



**OCA Weekly Update – February 1, 2008**

**Missed an Update? Looking for Something You Read in a Past Issue?**

Visit <http://www.cattle.guelph.on.ca/weekly-updates/weekly-update.asp> to download archived OCA Weekly Updates as PDF files. They are posted by 5pm on the day of issue.

**In Brief:**

**Ontario Food Manufacturers to Get More Competitive  
*McGuinty Government Helps Increase Sector's Productivity, Energy Savings***

TORONTO - Ontario's food and beverage processors can increase their competitiveness and reduce costs with new technical, advisory, training and environmental sustainability programs designed and delivered by industry experts.

The province is providing \$3 million as follows:

- The Alliance of Ontario Food Processors will receive \$2 million to design and deliver a program to encourage innovation and productivity in the food processing sector. Program components could include expert advice on adopting new technologies, skills training and competitiveness research for the food sector, including tender fruit and vegetable processing.
- The Guelph Food Technology Centre will receive \$1 million to carry out environmental and energy audits at food plants, and training programs for plant managers to implement the changes recommended in the audits.

"We want to ensure that food manufacturers have access to the latest technology and skills," said Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs Leona Dombrowsky. "We are working to put the sector on a more stable foundation for the future."

"This funding will kick-start the implementation of our long-term strategy, which is aimed at encouraging greater competitiveness throughout the sector," said Jane Graham, executive director of the Alliance of Ontario Food Processors.

"These days, we all need to do our part to conserve energy and reduce costs," said Gary Fread, president and CEO, Guelph Food Technology Centre. "This funding will help us help food companies do their part."

The funding is part of \$150 million in assistance announced in the [2007 Economic Outlook and Fiscal Review](#) to increase food industry competitiveness and help hog, horticultural and cattle farmers.

**Minister Ritz Makes Appointments to National Farm Products Council**

OTTAWA, Ontario, January 31, 2008 – The Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister for the Canadian Wheat Board, announced today the appointment of William Smirle as the new Chairperson of the National Farm Products Council (NFPC). In addition, Minister Ritz announced the appointment of Marjorie Donnan and re-appointment of Juliann Blaser Lindenbach as members of the Council.

"I am pleased to announce these appointments to the NFPC," said Minister Ritz. "Mr. Smirle's leadership skills and agricultural experience will serve him well as Chairperson of the NFPC. Ms. Donnan will bring to her position a valuable understanding of farm marketing systems, and I look forward to Ms. Lindenbach continuing her important contributions to the work of the Council."

The NFPC plays a key role in the supply management system for poultry and eggs. The Council supervises the operations of the four national marketing agencies that manage the supply of Canadian chicken, turkey, eggs, and broiler hatching eggs, ensuring they work best for both producers and consumers. These agencies implement and administer marketing plans, allocate production quotas and generate their revenues through levies.

In addition, the Council supervises the operation of the Canadian Beef Cattle Research, Market Development and Promotion Agency.

Mr. Smirle is appointed for a term ending February 14, 2010. Ms. Donnan's term ends on August 23, 2010. Ms. Lindenbach's reappointment is for one year. All the appointments are effective immediately. Biographical notes for the appointees are attached.

To learn more about the NFPC, please visit [www.nfpc-cnpa.gc.ca](http://www.nfpc-cnpa.gc.ca).

### **Food Freedom Day coming: Canadians Still Get the Best Deal on food**

(OTTAWA) – With Food Freedom Day less than a week away, Statistics Canada has released numbers that show Canadians still get the best deal in the western world for their food dollar. Food Freedom Day is the day the average Canadian consumer has earned enough income to pay his or her individual grocery bill for the entire year. This year Food Freedom Day is happening even earlier – February 3 – because in recent years Canadian disposable income has risen significantly faster than the cost of food.

The numbers released by Statistics Canada show that, over the past year, the Canadian grocery bill has risen only 0.6 per cent. By contrast, Europeans are paying 4.3 per cent more for their groceries, the United Kingdom 5.1 per cent more, and Americans are paying 5.4 per cent more.

“There is some growing concern among Canadian consumers about rising food costs, but the fact of the matter is your grocery bill has not risen that much,” said Bob Friesen, President of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture. “And when you add in the fact that Canadian food is of the highest quality, produced to high standards of food safety and environmental sustainability, you the consumer are getting the best deal for your food in the western world.”

This year, as part of Food Freedom Day, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture is also emphasizing the need for a clear and meaningful “Grown in Canada” food label.

“More and more Canadian consumers are looking for Canadian grown for reliable quality they know they can trust,” said Friesen. “To help them make that choice Canada needs a new food label system that clearly identifies foods that were produced by Canadian farmers.”

On Food Freedom Day the CFA also emphasizes the relatively small farmer's share of the consumer's food dollar. Within the first three weeks of the year an average consumer has earned enough income to pay the farmer's share of the annual grocery bill. While prices have risen recently in some agricultural commodities like grains, other Canadian commodity sectors, particularly the livestock sector, still face a significant income crisis.

### **Provincial Funding Announcement: December 14, 2007**

Specific information for producers on the new Ontario Cattle, Hog and Horticulture Payment is available by calling Agricorp at 1-877-838-5144.

*A PDF is also posted on the OCA Web Site at*  
<http://www.cattle.guelph.on.ca/PDFs/2008/InfoSheet-Dec.14Announcement.pdf>

### **Changes to Regulation 54 of the Beef Cattle Marketing Act Came into Effect on January 1, 2008**

Please note that due to GST reduction from 6% to 5% on January 1, 2008 and changes to regulations of the Beef Cattle Marketing Act (check-off increased to \$3.00/head on January 1, 2008), OCA has developed revised check-off forms which will be applicable to all transactions made on or after January 1, 2008.

- OCA Check-off Deduction Remittance Report for Individuals
- OCA Check-off Deduction Remittance Report for Licensed Dealers

The new check-off forms, as well as more detailed information, are now available at <http://www.cattle.guelph.on.ca/Checkoff2008/index.asp>, as PDF files.

### **Making Tough Decisions in Tough Times**

Need help to analyze your business in this new reality?

Aimed at the pork, beef and veal sectors, this conference is intended to provide real time information to help producers and agribusiness make sound business decisions in this changed business environment.

Topics will include: effects of the dollar, competitiveness, things to consider when transitioning your business, risk management, among others.

Pre-register by February 8th and Save!

*Payment and registration information must be received by February 8th to receive reduced rates.*

If you are a registered producer with OCA, Ontario Veal, Ontario Pork or are an OPIC member you can preregister for \$30.

If you are not a producer or OPIC member, you can preregister for \$40. Registrations will be accepted at the door at a cost of \$50 for the day.

Register now at: [www.toughdecisions.ca](http://www.toughdecisions.ca)  
See Web site for details on topics and speaker bios.

Speakers include:

David Irvine Irvine and Associates Maurizio (Moe) Agostino Farms.com  
Dr. Vincent Amanor-Boadu Kansas State Univeristy Steven Meyer Paragon Economics  
Dr. Gary Smith Colorado State University Kevin Grier George Morris Centre

Venue:  
LONDON CONVENTION CENTRE  
300 York Street, London ON, Canada  
Supporting Partners:

See Web site for funding partners

### **Canadian Farm Business Management Council Agriwebinar Series**

The Canadian Farm Business Management Council is again this year promoting their Agriwebinar series. All session are free. In order to view the webinars you must register, but only once for all of them. For more information and to register go to <http://www.agriwebinar.com/>

2007/2008 CFBMC Agriwebinar Schedule - Each Monday at noon EST

February 4  
Roger Samson *Resource Efficient Agricultural Production Canada*  
Switch Grass for Bioheat in Canada

February 11  
Mélanie Tremblay *MAPAQ*  
Does On farm Biogas Production Hold a Future in Québec?

February 18  
Don Jonovic *Family Business Management Services, Ohio*  
Surviving Family Farming Whitewater

February 25  
Mara Jernigan *Fairburn Farm, BC*  
Slow Food: Good, Clean and Fair

March 3  
Paul Paquin *Institut des nutraceutiques et des aliments fonctionnels, Université Laval*  
Dairy Ingredients Issues

### **Oxford Steps to Leadership 2008 – It's Back**

Who?

Any community-minded resident of Oxford County. Maximum of 25 participants will be accepted, including up to 5 students age 15-19 years.

Why?

To encourage the personal development of Oxford County residents; to expand the leadership skills of community-minded individuals; and to initiate organizational and community involvement in Oxford County.

Where?

Each session will be in a different location throughout Oxford County. The program will include a 1-day workshop and a 1-day educational bus tour throughout the County.

On people's list of fears, it's number one! Learn tools and techniques to speak effectively in a large or small group setting including tips for thanking and introducing guest speakers. This session will also give you the tools to write an effective media release to communicate with the media.

Find out more about Oxford County and its many assets. Economic, agriculture, agri-business, historical and cultural aspects will be highlighted on this tour.

