week of July off

Deadline for Applications: Friday, March 31, 2017

Applicants must be eligible for Service Canada's Canada Summer Jobs program.

Self-motivated, discrete, respectful and confident, candidates will possess strong interpersonal skills on the phone and be able to gain the trust of interviewees remotely. You will display a talent for writing and have a polite, professional manner. A background in agriculture or familiarity with the rural linguistic minority community is an asset.

You will be a team player, but also have the aptitude for working on your own. Capacity in English and French language is sought. There is flexibility in your working location. You will need high-speed internet access and your own computer.

The *Quebec Farmers' Advocate* is an award-winning newspaper that has been in circulation for over 35 years. We work closely with other English-language community publications and the French-language weekly *La Terre de chez nous*. This position is an ideal way to gain experience in community reporting and agricultural news.

The summer journalist will have four principal duties:

- Research and interview agricultural producers by phone and write profile articles on their history, life, family and farm business.
- Write informative feature profile articles on other linguistic minority and community groups.
- Research, interview and write stories on local and regional supply-chain businesses within Quebec.
- Gather photos and other visual aids to illustrate articles for publication.

Please send a CV with covering letter demonstrating how and why you would be a good candidate for this position.

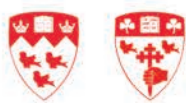
Write *QFA Summer Employment – Summer Journalist* in the subject line.

qfa@upa.qc.ca

For further enquiry please call: 450-679-0540 Ext. 8536

Macdonald

Reports



Flurry of events kick off winter semester

Caitlin MacDougall
Liaison Officer,
Farm Management and
Technology Program

Woodsmen teams compete at Mac

Macdonald Campus was a hub of activity and open to visitors almost continuously for the period between the end of January and the beginning of February. The 57th Annual Macdonald Campus Woodsmen Competition was held on campus on Saturday, January 28, with about 125 competitors, including visitors from Dalhousie University (NS), University of New Brunswick (NB), Fleming College and Algonquin College (ON), and Dartmouth College in Maine. A total of 21 teams participated in the competition, with one jack and jill (mixed), two men's and two women's teams for McGill. Hundreds of spectators watched as students threw axes, chopped and sawed logs, climbed poles and raced on snowshoes. These athletes compete in a variety of individual, pair, and team events, with a total of 14 events to complete per team. Congratulations go out to the McGill A women's team, which solidified its #1 ranking in the Canadian Intercollegiate Lumberjacking Association (CILA), with another strong win at the Macdonald competition. The men's A team placed fifth in the competition.

Open house at Mac Farm

The days leading up to Friday, February 3, were frenetic at the Macdonald Campus Farm, as staff and volunteers cleaned and clipped cows and prepared the facilities to welcome visitors during the Holstein Quebec Congress, which was hosted this year by the Montreal-Vaudreuil-Soulanges Holstein Club. During the day of February 3, hundreds of Holstein enthusiasts and students toured the dairy facilities and learned about ongoing dairy research at



For the top individual judges, McGill's Jos  anne Naud (centre) came second overall. Christian Molgat, course lecturer, presented the awards.

the farm. Macdonald was one of nine farms that opened its doors for the event. Always the gracious host, the farm offered attendees a free lunch consisting of a delicious chili made from ground beef raised on the farm and cooked by McGill's executive chef for Food & Dining Services, Oliver de Volpi.

Mac Judging Competition

The following day, Saturday, February 4, was the annual Macdonald Campus Intercollegiate Judging Competition, which saw 80 competitors from universities and 4-H clubs converge on campus. Twenty teams participated, which was the same as in 2016. Collegial contes-

tants hailed from Dalhousie University (NS), the University of Guelph (ON), and from Universit   Laval in Quebec City.

This event is coordinated by the Macdonald Livestock and Judging Club, which receives sponsorships and assistance from faculty groups and industry partners. Students organize this event, with support from teaching and administrative staff in the faculty and at the Mac Farm.

4-H Clubs from Shawville, Richmond and Hatley were represented in their category.

