

# THE Connection

Winter 2020 Volume 2, No. 4



**VEAL**  
Farmers  
of Ontario

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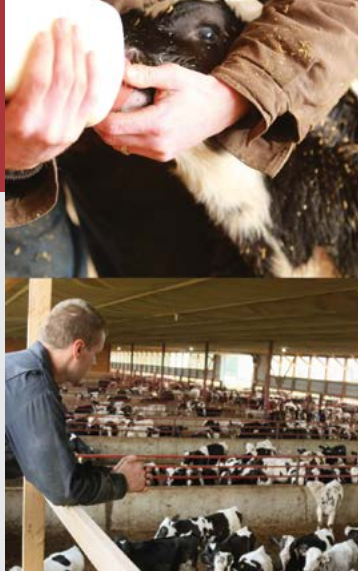
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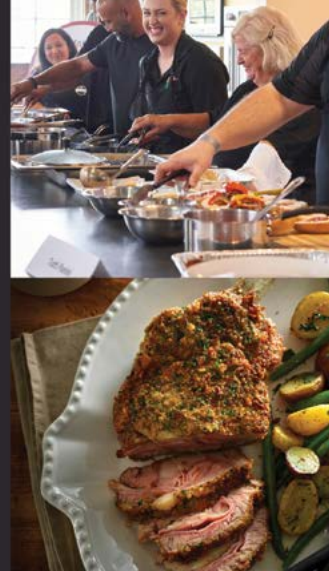


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## Chair's MESSAGE



Pascal Bouilly

# Harnessing the benefits of going virtual

The past several months of the global pandemic have challenged us all to think outside the box and approach things differently. We have all had to make changes to the way we do things. But we have also been given opportunities to re-think, re-learn, and re-imagine new ways to do these things that are important.

I have had the pleasure of meeting with Minister Hardeman a few times now via Zoom to discuss the importance of the Risk Management Program to the veal sector. Each of these meetings was 30 to 40 minutes tops. If we were meeting in person, that would have taken me the entire day off the farm to get into Toronto, attend the meeting, and get back out of Toronto (usually in rush hour traffic). While it is important to have face-to-face contact, it is my hope that we will retain some of these new ways of meeting as it is far more efficient for everyone.

This year, our Healthy Calf Conference (HCC) went virtual. While I know some people miss the networking and socializing of these types of conferences, I have had some feedback that many appreciated not having to leave the farm or family to be able to attend and participate. Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) did not want to lose our momentum with this popular producer education event, so we went outside the box! Thanks to our sponsors and industry partners who supported the concept—VFO had almost 400 people register for the HCC, and participants came from across Ontario, Canada, and around the world even! We have been able to extend our reach and amplify the message of how important calf care is!

Since March, the VFO Board has gone virtual as well. I believe one of the benefits of meeting

virtually for your VFO Board of Directors has been our ability to meet more frequently. Rather than a day-long meeting off the farm, the VFO Board has been meeting on Zoom at least twice a month, but for two or three hours at a time. This allows us, as farmers, to still be able to get the chores done and manage our business without having to take the day away from the farm and family. I will admit I was worried about this in the beginning and how would it work, but I believe it has allowed us to remain nimble—reduce travel time and expenses—and improve our productivity as an organization.

We are now looking ahead to our 2021 Annual General Meeting (AGM), and at this time the meeting will be held virtually given the uncertainty with Covid and restrictions on meeting spaces. More information will be coming out shortly on our plans for the AGM, including a series of virtual workshops. The AGM is also your opportunity to elect your representatives to the VFO Board of Directors. But, to have a Board, we need producers like you willing to put their names forward for nomination.

Personally, I can say that my time on the Board has been very rewarding. I have learnt so much about the veal sector, the needs of our members and partners, and how all the government programs work. As Chair, I have had the privilege of meeting and working with other industry leaders on our common issues, which has allowed me to better understand and appreciate the realities we all face in agriculture. I enjoy the opportunity to learn from the other Board members about their operations. Being able to contribute to the discussions and decision-making that help to shape our sector has been gratifying. I

really encourage all of you to consider becoming a member of the VFO Board and submit your nomination. If you have any questions about becoming part of the Board, please reach out to any one of the Board members, you can find their contact information on the last page of the magazine.

As we approach the holiday season, I wanted to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt appreciation to our VFO staff for their dedication and commitment to our sector. These past several months, our staff have risen to the challenges and ensured VFO's issues remained a top priority. I know without a doubt that the VFO Board and all of us as producers appreciate the work that they do on our behalf. Thank you, Jen, Kendra, Molly, Jen, Patrick, and Geoff.

I would also like to thank my fellow VFO Board of Directors for their contributions to our board discussions and deliberations. Your input and perspectives have been very much appreciated as we all work together for the common goals of the Ontario veal industry. The board and staff together make a great team!

As we come to the close of 2020—a year that has had so many highs and lows—I am looking forward to the hope of 2021. Wishing each of you and your families a Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays, and here is to a healthy, prosperous and Happy New Year! ■





# Join the VFO Board of Directors!

## Call for nominations now open

The Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) Board of Directors is seeking interested veal and dairy calf producers to get involved in our organization. Your input into the future direction of the organization is vital to maintaining a strong and active voice for VFO. All voting producer members of VFO, with their membership in good standing, are eligible for nomination.

VFO directors are provided a meeting per diem of \$250/day and reimbursement for travel expenses. Directors actively participate in approximately eight to 10 board meetings per year. Board meetings are currently held online, but in the future can be a combination of in-person, online, and conference calls with in-person meetings held at our offices in Guelph. Directors work on behalf of the Ontario dairy calf and veal sector on projects, issues, and initiatives that benefit the membership of the organization.

Interested candidates must complete a self-nomination form found at [vealfarmers.ca](http://vealfarmers.ca) and submit it by no later than January 29, 2021 for review by the Nominating Committee. There will be no nominations from the floor accepted. Elections, if required, will take place at the virtual VFO Annual General Meeting on Wednesday, March 3, 2021.

For more information, please contact:

Jennifer Haley, Executive Director at 519-824-2942 or [jhaley@vealfarmers.ca](mailto:jhaley@vealfarmers.ca)



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Jennifer Haley

## Silver linings found in 2020

Well what a year 2020 has turned out to be! Like many of you, I am looking forward to turning the page on the calendar to see what 2021 will bring. Despite all the challenges this year has brought, I am always amazed at how the agriculture sector keeps doing what it does best—producing food! Thank you to each of you involved in the agri-food supply chain for being part of the essential front line.

Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) just wrapped up its first virtual Healthy Calf Conference, and we are so thrilled with how the conference came together and the response we have received from participants. When it became clear that large in-person events were not able to be held for quite some time, we went outside the box and re-imagined what our popular biennial event could look like. We could not have been happier with the outcome for all our sponsors, industry partners, and for our conference participants. There was a great line-up of speakers and information that could all be viewed at your leisure, or live, without having to travel any further than your desk at home! Thanks to the VFO staff for taking on the challenge of learning how to host an online conference.

This fall has also been busy with several important issues being managed on behalf of the veal sector. The Board has been busy ensuring there is a veal voice on several issues, including the consultations on the specifics of Bill 156 *Security from Trespass and Protecting Food Safety Act*. This is an important piece of legislation to protect you, your family, your livestock, and your farm business.

A big thank you to the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and to those of you, like VFO, who submitted objections to personal information being released related to your Farm Business Registration Number. The Freedom of Information request, while now withdrawn, was a very charged issue for Ontario's farmers. No one should have open access to names and addresses of Ontario's farms and farm families.

VFO is waiting on news of proposed amendments to our Veal Regulations being finalized which, among other things, will see those producers who sell finished veal cattle in sales barns become VFO members and their licence fees directed to VFO (currently their check-off goes to Beef Farmers of Ontario). With this amendment we can close the loop on veal producers and membership so that all veal and male dairy calf producers are captured under the VFO umbrella. This change will also help VFO round out its Board of Directors with additional opportunities for representation.