Monday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2007—7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. - *Tavistock*  
"Asset Mapping"

A planning and goal setting session where you will have a chance to set some realistic goals. Learn more about Oxford County's diversity—the area, the people and their values and cultures.

Monday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, 2007—7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. – *Norwich Museum, Norwich*

"Team Building & Group Dynamics" - Have fun while getting the job done is the theme for this session. Methods on how to keep groups working in a positive and innovative direction will be addressed.

"Effective Organizations" - Learn ways to make meetings more productive and how you can help create an organization that can make a difference.

Find out how to run your organization smoothly while dealing with community issues.

Saturday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2007 – 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. "1-Day Workshop" - *Mt. Elgin Community Centre, Mt. Elgin*

"Responsibilities and Liabilities of Directors" - What is your responsibility and liability as a board member? Responsible procedures for organizations and individuals elected to a board will be discussed using case study examples.

“Stress & Time Management and Conflict Resolution” Time management tips that will help you meet your goals successfully and not stress you out! Learn how organizations and individuals can resolve conflicts effectively.

“Marketing & Fundraising for your Organization” - Learn ways to market your organization to create community awareness and build sustainability. Fundraising is often necessary—learn the essential features for any successful activity.

Monday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2007—7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. – *Fusion Youth Centre, Ingersoll*  
“Working with the Media”

Print, radio and TV—learn to utilize the press to your advantage. In addition, learn ways to achieve clear writing.

Monday, March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2007—7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. – *County Building, Woodstock*  
“Community Issues and the Political Process”

Group discussion on local and organization issues and how to deal with them. What is the process and how do you effectively lobby for change? How do you foster greater involvement in the democratic process to the benefit of individuals and the community?

Monday, March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2007—7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. – *North Blenheim Insurance, Bright*  
“Ironing Out Community Issues”

Learn some effective problem solving techniques that will help you formulate an action plan for your community.

Monday, April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2007—7:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m. – *Ingersoll Creative Arts Centre, Ingersoll*  
“The Challenge - Shaping Our Future”

Where will you go from here? Organizations that will be successful in the future need to think creatively and be willing to adapt to change. A motivational speaker will put the program into perspective and challenge participants to strive for excellence. Graduation ceremony will follow.

How?

For more information or to obtain an application form, contact: Brenda West or Patti Arts, Program Co-ordinators, Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs (519) 537-6621. [brenda.west@ontario.ca](mailto:brenda.west@ontario.ca) or [patti.arts@ontario.ca](mailto:patti.arts@ontario.ca)

Cost?

(Including all resource materials)

\$200.00 per participant (Due November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007 or \$250.00 after November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007)

Student (age 15-19) \$100.00 (Due November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007) or \$150.00 (after November 30<sup>th</sup>, 2007)

Note: If financial constraints are a concern, please contact us.

Participation in Steps to Leadership Will:

- Build self-confidence and leadership skills
- Allow you to learn from other local leaders
- Help you and/or your organization become more effective and
- Involve you in the planning of your local community

Don't Sit Back! Get Involved! Registration is limited, so APPLY NOW!

## **Growing Your Opportunities, Traction and AgriBusiness ecampus**

Growing your Opportunities:

This workshop is for Farm and rural based entrepreneurs who want to learn how to tap into new value added opportunities from idea to market.

Over The Two Days You Will:

- Learn how to identify, find and evaluate new value added ideas
- Learn how to put your ideas into action using the seven step value added development process
- Learn how to connect with the right market channels
- Learn how to find innovative ways to market your products and services
- Learn how to build a business that can support your new idea
- Learn how to create a dynamite, but simple business plan
- Learn how to finance the different stages of your new ventures
- Learn how to save time and money in the development process
- Learn how to price your products properly
- Learn how to manage your risk
- Explore case studies of how innovative rural and farm businesses that have developed their value added ideas and opportunities
- Follow a new product from conception to integration into the marketplace

Growing your Opportunities

Orangeville

Day 1: Sat. Feb. 23

Day 2: Sat. Mar. 1

\$75 per person (includes \$3.57 GST)

Growing your Opportunities

Hanover

Day 1: Mon. Feb. 25

Day 2: Mon. Mar. 3

\$75 per person (includes \$3.57 GST)

Growing your Opportunities

Clinton

Day 1: Tues. Feb. 26

Day 2: Tues. Mar. 4

\$75 per person (includes \$3.57 GST)

Growing your Opportunities

Port Hope

Day 1: Thurs. Feb. 28

Day 2: Thurs. Mar. 6

\$75 per person (includes \$3.57 GST)

Growing your Opportunities

Napanee Area

Day 1: Mon. Mar. 17

Day 2: Fri. Mar. 28

\$75 per person (includes \$3.57 GST)

Growing your Opportunities

Tillsonburg

Day 1: Wed. Mar. 19

Day 2: Wed. Mar. 26

\$75 per person (includes \$3.57 GST)

Traction

Traction: Skills to Grow is a program developed by Guelph-based Juice Inc. The program has been well received by farmers and producers within the agricultural community, who are attending with their spouses and family members to ensure they are aligned in the planning of their farm's future. Traction participants, ranging in age from their early 20s to their late 60s from various commodity groups, have consistently rated the program a 4.9 on a five-point scale. Uniquely designed in conjunction with producers, advisors and industry leaders, Traction provides a pragmatic and process-based approach to four main areas:

- Taking stock
- Innovation
- Communication
- Goal Setting
- Planning

What participants are saying:

- "Seeing the real life examples helped me to see how understanding the other person's point of view can solve problems that otherwise seemed impossible to solve."
- "This gave me a whole new way of approaching problems and relationships".
- "Problems just don't seem to be overwhelming after taking this course. Our family left with tools to help us keep unstuck and moving ahead more smoothly."
- "Being successful as a farmer requires ongoing development of not only your industry knowledge but your communication skills. This high energy program gave me new tools to take home that will keep the ideas flowing."

Traction

Ancaster

Thurs.-Fri., Feb 17-18

\$895 + tax

Traction

Belleville

Mon.-Tues., Feb. 4-5

\$895 + tax

Traction

Exeter

Thurs.-Fri., Feb 7-8

\$895 + tax

Traction

Hanover  
Wed.-Thurs., Feb. 21-22  
\$895 + tax

AgriBusiness eCampus Project  
<http://agribusinesscampus-com.rkd.ca/default.aspx>  
Your Home – offered by the University of Guelph, Kemptville Campus  
Launch date – early February  
variable

#### AgriBusiness eCampus Project

The AgriBusiness eCampus (ABeC) is a web-based and face-to-face learning centre offering a range of topics to assist farmers in managing their farm business in today's increasingly complex environment. The ABeC offers a "one-stop-shop" for practical, real-world business solutions through life-long learning in agribusiness management and entrepreneurship.

Our eCourses are designed by top experts in the agribusiness field with you in mind. Our focus is on developing skills that are immediately applicable to you and your farm business. Courses are self-paced and self-assessed, allowing you to fit your learning around other farm and family commitments. Courses provide you with networking opportunities through question and answer sessions and streamed discussion with industry experts and peers. Course facilitators are always just a phone call or click away to answer your questions and assist you with any course-related or technical problems.

Courses are currently being offered in: Strategic and Business Planning, Succession Planning, Domestic and Global Marketing, Commodity Marketing, and Human Resources.

#### **The Ontario Co-operative Association Invites you to a Co-operative Development Toolkit Workshop**

- Learn more about co-ops
- Connect with local business resources
- Discover why the co-op model works

This workshop will be held Wednesday February 6, 2008 at the W.I.S.H Centre, Chatham from 1 to 4pm. Please see the attached invitation for more information about the workshop. This workshop is FREE. However, we ask that you pre-register to allow us to adequately prepare. To register or if you have questions please call 1.888.745.5521 ext. 31 or reply to this email to indicate your attendance.

Thank you to those of you who have registered, we look forward to seeing you at the workshop. Using the following link, <http://maps.google.com/> you can type in your beginning address and then the end address: 177 King Street East, Chatham, ON to get directions to the workshop.

#### **Farm Succession Planning Courses 2008**

Introduction to Farm Succession Planning (Producer focus)

February 6, 2008; 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Fergus OMAFRA  
Workshop registration - \$110.00

The introductory courses will help producers, farm business advisors and consultants to: identify the five steps in developing a farm succession plan; prepare essential documents for farm succession; engage farm families with succession planning tools & approaches and coach farm clients to better assess their current situation; help resolve conflict; and generate options and make decisions related to farm succession planning.

The advanced level course will see participants increase their knowledge and learn more about a variety of tools to assist with succession planning, deal with conflict, promote open and honest communication and assess family readiness for change.