There were 14 classes to judge, divided into the Crops and Animal sections. These included: dairy cows, turkeys,

sheep, miniature horses, reigning saddles, footprint identification, an agricultural quiz, maple syrup, paintings, wine labels, apples, high-moisture corn, herb identification, and artisanal cutting boards. Six of the classes required members to also provide their reasons for their placings by presenting their arguments in front of a judge, for additional points. Each class is timed, with only 12 minutes to judge before moving on to the next class. While some classes, like dairy cows or sheep, are more common, the essential lessons of judging can be applied to any subject, whether it is paintings, wine labels or cutting boards. Participants evaluate each of the four items in a class with a critical eye, deciding which items deserve to be placed at the top and bottom of the class, based on selection criteria or true type descriptions.

The skills learned through judging can then be applied in real life situations – when deciding which steaks or vegetables to buy when grocery shopping, or selecting the next herd sire. Public speaking skills are also highly transferable and highly valued in the workplace. If you can clearly and confidently justify your reasons, you are a valuable employee.

Judging results

Results from the day were quickly tabulated, and ribbons, certificates and trophies were presented at the awards banquet. For the crops division team winners, Axes n' Horses placed first, followed closely by Don't Judge Me I'm Drunk (DJMID). The Livestock division team winners were Dal 2, followed by teams from Guelph and Laval universities. Four of McGill's judging teams placed in the top 10 overall – Ketsia and the Single Ladies (10), Les Mauvais Herbes (8), Axes n' Horses (4) and Don't Judge Me I'm Drunk (2), with only 34 points separating the second and first place teams. Dal 2 went home with top honours and their name on the Macdonald Judging Club Trophy.

For individual points, three Mac students and one alumnus also placed in the top 10 – Bobby Tolhurst (10), Ketsia Croteau (7), Andrew Boersen (4) and Jos  anne Naud (2). Naud was only 10 points behind the Dalhousie University student who came first overall.

The next competitions students in the Mac Judging Club will attend are those hosted by Dalhousie University in Truro, NS, and the University of Guelph in Guelph, ON, both in March.



The McGill B women's team was one of 21 teams that competed in the Macdonald Woodsmen Competition on Saturday, January 28, 2017.



Eighty participants competed in this year's Judging Competition, which saw university and 4-H teams judge 14 classes in animal and crop divisions on February 4, 2017.



Four producers, four views on replacement animals

Mario Séguin, Dairy Production Expert – Milk Recording and Data Management

Déborah Santschi, Ph.D., Agr., Nutrition and Management Expert. Valacta's Research and Development Team.

A panel discussion on rearing replacement animals was organized by Valacta and Holstein Québec as part of the Supreme Dairy Show held last November, in Saint-Hyacinthe. The four producers, introduced below, presented differing views on the subject. Here is what they had to say.

Our four panelists:

Amélie Tremblay owns Ferme Barjo, in the Charlevoix region, with her partner Dominique Bard. Their 75-head herd includes 38 milking cows and 32 heifers. Production is now at 12,555 kg of milk, with 4.1 per cent fat and 3.3 per cent protein. Replacement animals are selected through a rigorous process using the genetic tools available. Their goal is to rear just enough heifers to renew the herd without having to buy replacement animals.

Thierry Jatton and his partner Véronique Guay are joint owners of Ferme Provetaz, located in Compton, in the Eastern Townships. The 132 milking cows in their 290-head herd produce 11,100 kg of milk, with 4.0 per cent fat and 3.3 per cent protein. Mr. Jatton rears almost all of the heifers born on the farm. Every year, he sells about 40 milking

cows to other producers.

Raphaël Beauchemin is a third-generation owner of the family operation J. N. Beauchemin, in Saint-Ours, in the Montérégie region. The farm's 240 cows, housed in free stalls, produce 11,934 kg of milk (3 milkings/day), with 3.8 per cent fat and 3.2 per cent protein. Raphaël has diversified the operation with field crops and contract work and has a strong focus on herd management and heifer selection.