As well, VFO continues to work on the review of the Veal Risk Management Program (RMP). With the announcement earlier this year of an additional \$50 million into the RMP, Minister Hardeman signaled a need to look at how to make the RMP more insurance-like moving forward. The RMP is the only program available to veal farmers to help manage risk and it is critically important VFO ensures that the program remains responsive to the challenges of the veal market conditions.

As we move into the holiday season, we look forward to our traditionally strong retail veal market. We have seen the power of buying local, fresh veal throughout this Covid period and grain-fed veal demand remains steady. However, the milk-fed sector has experienced the opposite with the closure of the hospitality and tourism sector. Not only is Canada putting a lot of milk-fed veal in deep frozen storage but so are the rest of the top veal-producing countries. I am worried about what the markets

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will look like down the road, and the impact on price for all veal cattle farmers, when the time comes for the hospitality sector to re-open and pull that veal out of storage.

The Canadian Veal Association (CVA) worked with industry partners and the federal government to ensure that veal was on a prioritized list of commodities that were eligible for the Surplus Food Rescue Program. The CVA worked with a few organizations that were putting in applications for funding and matched them with our processors who had frozen veal available. This was important to reduce the level of frozen veal stocks and provide some return on the costs so that we could prevent a future glut of veal on the market down the road.

The holiday season will certainly be different from many this year. We know from the feedback we are getting from consumers that they are cooking with veal more at home now and are looking for a special meal to create at home to still try and celebrate the season. Check out our Ontario veal Holiday advertisement that can be found now in the LCBO Food & Drink magazine—the mouth-watering veal roast looks so delicious and inspiring. We know from our consumer market research that recipes and meal inspiration is very important to encourage the purchase of Ontario veal. Even though the holidays will be different this year, we also know

consumers are looking to plan special meals for their families now more than ever. Maybe you will be inspired to try this recipe as well for your family!

VFO has always strived to bring value to our members and ensure we are working on the issues that matter most to you and your farm. If you have a question, concern or suggestion please reach out to your Board or staff at any time. Call the office, send in an e-mail, reach out to a Director—keep the lines of communication open.

The past several months has been intense for everyone as we move through the challenges of a global pandemic. We have all found new ways of doing things, pivoting, and becoming more efficient, learning a new skill, or changing the way things have always been done. This has been a silver lining to the mess that 2020 has been. Here is to a better tomorrow and a healthy and prosperous 2021. Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays. ■



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# First-ever virtual Healthy Calf Conference a smashing success!



Nearly 400 attendees joined Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) for our first-ever virtual Building the Foundation: Dairy and Veal Healthy Calf Conference (HCC) on Tuesday, November 24th, 2020.

The ninth biennial HCC brought innovative ideas to an international audience of dairy, veal, and dairy-beef producers, veterinarians, industry partners, students, and researchers. Expert speakers offered advice on all aspects of calf management, including health, nutrition, welfare, and housing, providing insight into practical ways to improve their well-being and performance.

"Animal care is a top priority for VFO, and this conference has been an important way for us to bring the latest information to producers, veterinarians, and industry partners. We were thrilled to be able to extend our reach even further at this year's Healthy Calf Conference," said Kendra Keels, VFO's Industry Development Director.

With this year's new virtual format, the HCC delivered the same high-quality content in a more flexible way, with three live presentations and four pre-recorded sessions, to allow attendees to access the conference material at a convenient time.

Following a welcome from VFO Chair Pascal Bouilly, the live presentations were kicked off by Aaron Keunen from Maplevue Agri. Ltd., discussing attributes of effective calf electrolytes and the results of recent research studies published in the *Journal of Dairy Science*.

The talk by the Saskatoon Colostrum Company's Dr. Michael Nagorske sparked thoughtful questions from attendees as he shared the latest research in bioactives in colostrum and reinforced the importance of colostrum's role in calf health and disease resistance. Watch our Calf Care Corner Facebook page in the coming weeks for the answers to some of the questions on transition milk that we were not able to cover during the live event.

Dr. Joao Costa from the University of Kentucky headlined the live program with insights into group housing calves, including how to best transition the calves to reap long-term benefits of early socialization and proper nutrition while avoiding challenges with health and behaviour. His practical

advice on how to balance disease management and the benefits of group housing provided attendees with key concepts they should consider when making changes to how they manage calves on their farms.

As part of the conference package, attendees also received access to the 2020 Healthy Calf Conference portal on [www.calfcare.ca](http://www.calfcare.ca), a password-protected page housing the pre-recorded talks by Dr. Mike Van Amburgh, Cornell University, Dr. Steve Roche, ACER Consulting, Dr. Jodi Wallace, Ormstown Veterinary Hospital, and Kendra Keels, VFO, digital proceedings, and exclusive calf care resources.

Complementing the event, VFO is launching the newly revised second edition of the "Building the Foundation for Healthy Calves II" manual. Ontario veal and dairy producers will receive a copy with this issue of *The Connection* or the *Milk Producer*, depending on whether they are subscribed to one or both publications.

"This resource has been updated to give producers the newest recommendations when it comes to caring for the calves," said Keels. "The basic principles of calf raising are the same, whether your calves are destined for the milking herd or meat production, and we want to get all calves off to a healthy start," she added. ■





# Thank you to our sponsors of the 2020 Healthy Calf Conference

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# Water for veal cattle

Is this essential nutrient getting the attention it deserves on your farm?



Megan Van Schaik, Beef Cattle Specialist

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs

Water is considered an elixir of life for good reason. It is a necessary component to sustain life and is a critical factor in many physiological functions in the body, on both an intra- and extra-cellular level. Water is responsible for carrying nutrients and waste, helps to regulate body temperature, plays a critical role in homeostasis, lubricates the joints, helps drive dry matter intake, and is fundamentally needed for growth and development in veal cattle.

Cattle derive water to meet requirements primarily through ingestion of water in feed and through free water intake, but also through metabolism of nutrients in the body to a much lesser extent. As important as this nutrient is, water quality, availability, and consumption are often overlooked.

## Water quantity

While young calves fed a mostly liquid diet will get most of their water from milk or milk replacer, it is still necessary for calves to be offered fresh water every day from birth. Access to clean, free-choice water is important to increasing dry matter intake and rumen development. Where milk will bypass the rumen via the esophageal groove, water and starter feed enter the rumen when consumed to support the development of papillae and the rumen microbiome. Approximately four litres of water intake is needed for every one kilogram of starter intake. A number of studies have demonstrated that calves offered adequate fresh water daily will consume more dry feed and gain more.

Of course, it is also important for older veal cattle to have access to clean, fresh water on a daily basis. Requirements for water are influenced by rate of gain, activity, type of diet, and feed intake. Keep in mind that temperature and humidity also impact water requirements of cattle, so when those temperatures rise in the summer months, your cattle will need and will drink more water (*Table 1*).

## Water quality

The old adage of 'you can bring a horse to water, but you can't make it drink' has merit in a literal sense. But there are certainly a number of things you can do to encourage water intake in livestock. Making it readily available in adequate volumes where it is easily accessible is important, but the quality of water being offered is equally important. Poor quality water can reduce palatability and consumption, and can lead to health issues.

What do you need to consider in terms of water quality and encouraging intake by veal cattle?

- Odour and taste
- Physiochemical properties including pH, total dissolved solids, total dissolved oxygen, and hardness
- Toxic compounds such as heavy metals, toxic minerals, organo-phosphates, and hydrocarbons
- Excess minerals or compounds (nitrates, sodium, sulfates, and iron)
- Microbiological contaminants (bacteria, viruses, protozoa, and fungal contaminants)

**Table 1. Approximate total daily water intake for growing cattle**

	Weight		Air Temperature in °C					
	kg	lb	to 4°C	10°C	14°C	21°C	27°C	32°C
<b>Water Intake for Growing Cattle (L)</b>	185	400	15	16	19	22	25	36
	273	600	20	22	25	30	34	48
	364	800	23	26	30	35	40	57

Adapted from NRC Beef Cattle 2016



The best approach to reducing microbial contamination is prevention. Keep water feeders and buckets clean and free from manure and other contaminants from the environment. Periodic water testing is recommended for effective water quality oversight.