Course instructors Peter Coughler, Succession Planning & Business Agreements Program Lead with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs in Brighton and Blake Bexon of Bexon Consulting in Ailsa Craig bring an extensive background of skills and understanding to the courses. Participants will appreciate their straight forward approach to learning and instruction. For more information or to register, please contact The Centre for Rural Leadership at (519) 826-4204 or register online at [www.aalp.on.ca](http://www.aalp.on.ca)

### **Your Farm – Planning for the Future**

Join us for a one day workshop for farmers, to explore the steps in developing a plan for the sale of a farm business, transferring ownership to family members, or a transfer/sell upon death.

Tuesday February 12, 2008

Mount Albert Lions Hall

9:30 - coffee and registration

10:00 to 3:30 - workshop

Cost: \$15.00 per person. This includes the workshop and lunch  
Please make cheques payable to "York Region Federation of Agriculture"

To Register Contact:

Kim Empringham  
Secretary, York Federation of Agriculture  
12900 Kennedy Road  
Stouffville, Ontario  
L4A 7X5

Phone 905-888-1234

Email: [mandk.empringham@sympatico.ca](mailto:mandk.empringham@sympatico.ca)

The agenda will focus on planning for the future transfer or sale of a farm business. Topics include goal setting, communications, tax and legal implications, business structures and agreements, financial considerations and retirement. There will be time for discussion, questions and case studies.

Workshop leaders are Rob Gamble, Finance and Business Structures Program Lead (OMAFRA) and Peter Coughler, Succession Planning & Business Agreements Program Lead (OMAFRA).

The workshop has been planned and developed in co-operation with the York Region Federation of Agriculture.

### **Finding a Future in Beef**

Are you under the age of 40, involved in the Ontario beef industry and live in East Central Ontario?

If so, you are invited to an evening workshop that will address the opportunities, challenges and needs of young beef producers

When: Thursday February 7<sup>th</sup>, 2008

6:30pm to 10:00pm

Where: Scugog Community Centre, 181 Perry Street, Port Perry

Cost: \$20.00, dinner included

Tentative Agenda:

- Dinner and networking opportunity
- A Successful Farm Model: Adapting to Change for Survival, Betty Green, owner of a 1000 cow herd family farm. Betty is also involved with the West Hawk Lake Zoning Initiative and the Quality Starts Here-Verified Beef Production program in Manitoba.
- Planning for the Future: A facilitated discussion on opportunities, challenges and needs of Ontario beef producers, Marilyn Bidgood and Eric Lawlor, OMAFRA

Who should attend?

Anyone involved in the beef industry under the age of 40 who lives in the Simcoe, York, Durham, Northumberland, Peterborough, City of Kawartha Lakes, Hastings, Prince Edward and Lennox and Addington counties. This includes beef farmers, veterinarians, abattoir or processor owners, and auction mart owners.

Why should you attend?

If you would like an opportunity to network with other farmers and individuals involved in the beef industry, then this workshop is for you. Not only will you meet people with similar interests, but through the round table discussions you will discuss your similar needs and challenges. You will also provide input to the facilitators about the types of resources and educational vehicles young farmers need.

This is a pilot workshop that may be extended to other areas in Ontario or may become a province-wide initiative. The ultimate goal is to establish a networking and training resource for the beef industry at a one-stop shop.

To register contact:

Marlene Werry  
 Rural Economic Development Officer  
 The Regional Municipality of Durham  
 Box 623, 605 Rossland Road East, 5th Floor  
 Whitby ON L1N 6A3  
 Tel: 905-668-4113 Ext.2609  
 Fax: 905-666-6228  
 Email: marlene.werry@region.durham.on.ca

**University of Guelph Beef Cattle Transportation Study:  
 Assistance of Beef Producers Requested**

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) is currently assessing how cattle are transported in Canada with intentions of changing the laws and regulations that govern the industry. Changes proposed by CFIA may increase trucking costs for beef producers. In an effort to better understand current transportation conditions for the movement of cattle in Canada, the Ontario Cattlemen's Association is funding a University of Guelph research study to examine how current transportation conditions (space/loading densities and travel time) impact animal welfare, health, and performance for weaned calves and yearlings (500-900 lbs). The objectives of this research are to determine if current procedures for transporting cattle ensure animal welfare and how they impact health and performance after arrival. The ultimate goal of this work is to ensure animal welfare while increasing the demand for Ontario grown beef.

The help of beef producers is needed in this study to collect data on cattle loads that are received at feedlots and to follow their health for approximately 8 weeks after arrival. Surveys have been constructed to collect data from producers and truckers on the same loads of cattle during transit and following arrival. The more information that can be collected on how cattle are transported in Canada will provide CFIA with industry data that will support current trucking regulations without the need for the proposed costly changes. Please consider participating in this research study to provide valuable information on the

Ontario Beef industry. If you would like to participate in this benchmark study or desire more information, please contact one of the University of Guelph researchers involved in this study by telephone or e-mail: *Matt Thrower* (519- 827-1346 or e-mail [mthrower@uoguelph.ca](mailto:mthrower@uoguelph.ca)); *Ken Bateman* (519-824-4120, Ext 5-4006; [kbateman@ovc.uoguelph.ca](mailto:kbateman@ovc.uoguelph.ca)), *Ira Mandell* (519-824-4120, Ext 5-3337; [imandell@uoguelph.ca](mailto:imandell@uoguelph.ca)), *Tina Widowski* (519-824-4120, Ext 5-2408; [twidowsk@uoguelph.ca](mailto:twidowsk@uoguelph.ca))

### **BIC Bits**

#### **Health Professionals Hear Beef is Safe**

The Beef Information Centre (BIC) partnered with the Dietitians of Canada to host the most recent Nutricast™ web seminar titled “Food Safety for Health Professionals: From Farm to Fork”. Nutricast™ is an innovative series of free web health-forum broadcasts for health professionals.

The webcast looked at the steps taken – from farm to fork – to maintain the safety of the Canadian food supply and highlight resources that are available for health professionals to communicate this information to clients. The topic of food safety is of growing interest for Registered Dietitians and a topic that many are not confident addressing due to modest training. Historically, food safety seemed to focus on meat and dairy products, however the focus has shifted to produce foods and products.

Expert speakers included:

- Mansel Griffiths, Ph.D., Director, Canadian Research Institute for Food Safety and Senior Industrial Research Chair in Dairy Microbiology, University of Guelph.
- Bonnie Lacroix, Ph.D., RD, President, Bonnie J. Lacroix & Associates, and author of the Dietitians of Canada Current Issues paper: *Microbial Food Safety and Reported Consumer Practices*, December 2007.
- Brenda Watson, P.Ag, Executive Director, Canadian Partnership for Consumer Food Safety Education.

Dr. Griffiths reported Canada has one of the safest food supplies in the world and assured health professionals they can feel confident to convey a positive food safety message to clients/patients/consumers.

“With this Nutricast™ more than 710 health professionals registered while 242 tuned into the event live and received positive messages about the safety of beef,” says Carolyn Kallio, nutrition program manager for the Beef Information Centre.

Web-based technology like Nutricast™, enables BIC to cost effectively increase its national reach and educate health professionals on developments in nutrition and health, such as food safety, that can positively impact the image of beef. In addition, regular partnerships with Canadian health organizations help preserve and enhance BIC’s image as a trustworthy source of information for health professionals. Health professionals provide advice to consumers, media, government and other professionals on nutrition and health.

The success of Nutricast™ is demonstrated by the numbers with more than 700 health professionals registered for this Nutricast™. Sixty-eight per cent of those that completed the evaluation, felt the information presented was new and relevant to their work. For more information on beef and health visit [www.beefinfo.org](http://www.beefinfo.org).

### **Grey Cattlemen Present...A Beef Evening**

Wednesday February 6th

7:30pm

Keady Arena

Who: All interested cattlemen in the area

What: You Want me to Change? Betty Green

Betty, a cattle rancher from the Interlake region of Manitoba, will discuss her family’s decision and struggles to expand their operation in include more family members, yet still run as a profitable business. The G& Ranch runs 1000 cows and includes a backgrounding and finishing feedlot.

The green family is active in community and provincial activities. Betty has served as a school trustee, ad Director of the MCPA and the CCA. She currently sits on the Manitoba Rural Adaptation Council, is co-chair of the West-Hawke Lake Zoning Initiative and is the Provincial Coordinator of the Verified Beef Production program.

Betty has experienced succession from both ends of the spectrum and knows that change is the one 'contstant' in our industry. She believes that the new generation of producers have a lot to offer and can lead the industry into a prosperous and vibrant future.

Also Featuring: The ABC's and H's of Beef Cows  
Nancy Noecker, OMAFRA Beef Specialist, Kemptville

Nancy will examine added-value, breeding decisions, cost cutting and handling.

