Dairy Farmers Leading Industry Change

January 17, 2024, Guelph, Ontario

Over four years ago, CanWest DHI, Canadian Dairy Network, and Valacta came together to form Lactanet Canada, a new farmer-run national partnership of dairy cattle improvement organization with the expertise to drive innovation and evolve with a changing industry. While the formation of Lactanet was a significant step to support dairy farmers for a thriving future, it is not the last.

“Another step adapting to our changing environment is the proposed amendment of our bylaws to change the membership structure of our organization,” says Barbara Paquet, Lactanet Board Chair. “In the 43 years since the formation of Ontario DHI in 1981, the number of licensed Ontario dairy herds has decreased by more than 80% and farmer delegates felt it was simply time to adapt.”

For Ontario dairy farmers, this transition will mean that the 2024 Ontario

DHI Annual Meeting held on January 17, 2024, will be the last in its current format as a new streamlined membership structure is established. “I would like to take this opportunity to recognize and thank each of the Ontario DHI delegates for your support of our organization,” expressed Paquet. “You have had a dual role of being a representative of both Ontario DHI and Dairy Farmers of Ontario, and we greatly appreciate your contribution since this change took effect in 2015”.

Lactanet also emphasized its commitment to Net Zero 2050, reiterating the sustainability tools that are available to all dairy farmers. “While our Methane Efficiency Evaluation was the highlight of 2023, we are proud to back this important national industry initiative by further delivering and developing sustainability tools for efficient dairy production on each farm,” mentions Lactanet’s Chief Executive Officer, Neil Petreny.

Other changes for dairy farmers effective January 1, 2024, include lactations reaching 280-days, where animals can receive projected BCA’s if they dry prior to 305-days – with actual production remaining. “Another change that Lactanet customers have been anticipating that is now available is the option of having lactations calculated with component sensor data shared with breed associations for inclusion on pedigree records,” stated Petreny.

As the Lactanet Board of Directors is dedicated to helping the dairy industry reach its full potential, three departing directors were also recognized for their contribution to the creation of Lactanet and its formative success: Harm Kelly from Ontario, Matthew Flaman from Saskatchewan, and Ed Friesen from Manitoba. Harm was further recognized for his leadership as part of the CanWest DHI board since 2016.

For additional details, watch the video: Lactanet A Year In Review: Accomplishments, Statistics and What’s Ahead for 2024.

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