



Dr. Gerrit Kistemaker Receives Dairy Industry Distinction Award

Guelph, Ontario & Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue, Québec, August 28, 2025

On behalf of all organizations involved in the Canadian dairy cattle improvement industry, Lactanet Canada is pleased to announce Dr. Gerrit Kistemaker as the 2025 recipient of the Dairy Cattle Improvement Industry Distinction Award.

Gerrit Kistemaker was born on a dairy farm in the Netherlands and received BSc and MSc degrees at Wageningen University. He then travelled to Canada where he received his PhD degree in Animal Breeding and Genetics from the University of Guelph, under the supervision of Dr. Larry Schaeffer, who was the 2011 recipient of the Dairy Cattle Industry Distinction Award. Following the creation of Canadian Dairy Network (CDN), as Canada's dairy cattle genetic evaluation centre, Gerrit was hired in May 1998 to join the first group of geneticists that established the groundwork for CDN. A year later, in

1999, Gerrit was promoted to the position of Chief Geneticist – a role that he proudly served for 25 years to the benefit of the dairy cattle improvement industry in Canada and internationally.

As Chief Geneticist, Gerrit worked diligently for the timely delivery of accurate national genetic evaluations for all dairy cattle breeds in Canada. He was highly dedicated to the success of CDN services, including the improvement of existing systems and the continuous development and implementation of new traits valued by the Canadian dairy industry. During his 25-year career as manager of genetic evaluation services, Gerrit was directly responsible for the successful delivery of 83 official genetic evaluation releases. More specifically, Gerrit was actively involved in the introduction of all new traits and major methodology improvements including the Canadian Test Day Model in 1999, Pro\$ in 2015, Feed Efficiency in 2021 and Methane Efficiency in 2023, just to name a few.



While Gerrit's contributions were evident throughout his entire career, his single most important accomplishment was Canada's introduction of genomic evaluations. Under his technical leadership, the first Canadian genomic evaluations were launched in August 2009, making Canada amongst the first countries worldwide. As Canada's leading geneticist at CDN and Lactanet, Gerrit was an active voting member of the Genetic Evaluation Board (GEB) for his entire career. On the international scene, Gerrit was also one of the inaugural members of the Interbull Technical Committee when it was created in the late 1990s, which was at the time when the Interbull Centre was expanding its MACE services from only production to also include conformation traits.

As Lactanet Board Chair, Barbara Paquet, states "We are especially proud to posthumously recognize one of our own longstanding employees who has directly contributed so significantly to Canada's genetic evaluation services." This prestigious recognition will be presented to Gerrit's family during the 2025 Dairy Cattle Industry Forum on September 16-17 at the Marriott Airport Hotel in Montreal.

Lactanet Canada is the leading dairy herd improvement organization responsible for milk recording, genetic evaluations, herd management software solutions, knowledge transfer and dairy cattle traceability. As a farmer-run organization serving all Canadian dairy producers, Lactanet provides the dairy industry with products and services to help manage their dairy operation for maximum efficiency and profitability.

For more information, contact:

[Brian Van Doormaal](#)

Chief Services Officer

Lactanet Canada