**2008 OCA Annual General Meeting  
"Meeting Our Challenges"**

February 20 and 21, 2008  
Doubletree International Plaza Hotel  
655 Dixon Road, Toronto  
Reservations: 1-800-222-8733

Call by February 8th and ask for the "Ontario Cattlemen's Association" block of rooms

Agenda Highlights

*Wednesday, February 20*

**\*\*Registration 7:30am - 10am\*\***

Convene 10am

- Election of reps (4) to Board of Directors: Cow Calf / Feedlot / Backgrounder / Eastern Region
- Election of reps to Feedlot and Cow Calf Committees
- Election of Directors to CCA
- Presentation of Environmental Stewardship Award

Guest Speakers:

- Hon. Leona Dombrowsky - Ontario Minister of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs  
*(to be confirmed)*
- Hon. Gerry Ritz - Minister of Agriculture & Agri-food Canada *(to be confirmed)*

Reports from:

- OCA President and Executive Director
- Ontario Corn Fed Beef program
- Canada Beef Export Federation
- Canadian Cattlemen's Association
- Beef Information Centre
- CCIA
- CanFax (market update / outlook)

7:00pm Annual Banquet

with after-dinner Entertainment by Award-Winning Comedian, Derek Edwards

*Thursday, February 21*

Convene 9am

- Proposed Amendments to OCA Constitution
- Debate on Resolutions
- Presentation of Pasture Award
- Guest Speaker: Ted Schroeder , Kansas State University "*Meeting Our Challenges through Vertical Coordination*"
- Panel Discussion - "*Meeting Our Challenges*"
  - Participants (confirmed): Mike Buis, producer/OCA Advisory Councillor, Kent County
  - Jim Oehmke, CEO, George Morris Centre
  - one more participant to be confirmed

Moderator: Dan Ferguson, OCA Verified Beef Production - Quality Starts Here Coordinator

*Spousal Program*

Wednesday, February 20 - 2:00pm

*Presentation by:*

Anita Stewart, Author and Culinary Activist - "*The Power of Women in Agriculture*"  
sponsored by: Daco Animal Nutrition

Thursday, February 21

Shopping trip to *Square One* shopping centre

**Cattlemen's College®**

Tuesday, February 19 - 7:00pm  
Plaza C - Doubletree International Plaza Hotel, Toronto  
Sponsored by: Pfizer Animal Health  
in conjunction with the OCA 2008 Annual Meeting

Program:

Stan Jacobs, General Manager, Douglas Lake Ranch, British Columbia: "Herd Protocols and Marketing Cattle in an Ever-Changing Environment"

Dr. Maury Bredahl and Mike von Massow - University of Guelph, Dale Kaliel - Alberta Department of Agriculture and Food: "Benchmarking for Improved Performance"

Gord Colliar, Pfizer Animal Health: "Cowboy Humour"

**The Ontario Co-operative Association invites you to a  
Co-operative Development Toolkit Workshop.**

- Learn more about co-ops
- Connect with local business resources
- Discover why the co-op model works

This workshop will be held Wednesday February 6, 2008 at the W.I.S.H Centre, Chatham from 1 to 4pm. Please see the attached invitation for more information about the workshop. This workshop is FREE. However, we ask that you pre-register to allow us to adequately

prepare. To register or if you have questions please call 1.888.745.5521 ext. 31 or reply to this email to indicate your attendance.

Tanya Gracie  
Ontario Co-operative Association  
tgracie@ontario.coop  
1-888-745-5521 ext. 31

### **BIO AGM**

February 19<sup>th</sup>, 2008  
1pm

The DoubleTree International Plaza Hotel & Conference Centre  
550 Dixon Rd, International Room C  
Toronto, Ontario

### **Innovative Farmers Association of Ontario Conference 2008**

February 19 and 20, 2008

9 am to 8 pm day one 9 to 3:30 day 2

Best Western Lamplighter Inn, London ON

\$235 for non memb includes most meals and banquet

Speakers, John Phipps of Farm Report & John's World, Alistair Polson, New Zealand, Moe Russell, Iowa, Terry Schneider, Illinois, Larry Brown, Ohio, Shawn McRae, Glengarry, George Cornelissen, Martin Van Raay Topics: Irrigation with Drainage Tiles, Manure in No-Till, Great Lakes NO-tillers, Trends in Agriculture, Conservation Tillage, Cover Crops, Getting/Retaining good Help, Planter/Drill modifications, Fertilizer Materials and Placement, Guidance and Auto Steer Systems.

Contact: Lorraine House (519) 769-2443

### **Willabar Ranch Long Yearling Black Angus Bull Sale**

March 18

at the ranch

Claresholm, AB

Contact: (403) 625-2060

### **Saunders Andemar 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Purebred Charolais Bull Sale**

March 8<sup>th</sup> 2008 at 2pm

Keady Livestock Market.

Be our guest for lunch 11:30am sale day

Contact: Brent: (519) 986 4165 or Pete: (519) 871 4703

### **Northern Powerpac Bull and Heifer Sale**

2 p.m. Saturday, April 12, 2008

Temiskaming Livestock Exchange

New Liskeard, Ontario

### **News Index:**

**A) PENNSYLVANIA: Salmonella Typhimurium infection associated with raw milk and cheese consumption**

- B) NEBRASKA: Corn, cattle groups, not government, behind E.coli research
- C) CALIFORNIA: Key to safe raw milk from cows
- D) WASHINGTON D.C.: Scientists study possible link between ethanol byproduct and E. coli
- E) EU to ban Brazilian beef imports
- F) FRANCE: Atypical bovine spongiform encephalopathies, France, 2001-2007
- G) US: Fight to curtail antibiotics in animal feed
- H) UK: 'Bluetongue outbreak' fears
- I) UGANDA: Livestock disease hits Isingiro
- J) CANADA - Bovine Tuberculosis - latest information
- K) WALES: Anthrax outbreak shows need to track livestock: RLPB
- L) GEORGIA: Old MacDonald had a hormone-marinated, pesticide-fed cow

This report prepared with the assistance of Dr. Doug Powell's team at the Universities of Guelph and Kansas State. This service does not allow emails to be sent by responding to this email directly. If you have questions or comments, please contact Lianne Appleby at [lianne@cattle.guelph.on.ca](mailto:lianne@cattle.guelph.on.ca)

**A) PENNSYLVANIA: Salmonella Typhimurium infection associated with raw milk and cheese consumption**

30.jan.08

JAMA

<http://jama.ama-assn.org/cgi/content/full/299/4/402>

In February 2007, the Pennsylvania Department of Health received reports, through routine electronic laboratory disease reporting, of two persons with recent laboratory-confirmed infections with *Salmonella enterica* serotype Typhimurium. Both persons had reported drinking raw (unpasteurized) milk from the same York County, Pennsylvania, dairy (dairy A). *S. Typhimurium* isolates from these persons had pulsed-field gel electrophoresis (PFGE) patterns that were indistinguishable by use of the *Xba*I restriction enzyme. The same month, the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) received reports of illness from raw-milk customers of dairy A. PDA obtained milk samples from the raw-milk bulk tank at dairy A, which yielded *S. Typhimurium* with a PFGE pattern that was identical to the pattern from patient isolates. On February 26, the Pennsylvania Department of Health and PDA launched an investigation to determine the source and scope of the outbreak. This report summarizes the findings of that investigation, which determined that 29 cases of diarrheal illness caused by *S. Typhimurium* were associated with consumption of raw milk or raw-milk products from dairy A. The findings underscore the need to inform policymakers and the public of the potential health risks associated with raw-milk consumption. Epidemiologic and Laboratory Investigation

In Pennsylvania, raw-milk sales are legal at farms that hold a PDA permit, and vendors must display public notices regarding the potential hazards of consuming raw milk.<sup>1</sup> Dairy A owned 120 cows and sold raw milk for pasteurization and by PDA permit directly to consumers. In February 2007, PDA estimated that dairy A was selling 200-300 gallons of raw milk weekly to 275 regular customers.

A case of salmonellosis was defined as a diarrheal illness with onset since February 1, 2007, in a Pennsylvania resident who provided a stool specimen that tested positive for *S. Typhimurium* with a PFGE pattern that matched the outbreak pattern by use of the *Xba*I restriction enzyme. Nationally notifiable disease reports from Pennsylvania since January 2005 were reviewed for PFGE-matched *S. Typhimurium* isolates to identify cases and risk factors. To locate additional cases, ill household contacts of persons with confirmed cases were asked to provide food histories and submit stool specimens for testing. Raw milk for testing was obtained from dairy A milk tanks on five dates (February 20, February 28, March 27, May 14, and July 19) and from households of two ill persons on two dates (February 28 and July 20). In addition, PDA conducted multiple dairy A inspections during February-July 2007.

**Investigative Findings**

A total of 29 cases were identified, with illness onset occurring in three temporal clusters during February 3-July 14, 2007. The first cluster consisted of 15 cases with onsets of illness from February 3 to March 5. Raw-milk samples were collected February 20 from a dairy A bulk milk tank and February 28 from the home of an ill person. Both sets of samples yielded the outbreak strain of *S. Typhimurium*. On March 2, PDA ordered dairy A to stop raw-milk sales and advised the public not to consume raw-milk products from dairy A.

