



Guide to the Sustainability Index

January 14, 2022

The purpose of this index is to use milk recording data to provide a picture of the sustainability of Canadian dairy herds.

Data and Calculation Principle

The data used to create this index was selected by a committee of dairy industry experts. Thus, 10 criteria were used for the calculation of the Sustainability Index. The Sustainability Index is generated three times a year, at the same time as the genetic evaluations are published, in April, August and December.

The Sustainability Index in three steps:

1. A percentile rank (1-99) is assigned for each of the ten parameters of the Sustainability Index. These parameters are grouped under four themes
1. For all herds on milk recording, the ten percentile ranks obtained are summed
1. According to the calculated sum, the herds are finally reclassified in percentile rank

And now we have the Sustainability Index!

It is important to note that to have a Sustainability Index, the farm must have at least 7 out of 10 parameters available at milk recording. For missing data, a percentile rank of 50 is applied.

The **blue line** represents the percentile rank of the most current calculation, and the black bar represents that of the previous calculation. You can display the details by hovering your mouse over these elements. This is the same principle for all the graphs in the report.

On the right side of the graph, the difference between the current assessment and the last percentile assessment is displayed as a number. **Green** represents a **positive change** while **red** represents a **negative change**.

History

The history of the last two years for the Sustainability Index and for all

parameters is available by selecting the History button. By hovering over the dots on the graph, you will be able to see the details of it.

Longevity and Culling

Cows in 3rd lactation and over (%)

Involuntary Culling (%)

Cow Mortality Rate (%)

Feeding and Production

MUN <5 or > 18 mg N/dL (%)

Management Score - Milk (kg)

Transition Cow Index

Heifers

Calf Mortality Rate 0-24 hr (%)

Age at First Calving (months)

Health

Cows with BHB >0.20 mmol/ l milk (%)

Cows >200,000 cells/ml (%)

The Sustainability Index is now available in Quebec and the Atlantic provinces. It will then be available in the other provinces later this year.