While testing for bacteria and mineral content should be done routinely, a more comprehensive water test may be required for troubleshooting purposes. Water test results often come with guidelines for acceptable levels for livestock, but it is worth discussing results with your feed consultant and veterinarian.

A number of contaminants such as nitrates, sodium chloride, and sulfates are known to affect cattle performance and health, but other water quality factors may cause poor performance or health issues and should be considered when investigating these issues on-farm. Keep in mind that younger calves tend to be more sensitive to mineral levels in water and sodium levels in particular. Sodium is especially important to consider and monitor when water used for milk replacer or free-choice water has been passed through a water softener.

In conclusion, water is an essential nutrient to veal cattle that warrants close attention. Offering a source of clean, fresh free-choice water is a necessary for the health and growth of cattle. Test water routinely for quality parameters and share your results with your feed consultant and veterinarian. ■

References available upon request.

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# Disease surveillance and disease testing project for newly introduced mature cattle



The Bovine Ontario Animal Health Network (OAHN) regularly reviews health and laboratory data from cattle to determine disease trends and necessary response in Ontario. This past summer we had a generally uneventful summer for cattle disease. The most common submissions amongst young calves less than eight weeks were for diagnosis of the causes of neonatal diarrhea. Among older calves, pneumonia was the most common problem, although there were fewer cases of pneumonia over the summer than in the previous fall and winter quarters. *Salmonella* Dublin, a disease that causes severe pneumonia and high mortality in calves was diagnosed on eight lab submissions, representing two different premises. *Salmonella* Dublin is of concern to the bovine industry as the strains identified in Ontario are resistant to multiple antibiotics and infection can also be acquired by people, causing severe illness and frequently requiring hospitalization.

The OAHN bovine network has also launched a new project. The goal of the project is to encourage beef and dairy producers to test cattle at the time of purchase for disease before introducing them to their herd. This will also allow the OAHN bovine network to increase surveillance for two emerging diseases, *Salmonella* Dublin and Anaplasmosis, among a higher risk population.

Producers who have recently purchased mature cattle can submit samples for a panel of free tests that includes *Salmonella* Dublin, *Bovine Leukemia Virus*, *Mycobacterium avium paratuberculosis* (Johnes), and *Anaplasma marginale* via their herd veterinarian. The project is open for cattle two years of age and above purchased in the previous 365 days.

Although this project specifically looks at mature cattle, there is benefit to all facets of cattle production to prevent the introduction of infectious diseases, particularly to dairy herds that source calves to veal operations. Also, the project will increase surveillance for emerging diseases such as Anaplasmosis and *Salmonella* Dublin in the province of Ontario. More details on the project can be found at <https://www.oahn.ca/resources/oahn-bovine-research-project-disease-testing-for-newly-introduced-cattle/>. ■



The Bovine Ontario Animal Health Network is a group of veterinarians and specialists working in government, university research and laboratory, and in beef, dairy, and veal practice who meet regularly to monitor and discuss disease trends in Ontario. Our goals are to facilitate coordinated preparedness, early detection, and response to animal health and welfare in Ontario. For our recent reports or more information visit [www.oahn.ca](http://www.oahn.ca).

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# INNOVATION IN ELECTROLYTES

After thorough research and development, a new line of calf electrolytes has finally hit the market, and is taking it by storm. These new products are Truvitalyte and Truvitalyte-MAX. Both utilize a blend of mixed buffers or alkalizing agents to properly rehydrate the calf. These electrolyte powders provide a less expensive but effective alternative to current products on the market.

These new products are coming to the market from a Canadian company: TruVital Animal Health. Their goal is to develop products that will help to responsibly reduce the use of antibiotics and encourage on farm management practices that contribute to a preventative as well as therapeutic action against health challenges.

Truvitalyte-MAX is a new and innovative product, because unlike many other electrolyte products on the market it has the added benefit of a comprehensive vitamin package with B vitamins (Biotin, Niacinamide, Riboflavin, Pyridoxine hydrochloride,

Thiamine, Folic Acid) as well as Vitamin E and Vitamin C. These vitamins are important to replace any nutrients lost as a result of diarrhea, especially when milk is refused. It also contains a MOS (Mannan oligosaccharide) used to help bind pathogens therefore passing them through the feces.

The key components of Truvitalyte and Truvitalyte-MAX that were focused on in development were:

- Blood buffers or alkalizing agents: Used to correct metabolic acidosis
- Sodium: Required to correct dehydration due to losses caused by diarrhea
- Glycine: An amino acid that acts as a carrier for proper sodium absorption in the intestine
- Potassium: Assists with bodily functions and is required to restore depleted potassium stores as a result of diarrhea
- Energy (Glucose): Essential to help correct a negative energy balance
- Chloride: Has many functions but is used to balance strong ion difference (an important component of proper sodium absorption)



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The Mapleview Agri Research Team has also welcomed Masters students and PhD candidates from the University of Guelph to complete their project research.

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# Indoor calf housing requirements



Kendra Keels

Industry Development Director



In the last issue of *The Connection*, the outdoor housing requirements from the *Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Veal Cattle* (the Code) were covered, thoroughly sparking lots of discussion. In this issue we will cover the requirements for indoor veal cattle housing.

## Effective December 31, 2020, in all holdings:

Calves must be housed in groups as young as possible and not later than eight weeks of age. Time in individual housing can only be extended past eight weeks of age in exceptional circumstances for the health and welfare of individual calves on the advice of the herd veterinarian according to the herd health plan.

### **Transition to group housing methods – New or renovated facilities**

Effective July 1, 2018, in all holdings which are newly built, substantially renovated, brought into use, or where existing stalls are modified:

Calves must be housed in groups as young as possible and not later than eight weeks of age. Time in individual housing can only be extended past eight weeks of age in exceptional circumstances for the health and welfare of individual calves on the advice of the herd veterinarian according to the herd health plan.

If individual housing is used in the first eight weeks of age, it must allow calves to turn completely around without assistance, groom, adopt sternal and lateral resting postures, easily stand up and lie down, and have visual and physical contact with other cattle. This can be achieved through stall design, stall size and/or the timing of when calves are grouped.

### **Tethering – Indoor facilities**

Effective July 1, 2018, in facilities that are newly built, substantially renovated, brought into use, or where existing stalls are modified, those facilities must not be designed to permit tethering, and calves in those facilities must not be tethered.

## Effective December 31, 2020, tethering of calves is prohibited.

### **Existing individual stalls that do not allow lateral resting**

Existing stalls where calves are housed untethered may be used after July 1, 2018, provided:

- they are in good condition and allow calves to groom, adopt a sternal resting posture, easily stand up and lie down, and have visual contact with other cattle, and

- effective December 31, 2020, calves are grouped as young as possible and not later than eight weeks of age.

Existing stalls that meet the above requirements (for “Existing individual stalls”) and where less than 50 per cent of each of the two side panels is solid (thus permitting physical and visual contact between calves) may be used for the lifetime of the stall.

**Effective July 1, 2033, existing stalls where more than 50 per cent of the side panels is solid are prohibited.**

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## The tethering of calves will not be permitted after December 31, 2020

Producers starting calves for the veal or dairy-beef market indoors have new requirements coming into effect December 31, 2020. It is very important to understand if the stalls used in your operation comply.