On March 19, PDA allowed dairy A to resume sales of raw milk after PDA conducted inspections and recorded two consecutive negative cultures from milk-tank samples. However, a second cluster of three cases was detected when the outbreak strain of *S. Typhimurium* was identified in another patient, whose diarrheal illness began on March 21 and who had consumed raw milk from dairy A after sales resumed. The two additional cases were identified in persons with onsets of illness on March 19 and March 22. The first of these occurred in one of six ill persons who primarily spoke Spanish and who told investigators they had not consumed raw milk. However, when reinterviewed in early April, three of these six persons reported consuming queso fresco (a type of soft cheese) they bought at a grocery store serving the local Hispanic community. PDA learned that the queso fresco had been made by an unlicensed producer who purchased approximately 20 gallons of raw milk weekly from dairy A. Sale of raw-milk cheeses aged <60 days is illegal in Pennsylvania. Subsequently, in April, PDA inspectors seized 18 unlabeled retail containers of queso fresco from the grocery store. The cheese tested positive for alkaline phosphatase, indicating the cheese was produced from unpasteurized milk.<sup>2</sup> Bacterial cultures were negative for pathogens.

On March 27, PDA again ordered dairy A to halt raw-milk sales and suspended its raw-milk permit. No additional cases were noted until June-July 2007, when a third cluster of 11 PFGE-matched *S. Typhimurium* cases was detected through routine electronic laboratory reporting. Of these, 10 occurred among residents of three counties near dairy A. On July 19, PDA confirmed that dairy A had been distributing raw milk to the public despite its suspended permit; the date when illegal milk distribution began could not be determined. The outbreak strain of *S. Typhimurium* was isolated from dairy A raw milk collected from a bulk milk tank on July 19 and from the home of an ill person on July 20. PDA ordered dairy A to halt distribution of raw milk on July 20 and subsequently revoked the raw-milk permit for this dairy.

Among the 29 persons identified with diarrheal illness and PFGE-matched *S. Typhimurium*, 17 (59%) were male, and the median age was 6 years (range: 5 months–76 years). Fourteen (48%) patients reported drinking raw milk from dairy A, four (14%) consumed unregulated queso fresco (three linked to dairy A raw milk and one from an unknown source), and two (7%) consumed raw milk but did not identify the source. Two (7%) other patients were unrelated infants aged 5 months and 7 months. The parents of these infants acknowledged that raw milk from dairy A was present in their households but told investigators the milk was not consumed by the infants. For seven (24%) patients who did not reside with any of the other patients, no source of exposure to *S. Typhimurium* could be determined. Two of the 29 patients were hospitalized; no deaths were reported.

#### Environmental Inspections

Eight PDA inspections of dairy A conducted during January-April 2007 revealed improper cleaning of milking equipment, insufficient supervision of workers, unspecified illness among lactating cows, and bird and rodent infestation. On at least two inspections, the required public notice regarding the potential hazards of drinking raw milk was not visible at the dairy A retail store.

*S. Typhimurium* matched by PFGE to the outbreak pattern was isolated from dairy A raw-milk tank samples collected on three different dates (February 20, May 14, and July 19); an *S. Typhimurium* isolate collected from a milk tank February 28 was unavailable for PFGE typing. In addition to *Salmonella*, dairy A raw-milk tank samples also yielded *Listeria monocytogenes* (February 28, May 14, and July 19) and *Campylobacter jejuni* (February 28 and May 14). Although a stool specimen from one patient with February 28 illness onset yielded both *S. Typhimurium* and *C. jejuni*, the *Campylobacter* isolate was unavailable for subtyping. No *Listeria* infections were associated with dairy A.

#### Reported by:

L Lind, MPH, J Reeser, K Stayman, M Deasy, M Moll, MD, A Weltman, MD, V Urdaneta, MD, S Ostroff, MD, Pennsylvania Dept of Health; W Chirdon, Pennsylvania Dept of Agriculture. E Campagnolo, DVM, Div of State and Local Readiness, Coordinating Office for Terrorism Preparedness and Emergency Response; T Chen, MD, EIS Officer, CDC.

#### CDC Editorial Note:

Raw milk is a well-documented source of infections from *Salmonella*, *Escherichia coli* O157:H7, *Campylobacter*, *Listeria*, *Mycobacterium bovis*, and other pathogens.<sup>2-6</sup> In 1938, before widespread adoption of milk pasteurization in the United States, an estimated 25% of all foodborne and waterborne outbreaks of disease were associated with milk.<sup>7</sup> By 2001, the percentage of such outbreaks associated with milk was estimated at <1%.<sup>7</sup> During 1998-2005, a total of 45 outbreaks of foodborne illness were reported to CDC in which unpasteurized milk (or cheese suspected to have been made from

unpasteurized milk) was implicated. These outbreaks accounted for 1,007 illnesses, 104 hospitalizations, and two deaths (CDC, unpublished data, 2007). Because not all cases of foodborne illness are recognized and reported, the actual number of illnesses associated with unpasteurized milk likely is greater.

In the investigations described in this report, the evidence indicating raw milk from dairy A as the source of this outbreak included the (1) high percentage of ill persons who reported consuming either raw milk (48%) or queso fresco traced to raw milk (10%) from dairy A, (2) temporal associations between clusters of illnesses and starts and stops of distribution of raw milk by dairy A, and (3) repeated isolation of the outbreak strain of *S. Typhimurium* from dairy A raw-milk tanks. The PFGE pattern of the outbreak strain (Xbal JPXX01.0022) is rare, previously identified only 24 times in isolates from 11 states in 3 years, in a national PulseNet database of approximately 43,000 *S. Typhimurium* isolates.

Consumers have reported consuming raw milk for convenience, taste preference, or perceived health benefits. Although some advocates claim health benefits from raw milk compared with pasteurized milk, including decreased risks for atherosclerosis, arthritis, and lactose intolerance, such claims are not supported by scientific evidence.<sup>8</sup> Unsubstantiated claims of health benefits of raw milk for infants and children are particularly concerning for caregivers because infants and children are dependent on their caregivers to make safe dietary decisions for them. Sixteen of the 29 ill persons in this outbreak were aged <7 years.

Pathogens that infect humans are shed in the feces of cows, can be present in or on the udders of cows, and can contaminate their milk. Standard hygiene practices during milking can reduce but not eliminate the risk for milk contamination. In a 2001-2002 survey of Pennsylvania dairy farms, pathogenic bacteria, including *Salmonella*, were isolated from 13% of samples from raw-milk bulk tanks.<sup>9</sup> Pasteurization decreases the number of pathogenic organisms, prevents transmission of pathogens, and has been determined to improve the safety of milk more than other measures, including certification of raw milk.<sup>4-5</sup> Farms in Pennsylvania that hold PDA raw-milk permits undergo twice-monthly milk testing for coliforms and standard plate counts and monthly testing for growth inhibitors and somatic cell counts; annual PDA inspection and culture of raw milk for *Salmonella*, *Campylobacter*, *E. coli* O157, and *L. monocytogenes*; and annual herd skin testing for *Mycobacterium bovis* and *Brucella*.<sup>1</sup> Despite these measures, consumers cannot be assured that certified raw milk is free of pathogens.

As of 2004, at least 27 states permitted some form of raw-milk sales to the public, including sales at dairies, farmers' markets, or through purchase of "cow shares." Certain states also allow public sales of raw milk but for pet food only.<sup>10</sup> In Pennsylvania, the number of dairies with raw-milk permits increased from 42 in 2005 to 75 in 2007. During 2006-2007, three clusters of illness from *Campylobacter* were associated with consumption of raw milk from three different Pennsylvania dairies (Pennsylvania Department of Health, unpublished data, 2007). During the same period, PDA announced raw-milk recalls from three other dairies after finding *L. monocytogenes* in milk samples; no human illness was associated with these findings.

Given the continued interest in raw-milk production, policymakers, parents, and the public need to be informed regarding the potential health risks posed by raw-milk consumption. The only sure way for consumers to prevent raw-milk-associated infection from *Salmonella* or other pathogens is to refrain from consuming raw milk.

#### Acknowledgments

This report is based, in part, on data contributed by C Sandt, B Perry, Bur of Laboratories, P Feliciano, Pennsylvania Dept of Health; M Hydock, R Malik, L Sulpizio, Pennsylvania Dept of Agriculture; T Nguyen, T Ayers, G Ewald, M Lynch, Div of Foodborne, Bacterial, and Mycotic Diseases, National Center for Zoonotic, Vector-Borne, and Enteric Diseases; A Patel, A Sheth, EIS officers, CDC.