Caroline Martel is one of four shareholders of Ferme des Grandes Baies, in Plaisance, in the Outaouais region. She and her partner, Sylvain Mondou, are in the process of acquiring the farm from the Guindon family who wished to succeed the farm to non-family members. To ensure the viability of their project, the couple decided not to raise replacement animals, opting instead to purchase young cows on the basis of strict criteria. They are thus able to focus their attention on milk production, which currently exceeds 12,000 kg.

Q: How do you select your animals?

Caroline: We generally buy young cows in their first lacta-

tion, at about 30 days in milk. They have to have calved at 25 months or younger, and they must have conceived at first service, because it's a good indicator of future fertility. We do a CMT on all new cows as soon as they enter the herd. To keep their spot in the barn, our cows have to produce at least 1.2 kg of fat per day; otherwise they're out.

Thierry: We select our heifers at breeding time. They are either bred for their genetics or used as embryo recipients. Sire selection is based on LPI, and I only choose among those with the highest health and fertility indexes. For conformation, my criteria are at least +12 for proven bulls and +15 for genomic sires. We use a proportion of 70 per cent genomic bulls to 30 per cent proven. We've gone back to using sexed semen because there are better bulls available and fertility is improving.

Amélie: I select the dams at breeding time. As for sires, I rely on the insemination centre's program. My two main criteria are high productivity and fertility. I have all the heifers genotyped at birth.

Raphaël: We select our cows at breeding time, so about 20-30 per cent of them aren't bred, particularly those with a low Pro\$ index. We only use genomic sires, and we favour bulls

with good indexes for fertility, health and lifetime. Heifers are serviced with sexed semen, and we use a maximum of 10 sires per proof.

Q: Can you explain what sets you apart in your rearing costs?

Thierry: Our variable costs seem higher due to the genetic value of our calves, in addition to forage and reproduction costs. We have good equipment, which reduces our labour requirements.

Amélie: Our rearing costs are a little higher due to expenses for milk, concentrates and labour. Our focus on good feeding and management for our yearling heifers pays off because they calve young and produce well right from their first lactation.

Raphaël: Our housing costs are higher with our modern facilities. On the other hand, our workforce is more efficient and motivated because the environment is more pleasant.

Caroline: Buying for \$4,000 or rearing for \$3,500: it doesn't matter to me as long as I can get what I want when I want it. Since our arrival on the farm, we've replaced about 50 cows in the herd with animals we've bought, and the culling rate has dropped considerably as a result.

Q: Culling has a significant effect on the net cost of a new cow. Can you explain your situation?

Thierry: Our high sales/culling rate is strongly influenced by our sales of milking cows, and that income greatly reduces the net cost of a new cow in our herd.

Amélie: With the culling rate of our cows at about 20 per cent, the net cost of a new cow is near average of all dairy herds.

Raphaël: Our investments in heifer rearing result in lower costs. Our involuntary culling rate has decreased over the last two years, and we're now able to keep our cows in production longer.

Caroline: After acquiring shares in the farm, we intentionally culled the ordinary cows from the herd. Buying young cows has significantly reduced our culling rate. Both the culling rate and the net cost of a new cow should continue to decrease.

Q: Considering your goals, what makes your strategy successful?

Caroline: Biweekly preventive medicine visits and milk recording 12 times a year are essential. Despite the drop in the price of milk last summer, we haven't cut any of the services from our veterinarian or our Valacta advisor.

Thierry: We try to control everything without doing anything special. Calf care is important, and it's imperative to choose genetics that improve productivity.

Amélie: It's important to listen to one's advisors. Strict management and monitoring heifer growth are essential. We take very good care of our calves at birth, feeding colostrum as soon as possible. It's important not to put things off.

Raphaël: Only raise the best heifers and aim to raise them at the lowest cost possible. Our new buildings make us more efficient, because we're able to monitor feeding and growth more closely.

* This is a shortened version of an article that was originally published in the French Edition of *Progressive Dairyman Canada*, January 2017.