When evaluating individual housing indoors, the calf must be able to turn completely around without assistance, groom, adopt sternal and lateral (to lay completely stretched out on their side) resting postures, easily stand up and lie down, and have visual and physical contact with other cattle. They will need to see each other and touch at least one other calf for physical contact for the whole growing period. If the calves are not able to achieve this, then housing is not in compliance.

If producers are not sure if the pens comply, they are strongly encouraged to contact the Veal Farmers of Ontario office for clarification. It is better to be clear on the regulations and not have to be under a time crunch to make the modifications to continue to start calves.

Existing individual stalls that **do not** allow lateral resting may be used provided they are in good condition and allow calves to groom, adopt a sternal resting posture, easily stand up and lie down, and have visual and physical contact with other cattle. Where less than 50 per cent of each of the two side panels is solid (thus permitting physical and visual contact between calves), they may be used for the lifetime of the stall. **Effective July 1, 2023**, existing stalls where more than 50 per cent of the side panels is solid are prohibited.

The tethering of calves will not be permitted after December 31, 2020, regardless if the calves are indoors or outdoors. This requirement was not decided lightly, it is what our customers want and what our meat plants are asking for. Remember, as producers we produce what customers buy and if we do not, we do not sell. It is not the most difficult change, there are producers all over Ontario already not tethering calves. It will take some penning adjustments but is doable.

If farms do not already have a herd health plan, now would be as good of time as ever to get it developed and have all members of the team on the same page. The herd health plan can be a useful tool for disease monitoring year over year, in addition to saving money.

Remember, the Code is our industry standard and is in effect for all of Canada. Veal Farmers of Ontario does not have the authority to mandate the Code, however if the Provincial welfare inspector is called to investigate your operation, the standard will be the requirements in the Code. On January 1, 2020, the Provincial Animal Welfare Services (PAWS) Act replaced the Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA) Act and all investigations are done with Provincial welfare inspectors. ■



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# Starting a veal farm in today's market



Kendra Keels

Industry Development Director



Veal farming, for many young adults, may seem attractive because of the relatively low overhead to start. What some people do not realize is that understanding the veal market can be difficult and starting calves even harder. Quite often people see the larger veal operations and think it must be easy because they are feeding a lot of calves.

There is nothing easy in farming. Farming takes a lot of hard work and dedication. Farms that are bigger have all started out somewhere and have figured it out at some point but even then, they still run into challenges.

My best advice to people who want to start raising calves, regardless of their destination, is start small. When you are small it is easier to adjust the feeding program, ventilation, vaccination programs, or make any other management modifications.

When you are smaller it provides an opportunity to figure out what works and what does not. Finish some calves off and send them to the market—how did they do? Did you get the right price? How did the price compare to the market average? Are you following the Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) market report?

If the calves did not at least bring the average price, then you know there are improvements to be made. What did the overall finish of the veal cattle look like? Stand behind the cattle—do you see an upside-down U? How full is the U? If you do not know what I am referring to, maybe you should call the office for a chat.

All too often people fall into the trap, oh I did not do well at the market because the buyers did not know who I am. That is not the case. For any buyers I know, when they see well-finished veal cattle come into the ring, the name does not matter because the animal is selling itself on finish.

Some of the pitfalls new veal farmers fall into is feeding hay and not feeding enough supplement. The mindset is they think they are saving money. There are many ways to save money, but a poor feeding program is not it. To put the finish on the veal they need protein supplement. The last couple of months of the finishing period the veal cattle needs to be on a 5:1 corn to supplement ratio. Yes, it is more expensive, but so are longer days on feed with a poor dollar return.

Feeding hay is never recommended for veal cattle. They will end up with “hay belly” and when buyers see that in the ring, they will refrain from purchasing and the price will drop. If you are concerned your veal cattle need more fibre, offer free choice chopped straw. It will provide fibre, increase chewing time, and reduce acidosis. It is cheaper than hay and the cattle do better.

Overall, the best advice for any new producer is to know the costs before

starting. There is a cost of production tool on the VFO website, it is there to be used. Play around with the numbers. What are the limits to purchase male dairy calves and what is your break-even cost? If you do not know those numbers how can the operation be profitable?

It takes experience and time to get good at finishing veal cattle. It is important to talk to fellow veal producers to see what is working, what is not. For those interested, VFO has started a private Facebook group for finished veal producers called *Finishing Grain-fed Veal in Ontario*. Just be aware there are questions to answer to get in, and if you do not answer them you will not get in. We are trying to maintain a safe group of Ontario veal producers to discuss issues and management to improve the quality of veal finished in Ontario and build relationships among Ontario producers. The group will only be as good as the effort put in. We hope to see you in the group to spark some finishing veal discussions. ■

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# Budgeting for your farm's success

John Molenhuis, Business Analysis and Cost of Production Specialist  
Erich Weber, CPA, Business Finance Specialist

Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs

## Where do I start?

*I can't predict the future, so why should I budget?*

*I just don't have enough time to do a budget.*

When it comes to developing a budget for your farm, some of these phrases may come to mind. Just like planning for how many veal calves to raise or which crops to grow, you should also have a plan for what revenues and expenses you expect to incur within the next year. Creating budgets can allow your farm business to analyse and prepare for possible scenarios (e.g. change in market prices, change in production output, etc.).

In this article we'll take a look at:

- the budgeting process,
- how your cost of production (COP) can be used for your whole farm budget, and
- budgeting resources that can help make this process easier.

## Budgeting process

Like any plan, budgeting can seem like a daunting task. Let's break the process down into three steps:

### Step 1 – Look at last year's financial data

Creating a farm budget can be hard to start. Your previous year's income tax return, income statement, or budget (if one was prepared) can be used as a starting point for your budget.

### Step 2 – Adjust your budget to reflect the current environment

Make sure you account for one-time expenses and revenues that may affect your farm business budget. Tile drainage expense or rebates are good examples of one-time situations that can have a significant effect on your farm business and budget. There are external forces that can have a major impact on your farm business as well (e.g. market changes, yield/production issues, etc.). Utilizing best-case/worst-case scenarios in your farm budget can help you incorporate these possible external pressures.

### Step 3 – Throughout the year, look back at your budget

Creating a budget can take a lot of work and energy to complete. To get the most out of your budget, it is good practice to review your budget throughout the year. By doing this, you can compare how your income and expenses are doing compared to your budget, and if needed you can make changes to your farm business or budget.

## Use your COP for your whole farm budget

To maximize whole farm profit, each farm must make the most efficient, productive use of their unique blend of land, labour, and capital (buildings, machinery). The whole farm is the sum of its parts: its crop and livestock enterprises. Many veal farms have multiple enterprises that all contribute to the whole farm and look to optimize the land, labour, and capital available.

The other enterprises are typically complementary to the veal operation and are not always viewed as money makers but benefit the whole farm. Choosing to grow crops for homegrown feeds, for example, can be part of the farm strategy to control feed costs. Crops grown for feeds are often not looked at as a profit centre but as a cost centre for the veal operation. Each farm will need to assess whether it is better for them to grow their



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own feed crops or purchase these inputs. Having other enterprises may also help with labour productivity by using labour more efficiently across more production. Farms with multiple enterprises can use COP by enterprise to assess how enterprises are contributing to the whole farm budget. Resources to help create farm budgets can be found below.

## Resources

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) has resources available that can be used to help you create your farm budget.

- The Farm Business Analyser tool helps you analyse your farm's financial performance and can flag any areas where you might need to change your budget. The tool can be found at: [www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/download/analyser\\_farmbus.htm](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/download/analyser_farmbus.htm)
- The Cash Flow Planning worksheet is a template for budgeting your cash flow needs on a monthly basis. The tool can be found at: [www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/download/cash\\_flow.htm](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/download/cash_flow.htm)
- If you do not have an electronic bookkeeping system for your farm (e.g. Quickbooks, AgExpert, Sage, Excel spreadsheets, etc.) the Ontario Farm Accounting Workbook can be a good tool to start with. This tool allows you to record your daily transactions, building/equipment purchases, and create a budget for your farm. The Ontario Farm Accounting Workbook can be found at: [www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/download/wkbk\\_ontfarm.htm](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/download/wkbk_ontfarm.htm)

Veal Farmers of Ontario and OMAFRA staff developed a COP tool to help farmers calculate their costs and feed them into their farm budget planning. This tool along with other Excel-based crop and livestock budgeting tools are available at OMAFRA's Ontario Enterprise Budgets site: ([www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/bear2000/Budgets/oeb.htm](http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/busdev/bear2000/Budgets/oeb.htm)). The crop budgets can be used to calculate homegrown feed costs that can then help inform the feed section of the veal COP tool.