#### REFERENCES

1. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Chapter 59: Milk sanitation. Available at [http://www.agriculture.state.pa.us/agriculture/lib/agriculture/legalreference/007\\_0059.pdf](http://www.agriculture.state.pa.us/agriculture/lib/agriculture/legalreference/007_0059.pdf).
2. Gillespie IA, Adak GK, O'Brien SJ, Bolton FJ. Milkborne general outbreaks of infectious intestinal disease, England and Wales, 1992-2000. *Epidemiol Infect.* 2003;103:461-468.
3. Leedom JM. Milk of nonhuman origin and infectious disease in humans. *Clin Infect Dis.* 2006;43(5):610-615. FULL TEXT | ISI | PUBMED
4. Currier RW. Raw milk and human gastrointestinal disease: problems resulting from legalized sale of "certified raw milk." *J Public Health Policy.* 1981;2(3):226-234. FULL TEXT | PUBMED
5. Potter ME, Blaser MJ, Sikes RK, Kaufmann AF, Wells JG. Human *Campylobacter* infection associated

- with certified raw milk. Am J Epidemiol. 1983;117(4):475-483. FREE FULL TEXT
6. CDC. Human tuberculosis caused by Mycobacterium bovis—New York City, 2001-2004. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep. 2005;54(24):605-608. PUBMED
  7. Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition. Grade "A" pasteurized milk ordinance: 2001 revision. US Department of Health and Human Services, Food and Drug Administration, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition; 2002. Available at <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~ear/pmo01.html>.
  8. Leonard C. On the safety of raw milk (with a word about pasteurization). Presented at the National Conference on Interstate Milk Shipments, Columbus, Ohio, May 12-17, 2005. Available at <http://www.cfsan.fda.gov/~ear/milksafe/milksa1.htm>.
  9. Jayarao BM, Donaldson SC, Straley BA, Sawant AA, Hegde NV, Brown JL. A survey of foodborne pathogens in bulk tank milk and raw milk consumption among farm families in Pennsylvania. J Dairy Sci. 2006;89(7):2451-2458. FREE FULL TEXT
  10. Dairy Division of National Association of State Departments of Agriculture. Raw milk survey: November 2004. Available at <http://www.nasda.org/file.aspx?id=11160>.

## **B) NEBRASKA: Corn, cattle groups, not government, behind E.coli research**

29.jan.08

Brownfield Network

Peter Shinn

<http://www.brownfieldnetwork.com/gestalt/go.cfm?objectid=C7717A76-E68C-FFC8-37AD2671C56C4C74>

In the lead front-page article of its latest Sunday edition, the Des Moines Register reported that the Roman L. Hruska U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (MARC) in Clay Center, Nebraska, is conducting research to determine the impact, if any, of feeding ethanol co-products on the levels of e. coli 0157:H7 found in cattle. The article said the government had decided to conduct the research because of last year's wave of e. coli-related ground beef recalls.

But Dr. Mohammed Koohmaraie, who directs the MARC, told Brownfield that is not the case. According to Koohmaraie, the research is actually the brainchild of corn and beef industry groups.

"The Nebraska Corn Board made the commitment that they will not only give us some funding to do the experiment, but they'll also find a source of dry distillers' grains (DDG) for us," Koohmaraie explained.

"And then the National Cattlemen's Beef Association at the same time contacted us to see what we can do to join forces to do a pretty long and pretty detailed study about this very important subject."

All that took place in June of 2007. Koohmaraie said MARC started the study on about 300 calves the following month, having already determined the optimal DDG feed inclusion rate for cattle. MARC scientists are now in the process of finishing the calves and will slaughter them, most likely this June. MARC researchers are measuring e.coli 0157:H7 levels all the way through the process. Koohmaraie noted this is the only experiment of its kind ever conducted because of the many controls required to get accurate results.

"That's why we want to look at this 0157:H7 prevalence over the long-term period," explained Koohmaraie. "So that way, we can see the natural fluctuation that one would see whether they were fed distillers' grains or not distillers' grains."

Koohmaraie won't hazard a guess as to what the research will reveal at this point. But he said, either way, the outcome will determine next steps.

"All we're trying to do is find out, what's the effect?" Koohmaraie pointed out. "Is it positive? Is it negative or no effect? Could be any of those three," he added. "If it's positive, good. If it's not negative, great, but if it's negative then we try to find a method to mitigate it, so we'll have to wait until late spring or early summer until we have all the data."

Whether or not ethanol co-products contribute to increased e. coli levels in cattle, Koohmaraie insisted everyone in the U.S. food production and safety systems has an important role to play. And he emphasized that includes consumers.

"In the continuum of live animal to the table, everyone involved in that continuum has a responsibility to do their own things," Koohmaraie said. "And the last one is the consumer, and what we have to make sure is that ground beef - not the steak, ground beef - is cooked to an internal temperature of 160 degrees."

Koohmaraie explained that e. coli bacteria live on the surface of meat. Grinding beef to make hamburger mixes the bacteria throughout the product. Thus, the entire hamburger must reach 160 degrees for at

least a few seconds when cooked. In contrast, only the surface of steaks, roasts and other beef products need to be heated to 160 degrees in order to kill the bacteria. That, Koohmaraie said, means consumers have nothing to fear from a medium-rare steak, but should never, ever eat undercooked hamburger or ground beef.

"Whenever you go to a restaurant, and someone asks you, 'How do you want your burger?'" Koohmaraie said. "Tell them there's only one way, and that's well done."

### **C) CALIFORNIA: Key to safe raw milk from cows**

26.jan.08

WeWantOrganicFood.com

Lynn Cameron

<http://wewantorganicfood.com/2008/01/26/key-to-safe-raw-milk-from-cows/>

<http://barfblog.foodsafety.ksu.edu/2008/01/articles/raw-milk/do-happy-cows-make-happy-milk/>

If there could be a master key to safe raw milk, I think it would be contented cows. Remember Elsie, the Borden cow? Their slogan used to be "Milk from Contented Cows", when safe milk first became synonymous with pasteurization. Today's dairy cows have strayed way out of Elsie's pasture. These cows may not produce raw milk that is safe because Elsie's descendants spend their brief lives entirely indoors, living on field corn and soybeans to the degradation of their milk and the degeneration of the nation's health.

Cow health and safe raw milk

It's not complicated science to understand that quality of life as well as diet affects cows' milk quality. Superior milk reflects many things — quality fats, available minerals and vitamins, living enzymes, no "off-flavor" and much more. When animals are raised entirely outdoors on green grass and/or hay, their milk is proven time and again greatly reduced in pathogens (bad bacteria). When cows are happy, they will "chew their cud", a sure and outward sign with ruminants (grazing animals) that, as organic farmer Chris tells me about his ladies, safe and delicious milk with lots of cream is in the making.

Safe raw milk can be more assured when cows graze the fresh green grass sprinkled with wildflowers on an organic farm. Dairy cows are BIG Mamas; herds of them require outside room to move with fresh pasture every few days in Summer and grass hay to eat in Winter; each needs a comfortable stall with humane tending and strict attention to their health and cleanliness — this will mean less stress and a stronger immune system able to ward off disease without the continual needful expense of antibiotics and growth hormones that factory farms require.

The origin of milk pathogens (actually human pathogens found in milk) is primarily a result of poor sanitation, animal stress, and animal sickness. According to the definitively indicting book, *The Omnivore's Dilemma* by Michael Pollan, these conditions plus factory cows' unnatural diet stresses them enough to require ever more drugs to meet very short-term and cruel per unit production goals — drugs that can be traced to both their milk and their meat.

Most milk from "confinement cows" should be pasteurized if used for human consumption; in recent University of California Davis tests, 31 percent of raw milk samples taken from farm tanks of conventional milk intended for pasteurization contained detectable human pathogens. Raw milk standards need to be superior to that of the commercial milk supply headed for the cooker, big dairy biz couldn't begin to measure up and consumers would need to pay the price for this superior food. Currently some states require that raw milk hold to much lower bacterial counts than pasteurized milk, leading one to believe that drinking pasteurized milk is dangerous in more ways than one.

The Farm to Consumer Legal Defense Fund was established in July, 2007, to protect the rights of farmers to provide meat, eggs, raw dairy products, vegetables and other foods directly to consumers. If you really want to know the current legal climate along with actual bacteria count requirements, their site is worth checking out.

### **D) WASHINGTON D.C.: Scientists study possible link between ethanol byproduct and E. coli**

27.jan.08

Des Moines Register

Philip Brasher

<http://www.desmoinesregister.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080127/NEWS/801270330/->

1/SPORTS12

Washington, D.C. -- A nationwide surge in beef recalls has pointed the finger at an unlikely culprit - the nation's fuel ethanol industry.

Studies at two universities suggest that feeding cattle a byproduct of ethanol production known as distillers grains may increase levels of a deadly form of E. coli bacteria.

Concerned about those findings, U.S. Department of Agriculture scientists have recently put 300 cattle on a diet of distillers grains and are testing them regularly for the bacteria. Results won't be known until later this year.

Cattle producers and the ethanol industry both have a lot at stake in the research. The increased use of corn for ethanol has driven up the cost of grain for livestock feed. But the availability of cheaper distillers grains has offset the impact of those higher corn prices on livestock producers while providing a valuable revenue stream to ethanol plants.

Kevin Carstensen, who operates a cattle feeding operation near Odebolt in northwest Iowa and also is an investor in a local ethanol plant., was quoted as saying, "To those of us here in the Midwest, being able to utilize distillers grains gives us a huge advantage over the rest of the country."