Amélie Tremblay (Ferme Barjo), Thierry Jatton (Ferme Provetaz), Caroline Martel (Ferme des Grandes Baies), Raphaël Beauchemin (J.N. Beauchemin), Roxanne Montplaisir (Holstein Québec Advisor) and Déborah Santschi (Nutrition and Management Expert at Valacta).

Heritage



Emily Southwood
Freelance writer

Collage artist Alyson Champ thought she was asking a simple question when she went to the COOP to inquire about buying laying hens. Alyson grew up on an acreage family farm near Howick,

Rare Beasts: Bringing attention to endangered farm animals

QC, that had always raised chickens, ducks and geese. The breeds that she recalled from her childhood were Barred Plymouth Rocks, Rhode Island Reds, Light Sussex and Jersey Giants. "I thought these were normal breeds of barnyard chickens," Alyson says. "But when I asked the man at the COOP about a Rhode Island Red, he said, 'Madame, the hens are brown, white and black.'" He explained that they were all hybrid birds, bred for production. She went on to ask where one could acquire the old-fashioned farm breeds that people used to have—where had they gone? He explained that she'd need to find a specialty breeder.

Not too long after, Alyson received an issue of the *Advocate* with a copy of *Rare Breeds Canada* tucked inside it. It was all about endangered farm animals and birds. She hadn't realized that this was an issue. Alyson went on the website rarebreedsCanada.org and was astounded by the number of farm animals that were listed as endangered and in critical numbers. She was also surprised to see breeds she considered common like Clydesdales, Canadienne cows and Cotswold Sheep. Troubled by this revelation, she came up with the idea of drawing attention to these endangered



Artist Alyson Champ in her studio.

farm animals through her medium of painted paper collage.

Alyson is an acclaimed collage artist who has largely depicted subjects from her rural community. Alyson studied painting and drawing at Vanier College, The Saidye Bronfman School of Fine Art and Concordia University, and now works from her farmhouse studio and teaches art in the Chateauguay Valley. For the *Rare Beasts* project, Alyson is creating 20 painted paper collages. The original artworks will be exhibited to stimulate a cultural conversation about this important issue. Texts with information about the rare animals will accompany each original artwork and a bestiary, or book, will also be produced and sold. The *Rare Beasts* project is being funded by le Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec (CALQ) and la Conférence régionale des élus de la Vallée-du-Haut-Saint-Laurent (CRÉ).

Endangered is not a word that many people associate with farm animals, but Alyson wants to encourage us to make the connection. "Think about how many types of cows you relate to milk production: surely Holsteins and Ayrshires?" Alyson says. "But have you ever heard of a Lynch Lineback?" The critically endangered breed, though smaller than her counterparts, is an extremely hearty animal that lives a long milk-producing life.

Alyson wants to call attention to the fact that the current global and industrialized nature of our food production has limited the diversity of breeds. She

explains the implications: "Since we don't know what our future agricultural needs will be, we can't predict what we will lose in the traits of these animals. Large-breasted, commercially sold turkeys are too big to mate naturally. By contrast, the Ridley Bronze Turkey is a hearty, cold-withstanding bird that reproduces and forages. Climate change is real and it's happening. I think perhaps we've gotten so comfortable that we don't even see it happening."

Alyson has more animals to choose from than she could have imagined for her 20 artworks. Thus far she's featured two equine breeds, including a regal Clydesdale from the Ormstown area that calls attention to the fact that horses are animals that have largely lost their function in the world of today. If these breeds cease to exist, we will also be losing part of our cultural heritage in vulnerable animals like the Canadian horses that fought and died in great numbers during wartime.

As much as possible, Alyson is trying to work from her own photographs of local animals. As her project has progressed, she's received a great response from the conservation and farming community, alerting her to the many fascinating breeds with dwindling numbers. Alyson can be found blogging about her ongoing project at: <http://rare-beastsproject.alysenchamp.com/rare-beasts/>. The final 20 collages of *Rare Beasts* will ultimately be seen throughout exhibitions in the Vallée-du-Haut-Saint-Laurent region.