## Conclusion

Veal farmers must have many skills in order to run a successful and profitable farm (e.g. agronomist, animal husbandry, marketer, etc.). One skill that farmers should make sure they are using constantly is budgeting. Farm budgets can be used to help you, as a farmer, to determine if there are opportunities or problems that you may soon face. By creating a budget, and reviewing it throughout the year, you can ensure that your farm is staying current with external factors that may impact your farm's profitability. ■



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# INDUSTRY

## updates



### Select sections of Bill 156 now in effect

Ontario's government announced that some sections of Bill 156 related to animal transport would come into force to ensure the safety of people and animals. Other sections will come into force once additional regulations are finalized.

#### Effective Wednesday, September 2, 2020, the following sections of Bill 156 became enforceable under law:

- Section 6 (1): No person shall stop, hinder, obstruct or otherwise interfere with a motor vehicle transporting farm animals.
- Exceptions to this section include emergency responders, police, and authorized inspectors, acting within the course of their duties.

Find more information about Bill 156, what it means for Ontario farmers, truckers and processors, and how you can show your support on social media at: <https://aboutbill156.com>

Reminder: The veal industry must remain vigilant. We know there is increased presence of vehicles on back roads during COVID-19, and activists focused on defeating Bill 156 may target our sector. Producers are encouraged to review this article for more information on what to do if a protest happens on their farm: <https://bit.ly/onfarmprotest>

### VFO celebrates pride in farming during Ontario Agriculture Week



Ontario's veal is raised on family farms that support our rural communities and the Ontario

economy. Held October 5 to 11, 2020, Ontario Agriculture Week celebrated the abundance of food Ontario farmers produce, and their contributions to our province.

VFO used this opportunity to thank our supply chain partners, share resources to support our industry partners, and celebrate our pride in veal farming using the hashtags #OntAgWeek and #loveONTfood on social media.

### Toronto Stockyards Land Development Board elects Jennifer Haley as Chair

Like other organizations, the Toronto Stockyards Land Development Board (TSYLDB) held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) virtually this fall. Immediately after the AGM, the TSYLDB met to conduct their executive elections. The TSYLDB is pleased to announce that Jennifer Haley, VFO Executive Director, has been elected to the position of Chair. Jennifer is jointly nominated to the TSYLDB by VFO and Beef Farmers of Ontario and brings a wealth of board governance and strategic experience to the table.

"The TSYLDB is an important organization for Ontario's veal farmers," stated Haley. "The annual distribution of funds from the property holdings allows VFO to do more for our members and it is an important asset we want to make sure to protect. I have been fortunate enough over the past 20 or so years to see this organization go from its creation to where it is today and I look forward to continuing in my new role on behalf of the founding members," she added.

Dave Eastman, Director at Large, was elected as Vice Chair and Jim Weir, jointly nominated by Ontario Pork and Dairy Farmers of Ontario was elected as the Chair of the Finance & Audit committee. The TSYLDB is looking forward to the year ahead with a number of strategic priorities on the agenda.

### VFO transitions e-mail address and website to [vealfarmers.ca](http://vealfarmers.ca)

Please be advised that Veal Farmers of Ontario

(VFO) has transitioned our e-mail addresses and website. All of the great content on [www.ontarioveal.on.ca](http://www.ontarioveal.on.ca) can now be found on our website at [www.vealfarmers.ca](http://www.vealfarmers.ca).

During this time of transition, we will still receive forwarded e-mails, but it would be appreciated if you could update your contacts/address books to expedite the transition. Any questions, please e-mail [info@vealfarmers.ca](mailto:info@vealfarmers.ca).

### VFO launches grain-fed veal factsheet series

Deciding to raise calves for the grain-fed veal market requires thorough and thoughtful planning. VFO has developed a series of factsheets that will help answer common questions about starting and operating a grain-fed veal farm. New factsheets on Feeding for finish and Acidosis have now been released. Find them online at <https://bit.ly/GFVfactsheets> and watch for more monthly releases!

### VFO presents "Healthy calves make a healthy herd!" to Guelph 4-H club

Kendra Keels, VFO's Industry Development Manager, joined 20 members of the University of Guelph's 4-H on Campus club virtually in November to discuss the changing nature of Ontario's veal industry, the keys to raising healthy calves, and veal cattle regulations that ensure animal welfare. The 4-H club was excited to learn more about calf health and asked so many great questions! VFO is pleased to help the next generation of calf raisers and hopes the tips that we shared will be useful for their calf projects this year.

### New CFIA resources clarify key aspects of transport requirements

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has been working closely with industry, and through those communications have drafted new documents to avoid any confusion around the Transfer of Care Document and Animal

Transport Records. They have also developed a Transfer of Care Factsheet.

The resources, along with more information, is available here: <https://bit.ly/CFIATransport>. Please do not hesitate to contact the VFO office for clarification if you have any questions.

## New research project evaluates the health and growth impact of transport on male dairy calves

There is very little information about the effect of transport on the health and growth of young male calves after they arrive to a veal facility. Most previous work has assessed calves after long-term transport and have found some health conditions (e.g. navel inflammation, diarrhea) appear during transport. However, it is not clear when calves begin to develop these health conditions. In addition, the majority of the studies evaluating transportation have not evaluated the long-term effects of transport in terms of health abnormalities and growth after calves arrive to a veal facility.

The objective of this new study is to evaluate the impact of commingling and short and long-distance transport on behavioural, metabolic, and clinical indicators of health as well as growth in male dairy calves. An additional objective is to evaluate how intestinal microbiota change overtime and use these changes to predict morbidity and mortality.

This project started October 2020 and will be completed by February 2022.

## Marketing of male dairy calves

This research is now published in the Journal of Dairy Science.

A diverse group of Canadian experts was convened for a focused two-day discussion on potential health and welfare problems associated with the marketing (i.e., transportation and sale) of male dairy calves. Written notes and audio recording were used to summarize the information provided on transport times and marketing practices. Content analysis was used to develop a consensus statement on concerns, possible solutions, and recommendations to improve male dairy calf marketing. The group noted that calves across all Canadian regions are commonly transported at three to seven days of age and undergo transport for 12 to 24 hours or longer depending on the location of their dairy farm of origin. Calves in some regions are marketed almost exclusively through auction markets, whereas others have more direct sales. A need was identified for better criteria for calf fitness for transport, maintaining farm biosecurity, reducing the use of antimicrobial therapy in calf production, and improving education for farmers and veterinarians on the importance of neonatal care for male dairy calves before transportation. Experts noted that major changes in male dairy calf marketing will be required to comply with amendments to the federal *Health of Animals Regulations* (Part XII) on animal transportation; collaborative effort will be needed to safeguard animal health and welfare as this transition is made. Learn more here: <https://bit.ly/marketingcalves>

## Dairy Cattle Code update

Over the summer, the Code Committee's main activity was an online meeting focused on updating the chapter on pre-transport preparations. As with the current dairy cattle Code of Practice, the updated Code will have an on-farm scope, and the actual transportation process will be covered by the transportation Code of Practice. The group discussed specific considerations for calves.

Several subcommittee calls are planned for this fall to put the finishing touches on the draft feed and water chapter, revisit key topics in the health chapter, and begin detailed work on the housing chapter.