The story says that production of distillers grains has soared along with the growth of ethanol, and that about a third of the corn that goes to an ethanol plant is turned into distillers grains.

The USDA's undersecretary for food safety, Richard Raymond, was cited as saying he thinks distillers grains are one of several factors behind the spike in recalls, adding "There is just something different" going on.

Raymond was further cited as saying the government had no intention of restricting the use of distillers grains even if the E. coli link is confirmed, and would instead leave it to the industry to decide how to address the issue. One possibility, he said, is to vaccinate cattle.

The story goes on to say that researchers at Kansas State University noticed the possible E. coli connection to distillers grains in 2005. A second study found a twofold increase in E. coli levels in cattle fed the product compared with those that ate only corn. Research at the University of Nebraska showed mixed results.

## **E) EU to ban Brazilian beef imports**

30.jan.08

Agence France Presse

<http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5guEUlv-7Pw9AEiuccga08kLZLAOg>

BRUSSELS -- The European Union will, according to this story, suspend all imports of Brazilian beef from Thursday after Brazil failed to provide sufficient guarantees on their safety, the European Commission said.

Last month the EU warned Brazil, the world's biggest beef exporter, that only beef from an authorised list of Brazilian farms would be allowed into EU nations from the end of January.

Such a list could not be agreed on and therefore "at this stage as we speak, there will be no holdings authorised to export to the European Union," EU Health and Consumer Affairs Commissioner Markos Kyprianou was quoted as saying.

The EU decided the measures were necessary after inspections last November found Brazil's animal health and traceability systems failed to meet EU requirements on farm registration, animal identification and movement controls.

After the initial EU warning, the Brazilian authorities came up with a list of 2,600 farms they said deserved to be exempt from the export ban.

Such a massive list was unacceptable to the European authorities and hence the blanket ban on Brazilian beef following further investigations.

Kyprianou held out the possibility of a list of authorised Brazilian beef suppliers being gradually drawn up, while warning it would be a lengthy process.

## **F) FRANCE: Atypical bovine spongiform encephalopathies, France, 2001-2007**

29.jan.08

Agence Française de Sécurité Sanitaire des Aliments (Volume 14, Number 2–February 2008)

Anne-Gaëlle Biacabe, Eric Morignat, Johann Vulin, Didier Calavas, and Thierry G.M. Baron  
<http://www.afssa.fr/>

#### Abstract

In France, through exhaustive active surveillance, ≈17.1 million adult cattle were tested for bovine spongiform encephalopathy from July 2001 through July 2007; ≈3.6 million were >8 years of age. Our retrospective Western blot study of all 645 confirmed cases found that 7 were H-type and 6 were L-type. Most cases of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) have shown strikingly uniform features. The origin of epidemics, mainly in the United Kingdom but to a lesser extent in other countries, has been foodborne contamination by a single major strain of the transmissible spongiform encephalopathy (TSE) agent (1,2). However, in recent years, 2 distinct forms of the disease have been described; these forms deviate phenotypically from the previously identified classic BSE (C-type) (3,4). Western blot studies of the protease-resistant prion protein (PrPres) showed higher and lower molecular masses of unglycosylated PrPres in these 2 types, subsequently named H-type and L-type compared with C-type BSE (5). In L-type BSE, the most discriminant molecular feature was the lower level of diglycosylated PrPres (4,5). Such cases have now been identified in a number of different countries (6–8). The origin of H-type and L-type BSE cases is unknown, but they may represent spontaneous or so-called sporadic forms of TSE, reminiscent of most cases of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease in humans. Transmission studies in wild-type mice (9) or in transgenic mice expressing the bovine PrP gene (5,10–12) have shown that the infectious agents involved in H-type and L-type BSEs differ from the single strain isolated from C-type BSE.

Epidemiologic data are crucial to our understanding of the origin of such cases, but precise prevalence needs to be determined. The prevalence in cattle can now be assessed with accuracy because exhaustive BSE testing of adult cattle was implemented in 2001 in all European member states (January 1 for abattoirs and July 1 for rendering plants). We report the results of a retrospective study to determine the frequency of H-type and L-type BSE identified in France since July 2001.

#### **G) US: Fight to curtail antibiotics in animal feed**

28.jan.08

San Francisco Chronicle

Sabin Russell

<http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/01/28/MNSTUGD8E.DTL>

Consumer advocates have, according to this story, been campaigning for years to curb the use of antibiotics in agriculture, citing studies that show that 70 percent of all U.S. antibiotics are administered in low doses - not to treat disease, but to promote the growth of pigs, sheep, chicken and cattle. Low doses of antibiotics in animal feeds have been shown to boost the speed of food-to-muscle conversion by 5 percent, and can prevent the spread of disease in the tight quarters of modern factory farms.

But as early as 1963, British researchers tied the emergence of drug-resistant strains of salmonella in humans to antibiotics fed to cattle. Among the drugs routinely found in animal feed are erythromycin, penicillin and streptomycin. Critics warn that the use of antibiotics in feed at low dosages helps to breed resistant bacteria in the gut of farm animals - threatening the future of these drugs for use in animals or humans.

Major antibiotic classes such as tetracyclines and the Cipro-like fluoroquinolones have already been compromised, according to Keep Antibiotics Working, a coalition backed by environmental groups and the American Medical Association.

The stakes are high. The Union of Concerned Scientists calculated in 2001 that U.S. farm interests were using 24.6 million pounds of anti-microbials - almost 40 percent higher than industry estimates.

Ron Phillips, vice president of the Animal Health Institute, a Washington trade group for agricultural drugmakers, was cited as saying that growth promotion accounts for only 4.5 percent of antibiotic consumption in agriculture. The rest are used to prevent, treat or control the spread of disease.

"Antibiotics," he was quoted as saying, "are a net positive for both animal health and human health."

After antibiotics were banned from animal feed in Europe beginning in 1995, Phillips added, farmers there found they had to use more antibiotics to care for illnesses that cropped up in their livestock.

Keep Antibiotics Working nevertheless is pushing for a federal ban on antibiotics in feed. Introduced by Sens. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass, and Olympia Snow, R-Maine, the "Preservation of Antibiotics for

Medical Treatment Act" would phase out in two years antibiotics deemed "important in human medicine." The story goes on to say that the FDA is considering an application for approval of the antibiotic cefquinome, a proposed veterinary drug that is similar to the human drug cefepime. In the fall of 2006, an FDA advisory committee recommended against approval.

"It was surprising what the committee did, because it was stacked with veterinarians and animal science people," Stephen Roach, director of public health programs for Keep Antibiotics Working was quoted as saying, adding

"The USDA is very reluctant to say that antibiotic use causes a problem, and the FDA has traditionally been in the middle. But I feel that in the last several years, they have been more accommodating to industry."

#### **H) UK: 'Bluetongue outbreak' fears**

28.jan.08

Manchester Evening News

Amanda Crook

[http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/s/1034055\\_bluetongue\\_outbreak\\_fears](http://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/news/s/1034055_bluetongue_outbreak_fears)

FARMERS across Greater Manchester are, according to this story, bracing themselves for news of an outbreak of the animal disease bluetongue.

Nation Farmers' Union leaders say they were expecting to hear the results today of tests on suspected cases at farms in Greater Manchester and Shropshire.

Officials from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) were cited as saying they were aware of rumours about a suspected outbreak in the north west, but could only confirm that routine tests were being carried out.

If the tests prove positive, it would mean a new 100km restriction zone in the region, which was previously free from the disease.

It could also raise worrying new questions over the disease, which is spread by midges and was previously considered unlikely to spread during the colder winter months.

They believe sheep are at the centre of the investigation, although the disease can also affect cattle.

Carl Hudspeth, from the NFU was quoted as saying, "Everyone is holding their breath for the news - we don't know what we are dealing with at the moment.

"It is all the more worrying because we had thought it was unlikely to spread in the winter when it is colder."

#### **I) UGANDA: Livestock disease hits Isingiro**

27.jan.08

Kampala

Ebenezer Bifubyeka

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200801280696.html>

FOOT and mouth, a deadly cattle disease locally known as ejjwa, has, according to this story, broken out in Isingiro, the district veterinary officer, Dr. Bruhan Kasozi, has said.

"The disease crossed with the infected cattle in Karagwe district in northern Tanzania to Endiizi and Mbale sub-counties in Bukanga County (near) the Uganda-Tanzania border," Dr. Kasozi was quoted as saying.

Dr. Kasozi was cited as saying they had imposed a quarantine on cattle and stopped livestock markets in the district so as to contain the disease, adding "Besides, we have ordered for 60,000 doses of vaccine from the ministry (of agriculture) to carry out massive vaccination."

According to the state minister for animal industry, Maj. Bright Rwamirama, anybody found transporting cattle without a permit would be jailed for seven years. He said besides affecting the country's trade in the international market, the disease had led to low production of milk and meat.