NEWS RELEASE NOTICE TO AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS

Regarding dues to the Union des producteurs agricoles

UPA dues for 2017 have been set at \$336 for individual producers and \$672 for undivided co-owners (joint ownerships) and multiple-owner farms (corporation, partnership, association, trust, etc.).

The UPA dues will be deducted from milk producers' last pay in January. For milk producers who pay the equivalent of two fees (\$672), an additional deduction will be made on the final pay in February. Other producers will receive a notice through the mail in the near future.

The dues are used to finance a portion of the organization's union activities and are allocated as follows:

Local syndicate:	7.05%
Regional federation:	38.25%
Confederation:	54.70%

For any further information, please contact your regional UPA federation.

Denis Corbeil
Information Technology and Membership
Dues Director

N.B.: GST (5%) and QST (9.975%).
Eligible producers may reclaim these
taxes from the Minister of Revenue

Notice: This news release does not replace the official version of the Règlement sur les catégories de producteurs, leur représentation et leur cotisation annuelle à l'Union des producteurs agricoles. It is the only legally valid version and may be consulted at the Publications du Québec website.

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Colour matters

Cynthia Gunn
QFA's Food Writer

The market is replete with food that is not the colour it seems. Usually, it is dyed to mimic the real food it is replacing, but sometimes just to fit what has become a cultural norm. It seems our brains have a hard time dissociating colour from taste.

Factory-farmed salmon is naturally grey because they are not dining on krill and shrimp, which turns wild salmon's flesh pink. What to do? Dye the feed given to farmed salmon. Market research has shown that we just will not accept grey salmon. Most oranges have green skins, depending where they're grown and what time of year they're harvested. Lime juice is a yellowy-green. If you are used to dyed lime products, you may approach a yellowy key lime pie with trepidation. If you are used to lime products without dye, you'll approach bright green lime sherbet with trepidation.

How colour affects appetite is "directly related to experience, expectations, associations, cultural norms and fashions," explains Chris Lukehurst, head of research at the Marketing Clinic. If you get people to eat a dyed blue steak in the dark, says Charles Spence, an Oxford experimental psychologist, "they think it's normal, then you turn the lights up and show them the colour, some will get up and be sick straight away."

The producers of margarine were well aware of the effect colour had on the brain and our sense of taste, even if they didn't have the science or research to back it up. Margarine—invented in 1869 in France, unbelievably, land of beautiful butter—was white, and many people found it unappealing as it looked more like lard than butter. This played into the hands of dairy producers, who understandably saw a threat to their butter product. Vociferous lobbying by dairy producers resulted in various laws being passed in the US and Canada prohibiting the colouring of margarine. Some states even went further, requiring that it be dyed pink, though this extreme law didn't last long. Meanwhile, in Canada, margarine was outright prohibited from 1886 to 1948, though this ban was temporarily lifted from 1917 until 1923 due to dairy shortages.

The 1902 tax increase on margarine together with restrictions on margarine colour in the US cut annual consumption from 120,000,000 to 48,000,000 pounds. Clearly, looks matter. By the mid-1950s, most of these colour laws had been repealed in the US. Canada held out longer, with colour restrictions on margarine in most provinces lasting until the 1980s. Quebec was the longest holdout, managing to prohibit the colouring of margarine until July 2008.

On a recent episode of *The Nature of Things*, psychologist Spence managed to fool almost everyone. He confused them by putting the "wrong" colour with a particular flavour in the test drinks, such as blue apple juice. I decided to try a similar experiment.

When my 8- and 11-year-old daughters came home from school, along with another willing 8-year-old subject, I experimented on them. I made a peach smoothie and "dyed" it red with a single raspberry. They all guessed it was strawberry or raspberry. I then made a lemon smoothie, using some vanilla ice cream for the sweetener. I added green food colouring so that the result was a pale green. They guessed kiwi, grape, avocado and zucchini. Poor things, what did they think I was inflicting on them? Lemon simply did not equate with the colour green. It seems that we'll taste what we expect.