The Scientific Committee is in the final stages of addressing valuable input from peer reviewers on their draft report on priority welfare issues.

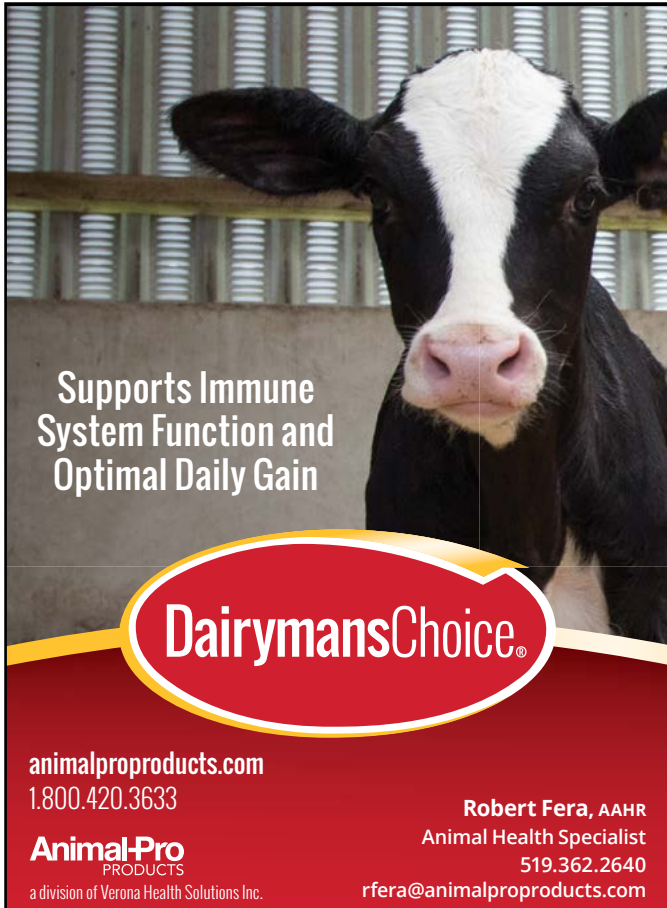
More details can be found at: <https://bit.ly/dairyupdate>

## Transportation Code update

Progress continues on the Livestock and Poultry Transportation Code of Practice. The full 23-member Code Development Committee (CDC) is scheduled to meet in its entirety for the first time in September. The September meeting will be used to give the full committee the opportunity to hear about the day-to-day experiences, first-hand knowledge, and insights of the three livestock and on poultry transporter representatives. Following this online meeting, three of the five sub-committees that were recently established are expected to commence work in mid-fall.

All eight species-specific Working Groups will have the opportunity to review and add to the common Code elements with animal-specific text as the Code Development Committee and its sub-committees populate content.

More details can be found at: <https://bit.ly/transportcode> ■



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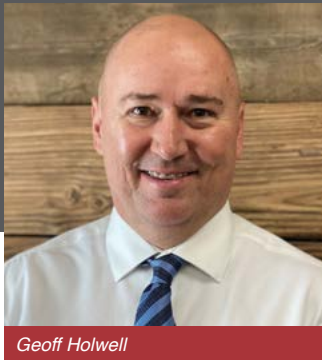
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Geoff Holwell

# VFO announces Licence Fee Inspection and Compliance position

## Board focusing on enhanced communications and integrity in collection system

Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) is pleased to announce that Geoff Holwell has joined the organization in the newly created position of Inspection and Compliance Officer.

"Since VFO came into force in April 2015, we have worked openly and diligently on education and awareness with our industry partners with respect to the collection and remittance of the mandatory licence fees and as a result developed some great partnerships," said Jennifer Haley, VFO Executive Director. "However, we are now moving into the next phase of development as an organization and looking to ensure equitable compliance for all stakeholders with additional outreach to the industry," she added. The primary responsibilities of this new posi-

tion are to ensure compliance with the VFO's regulations and maintain integrity in the licence fee collection system. The position will be responsible for ongoing communications with industry stakeholders that will include auditing and inspection functions to ensure licence fee remittances are timely and accurate.

Geoff brings with him a comprehensive resume of experience that includes a broad spectrum of law enforcement, investigative, and auditing roles over the past twenty-six years that include municipal policing and border services, as well as forensic insurance investigations.

In his role as the VFO Inspection and Compliance Officer, Geoff will be working with producers, industry partners, and stakeholders

to monitor, discuss, and create awareness for licence fee remittance obligations that are part of VFO's marketing board regulations. "I am looking forward to meeting with and working with our industry partners to provide assistance to them where I can and to ensure compliance," said Holwell.

"On behalf of VFO, I would like to welcome Geoff to the VFO team," stated Pascal Bouilly, VFO Chair. "For VFO, it is the right time for our organization to take this next step and demonstrate to our members, industry partners, and the Ontario Farm Products Marketing Commission that VFO's licence fee collection system is thorough, transparent, responsible, equitable, and has integrity," he added. ■

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# New OFA project helps farm employers find and train workers

Michelle deNijs, Communications Specialist

Ontario Federation of Agriculture



The Ontario Federation of Agriculture (OFA) is excited to announce a new project to help farm employers find skilled labour. The Feeding Your Future project aims to assist farmers and agricultural business owners in finding qualified workers and in turn, connect youth with jobs in agriculture. The project includes a job matching concierge service, virtual career fairs, webinars, and agricultural training.

AgCareers.com has been working with OFA to help farmers post jobs for free on their website. Through the AgCareers.com job matching service, farmers can visit the website and create their account. Enter the code *AgriFoodONT20* at checkout to receive this service for free.

## Virtual career fairs, webinars & training opportunities

In place of in-person job fairs, the project has hosted several virtual career fairs where job seekers have had the chance to 'visit' employer booths. To date, there have been 11 career fairs across Ontario with over 700 job opportunities posted. Leading into a busy spring season, there will be another Feeding Your Future virtual career fair in March 2021.

To exchange knowledge on relevant agriculture and agri-food industry topics, the Feeding Your Future project includes a webinar series. Ten free webinars for both employers and job seekers were hosted between June and October 2020. All webinar recordings can be found on the website at [feedingyourfuture.ca](http://feedingyourfuture.ca) under Webinars, and more webinars will be launched in the coming months.

In early 2021, an exciting new training program will be launched called the *Ontario Agriculture Worker Safety and Awareness Certificate*, developed in collaboration with the University of Guelph, Ridgetown Campus. This certification consists of a series of online training modules to help agricultural workers stay safe and be aware of how a farm operates. The program is meant to provide timely training to help employers that have recently hired or for job seekers looking to enhance their resume. While this certification does not replace hands-on, in-person learning, it is an opportunity to learn basic awareness and health and safety.

## Contact us

For all general inquiries, please contact us at [feedingyourfuture@ofa.on.ca](mailto:feedingyourfuture@ofa.on.ca) or by phone at 1-877-438-5729 ext. 4. Connect with AgCareers.com today to create a job posting or sign up for the upcoming career fairs by email at [feedingyourfuture@agcareers.com](mailto:feedingyourfuture@agcareers.com). Connect with Feeding Your

Future on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn to stay updated on future events or visit the website at [feedingyourfuture.ca](http://feedingyourfuture.ca). If you are looking for workers or employment opportunities, we hope you take advantage of these services during COVID-19 and beyond. ■



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# Here comes DairyTrace!

Brian Van Doormaal, Chief Services Officer

Lactanet Canada



This article is the second of a two-part series examining DairyTrace and the role of veal farmers in the national dairy cattle traceability system.

DairyTrace is the new national dairy cattle traceability program officially launched on October 5, 2020. The DairyTrace vision was established in 2016 and its four-year development and implementation has been led by a collaboration between Lactanet Canada, as the responsible administrator, and Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC).