Dr. Kasozi was cited as saying traders transporting cattle illegally would pay a sh2m fine, but added that, "Some Police officers take bribes to allow infected cattle cross to Uganda."

#### **J) CANADA - Bovine Tuberculosis - latest information**

28.jan.08

From a Canadian Food Inspection Agency press release

<http://news.gc.ca/web/view/en/index.jsp?articleid=375089&categoryid=1&category=News+Releases>

The CFIA's ongoing investigation of cattle and other animals exposed to a bull infected with bovine tuberculosis (TB) has identified more than 1,000 animals of interest that may have been exposed to the disease. To date, there have been no additional confirmed cases of bovine TB among the exposed animals that have been inspected and tested as part of the investigation.

All of the animals of interest are being traced to determine their whereabouts and assess their exposure to bovine TB. All confirmed exposed animals that are still alive are being ordered destroyed and inspected and tested for the disease. There is currently no definitive test for bovine TB in live animals. Confirmatory testing requires a visual inspection of an animal's tissues followed up with laboratory testing. The farm in British Columbia where the infected bull resided remains under quarantine. All cattle on this farm have been slaughtered and inspected for signs of disease. Arrangements are being made to destroy and inspect all remaining exposed, susceptible animals on this farm. Following the removal of these animals, the premises will undergo cleaning and disinfection.

The CFIA's investigation determined that the infected bull had been sold to the BC farm directly from its birth herd in Alberta at approximately one year of age. Intensive investigation and testing on this Alberta farm has found no evidence of bovine TB and the quarantine on the farm has been removed.

The CFIA recognizes that disease investigations such as this one can present hardships for farm operators and appreciates the cooperation received to date. The Agency is endeavouring to remove quarantine restrictions as quickly as possible without compromising disease control. Animal owners are eligible to receive compensation, as per the Health of Animals Act for animals ordered destroyed as part of this investigation.

While Canada's livestock herds are considered to be free from bovine TB, isolated cases such as this one can occur during the final stages of TB eradication. Bovine TB is a reportable disease in Canada - all suspected cases must be reported to the CFIA. Whenever an infected herd is found, the CFIA institutes aggressive measures to contain and eradicate the disease. These measures are designed to protect public and animal health and help maintain Canada's bovine TB free status under the criteria established by the World Organization for Animal Health.

Bovine TB can infect all types of mammals including humans. Infection usually results from extended, close contact with an infected animal. When bovine TB is found in livestock, public health officials are notified so they can undertake the appropriate human health follow-up.

#### **K) WALES: Anthrax outbreak shows need to track livestock: RLPB**

28.jan.08

ABC Newcastle

<http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2008/01/29/2148512.htm?site=newcastle>

The rural lands protection boards (RLPB) was cited as saying in this story that the outbreak of anthrax in the New South Wales Upper Hunter is a prime example why graziers need to record the movement of livestock from one property to another.

Under the National Livestock Identification system, records must be provided by farmers to show when livestock has moved to property with a different identification code.

Animal health manager for the RLPB, Stephen Ottaway, was cited as saying when there is a disease outbreak, tracking stock movements is important and it needs to be done quickly, adding, "One of the things that the government vets need to do very quickly is identify cohorts and or other animals from that property and stop them being killed if they've gone off to a meatworks."

#### **L) GEORGIA: Old MacDonald had a hormone-marinated, pesticide-fed cow**

27.jan.08

Savannah Morning News

Anne Hart

<http://new.savannahnow.com/node/437291>

Hart writes in this column that the children's song about Old MacDonald and his farm is a favorite at her house.

But with a little twist. Here's how we sing it:

"Old MacDonald had a farm. E-I-E-I-O. And on his non-organic factory farm he had a bovine-growth-hormone marinated, antibiotic-pumped, pesticide-fed cow confined to a feedlot. E-I-E-I-O."

That's my obnoxious way of justifying shelling out \$1 to \$1.50 more for certified organic milk - even though we can't afford it.

I admit it. I'm conflicted about the question that more and more parents face on each milk run: To buy organic or not?

Every time I pluck a half gallon of organic milk off the dairy shelf, I repeat the same argument I've had with myself ever since my son started drinking cow's milk.

"You've been duped into believing that organic milk is healthier," I reprimand myself. "You're wasting money. You're a marketer's dream, easily coerced by campaigns that exploit your fears rather than rely on scientific data."

Then I remember everything I've read about conventional milk from such trusted, well-know pediatricians as Dr. Alan Greene and Dr. William Sears. Conventional milk comes from cows that are given antibiotics to keep them from getting sick, hormones to increase their milk production as well as pesticide-laced cow-feed.

Hart goes on to ask why take the risk of such substances showing up in a crucial drink that my child downs several times a day, every day?

I realize I could be throwing away money on organic milk. Especially considering that the American Academy of Pediatrics doesn't even have a policy statement on organic milk.

"So far, there's no evidence that organic milk is safer or healthier than 'regular' milk," Dr. Jatinder Bhatia told me. He's a member of the AAP Committee on Nutrition and chief of neonatology at the Department of Pediatrics at the Medical College of Georgia.

"However, if a parent chooses to feed organic milk and food because of a belief or perception that organic is better for them and can afford it, that's fine," Bhatia said. "It is just that at the current time, switching to organic cannot be justified on scientific data."

You would think the AAP would be able to encourage researchers to conduct ample medical studies on health effects of organic vs. conventional milk. After all, the news is teeming with results of studies on much less important issues ("Pig gut could offer a longer-lasting alternative to injections for filling out lips, according to a new study").

Skeptics contend there are other reasons for AAP's failure to publicly push organic milk. Such as the decrease in milk consumption and lack of adequate calcium intake among children. Questioning the safety of conventional milk may drive that down even more, especially among families who can't incur the price of organic milk.

Or is AAP's silence related to the strong influence of the National Dairy Council, which says giving cows antibiotics and bovine growth hormones does not pose health risks to milk-drinkers?

Bhatia denies such an influence: "The National Dairy Council works with the AAP, but lack of a statement from the AAP does not imply that NDC has a role in it."

A tough call

Meanwhile, parents are left wondering. Do we pay \$3.69 for a half-gallon of Horizon Organic milk, produced without the use of antibiotics, added growth hormones or pesticides?

Or take our chances with the more economical store-brand half-gallon at \$2.29?

The good news is that mass-market sales of organic milk, at big box discount stores like Target and local supermarkets, have attracted a larger group of consumers beyond the Birkenstock crowd. Often sale prices on organic milk at such stores can be cheaper or equal to conventional milk.

Plus, an increasing number of store-brand milks now come from cows not treated with rbST, an artificial hormone that helps the bovines produce more milk. So concerned parents who don't want to pay extra for certified organic milk can at least find conventional milk that's one step closer to organic.

Of course, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration says rbST isn't a health risk. But so much of what we put into our mouths today is suspect, including commodities that get a green light from the federal government.

Remember the E. coli spinach scare? Voluntary Vioxx recalls? Even certain shatterproof plastic baby bottles and sippy cups contain a chemical that could pose health risks for children.

Deciding whether to pay more for organic milk is a tough call, especially in an economy that necessitates hunting down the cheapest prices in the grocery aisle.

But when it comes to deciding what type of milk to give my child every day, I'll continue to opt for organic

while waiting for AAP to come up with a policy statement.  
Now, if only we can get Old MacDonald to turn his feedlot into a grassy, pesticide-free pasture.  
JOHN M. NEUHOLD is Utah State University's emeritus professor of natural resources. RONALD W. GOEDE is the former director of DWR's Fishery Experiment Station.



### **Got News?**

If you would like to post your cattle industry news or event, send your information by Thursday at 4pm to [lianne@cattle.guelph.on.ca](mailto:lianne@cattle.guelph.on.ca) or submit through the OCA Web site: <http://www.cattle.guelph.on.ca/calendar/calendar.asp>.

OCA will accommodate all requests within reason to the In Brief section of our update.  
NO PRODUCT ADVERTISEMENTS WILL BE ENDORSED.

### **OCA Commitment to Privacy**

OCA is committed to protecting the privacy of its members and of its service subscribers in accordance with the federal Protection of Personal Information and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA). OCA's Commitment to Privacy statement can be found at <http://www.cattle.guelph.on.ca/privacy.html>

### **To Unsubscribe**

Email addresses within the OCA Listserv system are kept strictly confidential. To unsubscribe to the list, send a message with the email address to be deleted to [lianne@cattle.guelph.on.ca](mailto:lianne@cattle.guelph.on.ca)

### **Email Address Changes**

To register a change of email address, send both your old address and new address to [lianne@cattle.guelph.on.ca](mailto:lianne@cattle.guelph.on.ca). Otherwise, the Update will continue to be sent to the old address as well.

### **Tell a Friend!**

Anyone can subscribe to the OCA Weekly Update, so forward this to a friend in the industry and tell them to sign up to receive it directly in their own Inbox!