My favourite trick is white carrots. Or at least it tricks my kids, who insist that they hate cooked carrots. I have found if I use white carrots in soup, however, they don't detect that it's carrot. I don't ask them what they think it is or I'll raise their suspicions and be foiled, no doubt.

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.



Don't be fooled by the colours!

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Quebec women's institute

A 70th anniversary for the Fordyce Women's Institute

Cynthia Jackson
QWI Vice President

Seated at the head table for this special event were: Linda Hoy, FWIC President; Sheila Needham, Canada Area President, Associated Country Women of the World; Elizabeth Milroy, QWI President Elect; Joyce Martin, QWI Secretary; June Lamey, Fordyce Treasurer; Michel Charbonneau, Pro-May, City of Cowansville; Anne Stairs, Principal, Heroes' Memorial School; and "yours truly," QWI past President and Fordyce President. Judy Page Jones, QWI President, was also present, but occupied with the catering. Following a bountiful turkey dinner, we were treated to musical entertainment by the talented Heroes' Memorial Elementary School Band and Choir. The children, from grades two to seven, received a standing ovation and members were delighted with their talent.

Fordyce Branch was "born" on November 27, 1946, and our first president was Mrs. Amy Hooper. Over the years we have supported our local hospital in many ways: money donations, knitting and sewing cancer hats and baby layettes, and donations towards



Celebrating 70 years of involvement in the Cowansville area.

an X-ray machine and oxygen analyzer. As our centennial project in 1967, we unveiled our picnic area. This picnic area was maintained by our branch until 2016, when it was turned over to the City of Cowansville. We support three elementary schools in the area. We award bur-

saries to deserving students graduating from high school and we present academic awards at the elementary schools. We also support the women's shelter, the Anglophone group home for teenagers and the Living Room Group Home for pre-teens.

Our meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. at Emmanuel United Church in Cowansville. All women, no matter what their faith or language, are invited to join us.



Rural Community Better Together



QUEBEC 4-H ASSOCIATION

Sustainability Days

Thanks to funding from Agrium, 4-H Quebec will coordinate Sustainability Days to help bring Journey 2050 programming to clubs. Staff members are available to introduce clubs to the online game and will help members get started on their own sustainability journeys by bringing the supplies they need to complete a project chosen by the club. To find out more or to book your Sustainability Day, contact Julie at program@quebec4-h.com.

Lachute 4-H Fundraiser Square Dance

On March 25, there will be a square dance fundraiser at Grenville Community Centre (21 Rue Tri-Jean, Grenville). Music by Stray Dogs (with Jean-Phillippe Levert on the fiddle). Hope to see you there!

Ormstown Square Dance Competition

This year, the Ormstown competition will take place on April 1 at the Ormstown Rec. Centre. The club looks forward to welcoming clubs from across Quebec for this lovely tradition! Contact Janice Barr at barnal26@outlook.com for more information.

Innovative Ag Tour

Hosted in Richmond from March 17-19, 2017, this event is a chance for 4-H Quebec members between the ages of 13-25 from across the province to travel together by bus to visit various farms and agribusinesses in the region. Over the course of the weekend, they learn innovative agricultural practices, feeding techniques, business practices, architectural possibilities and more.

Provincial Rally 2017

Hosted in Hatley from July 27-30, 2017, this event showcases our members' 4-H projects from across the province. Including a competitive livestock show and public speaking and live skills competitions, this is an event not to be missed!

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. 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

Global 4-H Network Summit

The 2017 Global 4-H Network Summit, July 11-14, is the opportunity for 4-H youth, leaders and professionals from 70 countries around the world, representing 7 million youth worldwide, to gather in Canada's national capital city of Ottawa at an exciting time when celebrations are underway for Canada's 150th birthday. 4-H Canada is proud to host this important event, as we come together to share experiences, learn from each other and celebrate the successes of the 4-H global movement through positive youth development. Register with the 4-H Quebec office by contacting Julie at program@quebec4-h.com.

For more information about 4-H programming and events, contact 4-H Quebec: program@quebec4-h.com 514-398-8738



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