## What will be different?

Given that the dairy industry has unique needs as well as self-imposed requirements related to traceability via DFC's proAction® initiative, compared to those of the beef sector, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) granted Lactanet Canada the status of national responsible administrator for dairy cattle traceability, effective October 5, 2020. With DairyTrace, the dairy industry traceability requirements can be managed, and the national dairy cattle traceability database can be used for trace-back and emergency response situations that may affect dairy producers and other traceability affiliates. With this change, the Canadian Cattle Identification Agency (CCIA) remains the responsible administrator for traceability information for beef cattle, bison, sheep, and pending regulation, cervids and goats in Canada (with exception of Québec where CCIA only administers bison and goats).

Effective October 5, 2020, dairy producers outside of Quebec must now report all traceability data directly to the DairyTrace system using the various methods available to them. These include their personal online DairyTrace account, the DairyTrace mobile application linked to that account, and customer service agents accessible by phone at 1-866-55-TRACE, by e-mail at [info@DairyTrace.ca](mailto:info@DairyTrace.ca), or by paper forms that can be mailed to DairyTrace Customer Services at Holstein Canada's office in Brantford, Ontario. More information about the DairyTrace program can be found on its website at [www.DairyTrace.ca](http://www.DairyTrace.ca).

Other affiliates involved in the dairy cattle traceability chain, such as veal producers, calf growers, auction facilities, exhibitions/fairs, assembly yards, abattoirs, transporters, veterinarians, etc., have two options for reporting events related to dairy cattle. For affiliates that deal with both dairy and beef cattle and/or other livestock species, you may find it most convenient to continue using your current methods of reporting to the Canadian Livestock Tracking System (CLTS) database of the CCIA. In this case, data on dairy cattle will automatically be transmitted to DairyTrace. For specific affiliates that deal primarily or solely with dairy cattle, it is

likely best that you activate your own DairyTrace account and report the required data directly to the DairyTrace system.

## What won't change?

Dairy producers and other stakeholders in Quebec will be least affected by DairyTrace since they must continue to report all traceability data directly to ATQ via its SimpliTRACE system in accordance with the Quebec government regulations. To respect federal regulations, achieve the vision of a national dairy cattle traceability system and avoid duplication of effort, all dairy data from SimpliTRACE will be transferred to DairyTrace. Quebec producers will continue to order their tags from ATQ and all stakeholders in Quebec will continue to receive traceability customer services from ATQ. These same stakeholders will, however, also have a DairyTrace account and their associated data may be viewed accordingly.

Outside of Quebec, dairy producers and other affiliates as needed will continue to order all dairy tags from NLID via the DairyTrace Customer Services offered by Holstein Canada. In fact, they will also be able to order new white single button RFID tags at \$3.25/tag (including shipping but not applicable taxes) allowable under proAction® requirements as an exception for identifying calves born on a dairy farm that are destined to leave the farm at a young age. This offering of both dual tags and single tags through NLID, in conjunction with the DairyTrace Customer Services provides a one-stop-shop through Holstein Canada for dairy producers and affiliates outside of Quebec.

In terms of herd management software tools to facilitate the recording and reporting of traceability events on behalf of dairy producers across the country, all existing tools, such as DairyComp and Lac-T offered by Lactanet as well as online processes available from Holstein Canada, will continue to exist and direct the proper dairy traceability events to DairyTrace. In addition, with producer consent, Lactanet will act as a Third-Party provider of data to the CLTS for animals in dairy herds identified with CCIA yellow tags. It is recommended that anyone planning to report events to DairyTrace for animals with yellow tags to contact the DairyTrace Customer Services using the toll-free number 1-866-55-TRACE or by sending an e-mail to [info@Holstein.ca](mailto:info@Holstein.ca).

Also, to simplify the transition to DairyTrace, all non-producer stakeholders (i.e.: abattoirs, assembly yards, etc.) outside of Quebec may continue

to report events for dairy cattle to CCIA and all such data will automatically be funneled from the CLTS database to DairyTrace.

### How do veal producers and calf growers fit in DairyTrace?

While the main purpose of the dairy industry is the production of quality milk and other dairy products as a healthy nutritious food, it is recognized that the dairy industry also significantly contributes to the beef sector. In more recent years, the growing usage of sexed semen to breed dairy cows has also resulted in an associated growth in the use of beef sire semen to produce beef on dairy crossbred calves, both male and female. This trend is not expected to change in the future, which means that a significant proportion of calves born on dairy farms across Canada will be destined for the veal and beef industries rather than for dairy production. The DairyTrace vision includes these calves within the national dairy cattle traceability system and they should therefore be identified at birth with dairy tags available through the NLID program offered by Holstein Canada for farms located outside Quebec and through ATQ for those in the province of Quebec.

To facilitate this objective of inclusion within DairyTrace, a new white single button RFID dairy tag will be sold through Holstein Canada starting October 5, 2020 for the purpose of identifying calves born on dairy farms that are destined to leave the farm at a young age for the beef industry. These HDX RFID button panel tags for dairy will be sold in sets of 30 at a cost of \$3.25 per tag including shipping and there will be the option to include a herd management number on the back panel. Depending on the size of the dairy farm, multiple sets of 30 can be purchased at the same time. A specific tag number range will be allocated to these tags sold by Holstein Canada to easily distinguish them from the range used for the dual tagging number series. These white single button tags are designed to replace the use of beef yellow tags for identifying animals born on dairy farms.

Whether calves on these dairy-related enterprises were identified at birth with the white single button dairy tag or the CCIA yellow tags, veal producers and calf growers should have a DairyTrace account and will be able to report all traceability events to the DairyTrace system. Reported events for animals with CCIA yellow tags may be processed accordingly to get forwarded to the CLTS once consent is provided by the producer for Lactanet to act as a Third-Party data provider to the CLTS on their behalf. That said, only those calves identified with the white dairy tags will be part of the DairyTrace national traceability system.

### A look to the future

October 2020 marked an historical time in the history of the Canadian dairy cattle industry with the arrival of DairyTrace—Canada's national dairy cattle traceability solution. The first priority is for all dairy farmers, veal producers, and other traceability affiliates outside Quebec to activate their DairyTrace account by contacting the DairyTrace Customer Services (1-866-55-TRACE). Over time, the benefits of DairyTrace are expected to expand beyond just animal traceability but also to offer significant opportunities that add value and provide protection, prosperity, and peace of mind to Canadian producers, the Canadian dairy industry, and Canadian consumers. ■



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# Being proactive about biosecurity and visitors to the farm



Cheryl DeCooman, CHRL, President

People Management Group/UdderlySAFE

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought to everyone's attention how infectious diseases can spread quickly, and the importance of personal hygiene and biosecurity, to the forefront of everyone's mind. Biosecurity is especially important when it comes to visitors to your operation. In any given day, think about how often you have visitors to the farm; veterinarians, service technicians, inspectors, sales representatives, and delivery truck drivers can easily come to mind. Not to mention employees who may come from farms they live on. This travel of visitors between operations increases the risk of infectious diseases being transmitted between herds. Biosecurity is extremely important to minimize the risk of transmission.

It is important that your operation has a biosecurity program in place with specific policies and protocols. You also should ensure that all staff are trained on the biosecurity program and visitors to the farm are aware of the biosecurity protocols that in place and how they can follow them.

## Here are 10 guidelines your operation should have in place in order to be proactive about biosecurity when it comes to visitors on the farm:

### 1) Biosecurity signs

Signs should be placed at the entrance of the operation driveway and on the doors of all barns. The sign should read that there are biosecurity protocols in place and only authorized personnel may enter. It would also be helpful to include the owner or manager's phone number on the sign so visitors can call them upon arrival.

### 2) Parking lot

Have a designated parking area for visitors. This ensures visitors do not drive their vehicle too far onto the property and potentially spread disease that is on the outside of their vehicle.

