

NATIONAL FARM ANIMAL CARE COUNCIL
CONSEIL NATIONAL POUR LES SOINS AUX ANIMAUX D'ÉLEVAGE



Dairy Animal Care Assessment Program

Implementing the Dairy Code –
Mooving Ahead with Animal Care
October 9, 2013

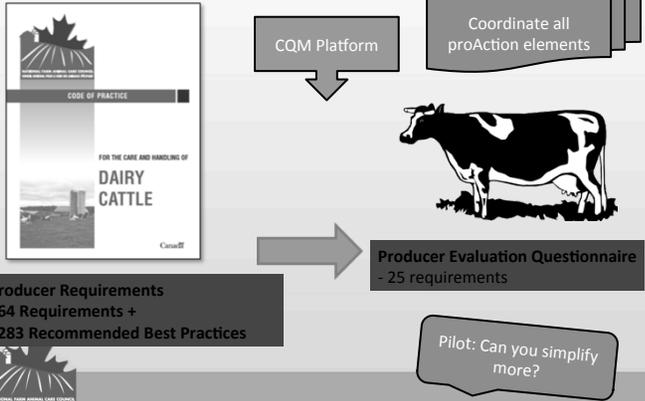
Ron Maynard – Dairy Program Chair

How did this all come about?



- Spring 2011**: NFACC approached DFC to help develop the Model.
- June 2011**: Board approves the participation to help NFACC.
- Aug 2011**: NFACC consultation of ag & food stakeholders on the Model.
- Oct 2011**: Dairy group facilitator Lisa Pierce hired by NFACC.
- Nov 2011**: Dairy group formed to develop dairy program based on NFACC draft model.
- Jan 2012**: First meeting of that group.
- 2012-2013**: 7 meetings or conference calls of the group to develop DRAFT program.
- Feb 2013**: First pilot test on UBC farm March – training of validators.
- May-July 2013**: 37 farms participate in pilot.
- Sep 2013**: Final meeting of dairy group in the NFACC "Framework" project.

Assessing The Dairy Code of Practice



CODE OF PRACTICE
 FOR THE CARE AND HANDLING OF
DAIRY CATTLE

CQM Platform

Coordinate all proAction elements

Producer Evaluation Questionnaire
 - 25 requirements

Producer Requirements
 =64 Requirements +
 =283 Recommended Best Practices

Pilot: Can you simplify more?

How do we assess or measure each of the 25 requirements?

You manage what you measure.
Temple Grandin



Our first challenge

Dairy Code was developed in 2008-09 without the development of an assurance program in mind.

HOW do we *measure* if farmers meet requirements?

Dairy Code was not developed using formal risk assessment approach, unlike CQM*

*CQM – Canadian Quality Milk is the on-farm food safety program for dairy



So how should we measure animal care, well-being?

- ▶ DFC has a long tradition of funding research
- ▶ **Animal Care** is a key priority area
- ▶ So we asked respected dairy welfare researchers to look at the Code and how they would measure animal care
- ▶ This research has considerably helped the dairy committee in its work in terms of suggesting “animal based measures” (*ex: injury, cleanliness*)
 - ▶ These measures cover several Code requirements
 - ▶ Adding management practices that are useful on farms to ensure consistency among practices of different family members and other employees.



CQM

- ▶ With CQM, we already measure critical control points that could pose a risk to food safety – such as the temperature of the milk and the wash water.
- ▶ We have an independent validators’ network



DFC already has a network for validating CQM

- ▶ A national network of validators check and certify farms for following the *Canadian Quality Milk* program
- ▶ Developing key points that can be assessed by these validators would complement the management and animal based measures.
- ▶ We want these validators to have a role in delivering the animal care assessment program – to avoid multiple auditors going on farms.
- ▶ We want to take advantage of this network to integrate traceability, quality and biosecurity measures as well. We believe in having one integrated program of farm practices that speak to quality and sustainability.



NFACC Framework for developing assessments

NFACC believes that an assessment program, based on Code of Practice should bring the following benefits:

1. Facilitate and accelerate technology transfer on farms
2. Provide **assurances** to buyers
3. **Celebrate achievements** of farmers, assist them in meeting their management goals for animal health, care & welfare
4. Provide a mechanism for **continuous improvement** in animal care and welfare
5. Inform future changes to the Codes of Practice.



Dairy perspective on these benefits (1)

1. We are interested in providing **assurances** to buyers
 - ▶ We think farmers should lead in defining sustainability and quality, with experts in their industry.
 - ▶ Yet we see various initiatives being undertaken by food businesses...
2. **Celebrate achievements** of farmers, assist them in meeting their management goals for animal health, care & welfare
 - ▶ Gain for farmers: increased productivity
 - ▶ Collective gain for marketing: independent certification is a way to reinforce the image of Canadian dairy products



Continuous Improvement

Continuous improvement is key in the dairy industry

- ▶ Farmers already committed to animal care
- ▶ Fact: healthy, comfortable cows produce more milk – and of higher quality.
- ▶ *A stressed cow will not meet her genetic potential*



What is DFC's priorities for the assessment program?

