

**Guelph, Ontario & Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue, Québec, April 9, 2021** – This week marks an important highlight in the history of dairy cattle improvement services in Canada as Lactanet introduced the first genetic evaluations for **Feed Efficiency** in the Holstein breed.

Feed is a major expense on every dairy farm and represents more than half of on-farm production expenses. Some animals are more efficient at converting feed at the bunk to milk in the tank - the primary source of income for dairy producers. Lactanet's new Feed Efficiency evaluation focuses on selection for improved biological efficiency without affecting production levels or body size and aims to minimize stress during the transition period.

“We are very proud of the launch of new genomic evaluations for Feed Efficiency, which positions Canada among global leaders in terms of the opportunity for genetic selection to improve the production efficiency of dairy cattle”, stated Neil Petreny, Lactanet CEO, “and provide Canadian dairy farmers with additional savings for their everyday operations”. Lactanet Board Chair, Barbara Paquet, added “The Board recognizes and appreciates the significant time and effort invested by Lactanet staff, other industry personnel and the highly qualified team of research scientists involved in this initiative to reach this pivotal successful outcome”.

This week's launch of Feed Efficiency evaluations was made possible through a large-scale international research project that spanned from 2015 to 2020. This *Efficient Dairy Genome Project* was a Canadian-led collaboration involving Lactanet as the major industry funding partner and a joint research team from the University of Guelph and University of Alberta. This \$10.3M initiative also received much appreciated funding from Genome Canada, Genome Alberta, Ontario Genomics, Alberta and Ontario Ministries of Agriculture and the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities. Only four months after this project's completion, Lactanet brings this latest world-leading innovation in research to dairy farms across Canada in the form of genetic evaluations for Feed Efficiency.

Initially, Feed Efficiency evaluations are available only for genotyped bulls in A.I. and females in herds enrolled on Lactanet's milk-recording services, but access will be available to all Canadian herd owners before the end of the year. For every 5-point increase in a sire's Feed Efficiency evaluation, the daughters are expected to reduce their total dry matter intake after peak lactation by 60 kg without impacting production levels or body weight – each and every lactation.

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 more than 8,000 Canadian dairy producers, Lactanet provides the dairy industry with products and services to help manage their dairy operation for maximum efficiency and profitability.

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