Establishment of program priorities – are we trying to address the 'problem' farms or move the entire industry forward?

Or both?!



Dairy's Perspective on Benefits (2)

- 3. Provide a mechanism for **continuous improvement** in animal care and welfare
 - ▶ Dairy leaders have decided the program will be implemented on **all** farms.
 - ▶ The first two years on farms: benchmarking. Advice, training, education offered.
 - ▶ We need to first help the farms that need to improve most – those the research shows to be the “bottom 25%”
 - ▶ Education, training, consistent advice are crucial
- 4. **Tech transfer** fits well as research and experience will inform future changes to the Code of Practice. That is continuous improvement.



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Test pilot of the Draft Assessment Program

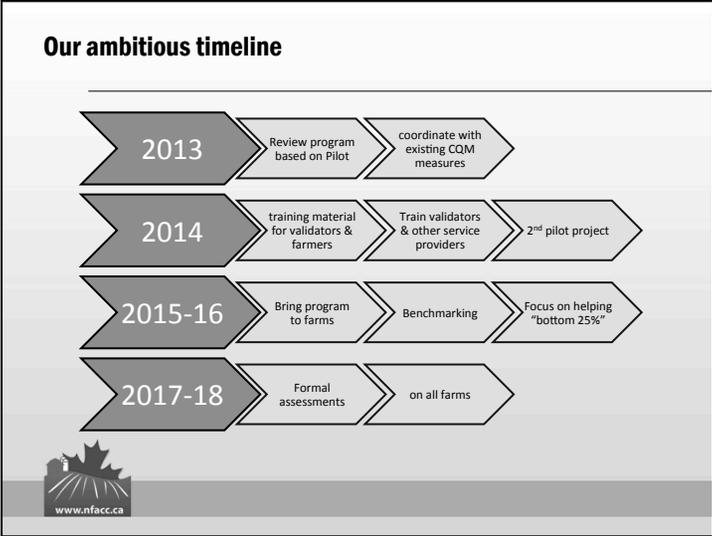
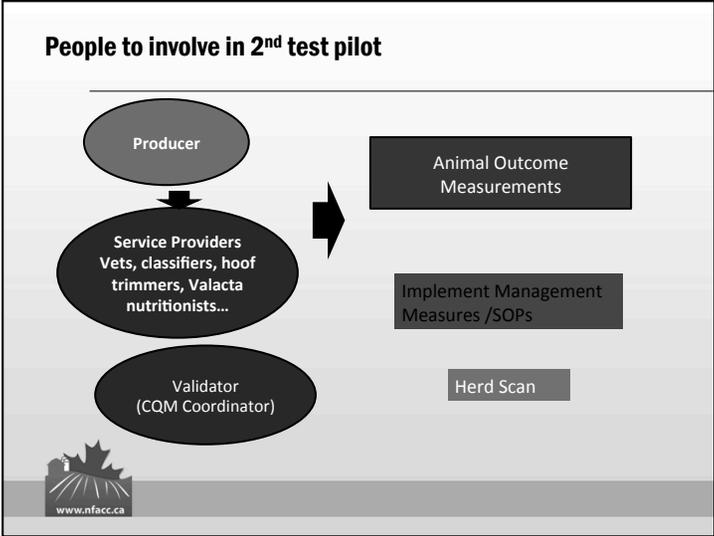
- ▶ We relied on volunteers to participate in the test pilot
- ▶ ‘In general, producers in the pilot saw why we want to do this...’
- ▶ Farmers’ impressions
 - ▶ *‘How many times do I have to be judged?’*
 - ▶ *‘This is interesting way to evaluate, I will use that on my farm!’*
 - ▶ *‘I am actually doing a good job and you have confirmed it.’*

Key lesson learned:

- ▶ Need to work with veterinarians, breed association /classifiers, other stakeholders to tap in their expertise and discuss their role in this program and assuring animal welfare generally
- ▶ This was a “test pilot of the test pilot”
- ▶ Let’s take time to work this out and test pilot again, to get it right!



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The Dairy Team

We had a big team involved in the development of the dairy assessment program, they all worked hard and brought valuable insight to the process.

- ▶ Farmers, producer staff, CQM coordinators, processor,
- ▶ Researchers, veterinarians, retail representatives
- ▶ Canadian Federation of Humane Societies
- ▶ NFACC

A big Thank you for your valuable input!