### 3) Visitor log book

As we have learned this year, contact tracing is essential when it comes to notifying people that they may have come in contact with infectious diseases. All visitors to the farm need to record their visit in a log book. The log book should have information such as date, time of arrival name, company, phone number, purpose of visit, previous farm contact (yes/no), entered production area (yes/no), animal contact (yes/no) and

an acknowledgement they read the biosecurity protocol overview. Log books should be kept in an area that is easily accessible to visitors.

### 4) Biosecurity protocol overview

Placed beside the visitor log book, there should be a one to two page overview of the biosecurity protocol for visitors. As part of the log book, visitors should be asked to read this overview and acknowledge they have done so on the log form.

### 5) Minimize animal interaction

Unless it is necessary for the visitor to directly interact with the animals to complete their job, contact with animals should be avoided. If the visitors needs to come in contact with the animals, ensure they wash their hands both before and after contact.

### 6) Boot cleaning area

Ensure that there is a designated area that boots can be cleaned with water, soap, and a scrub brush. The cleaning of boots is a two-step process, the first step is to remove all organic and physical material, the second is to use soap and water to remove pathogens.

### 7) Disposable PPE

Disposable Personal Protective Equipment

(PPE) should be available for visitors to use. This can include boot covers, gloves, masks, and coveralls.

### 8) Protective clothing

Ensure that protective clothing, such as coveralls, are worn by employees and encourage visitors to do so as well. This is especially important for employees and visitors who are on multiple different farms in one day.

### 9) Hand washing

As we have all learned this year, hand washing is a critical step when it comes to preventing transmission of disease. Ensure that there are hand washing stations with soap around the farm and ideally in each building. If there is not the ability to put in stations, provide hand sanitizer.

### 10) Cleaning procedures

As part of your biosecurity program, you should establish cleaning procedures for around the farm. This can include hourly, daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly checklists of areas that need to be disinfected and/or cleaned and how to do so (ie. what type of cleaner to use, how often to use it, etc.)

Being proactive and having a biosecurity program in place ensures the well-being and health of your herd, visitors, employees, and family. ■



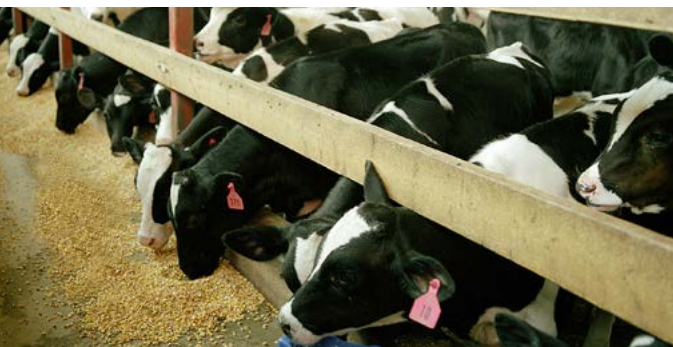
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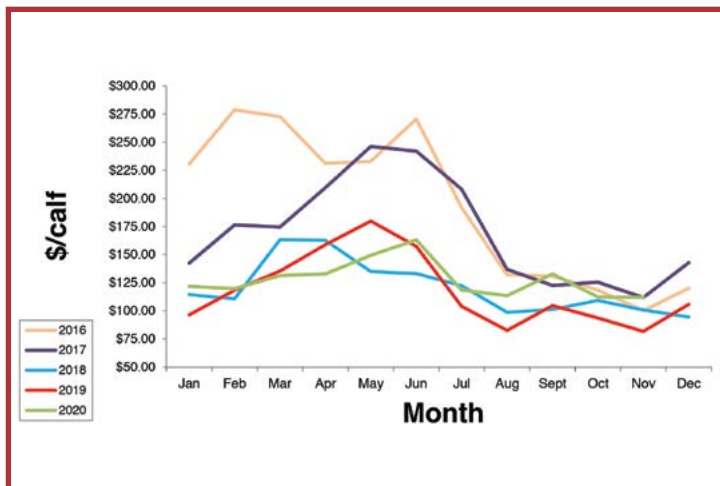




# Veal Market Information

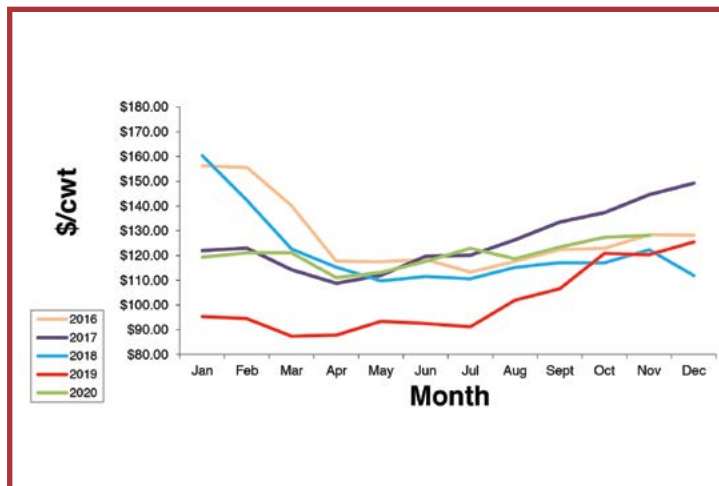
This information is collected from various sources and disseminated by Veal Farmers of Ontario.

## Bob Calf Pricing



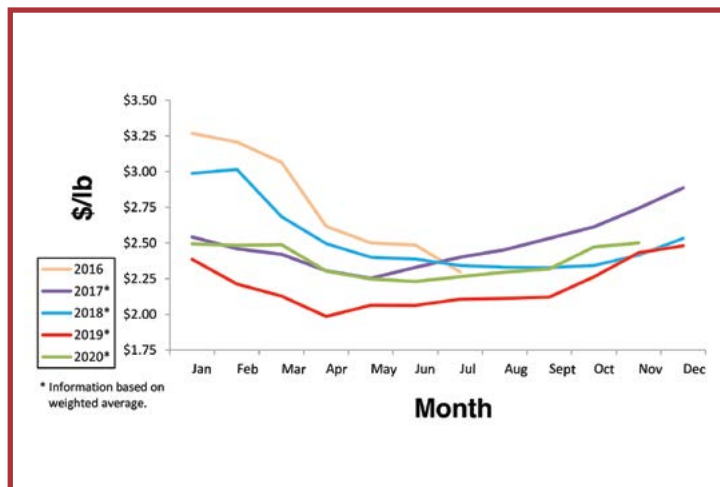
This price range is collected and tabulated from participating sale barns throughout Ontario based on average pricing. This information is used to follow trends.

## Sale Barn Veal Pricing



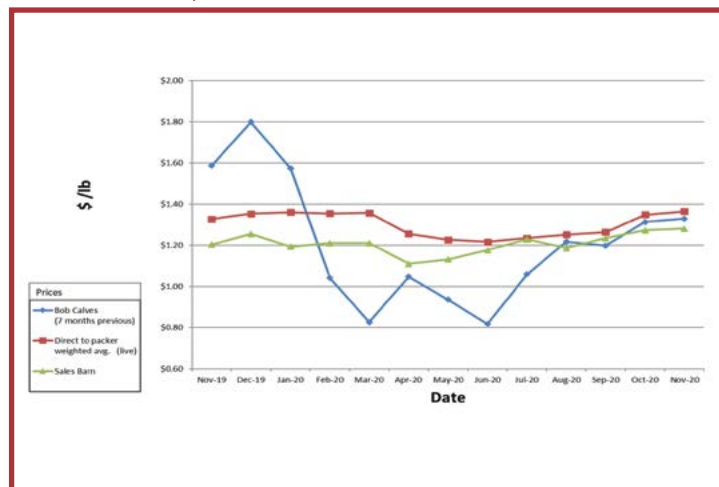
This price range is collected and tabulated from participating sale barns throughout Ontario based on average pricing. This information is used to follow trends.

## Rail Grade Veal Pricing



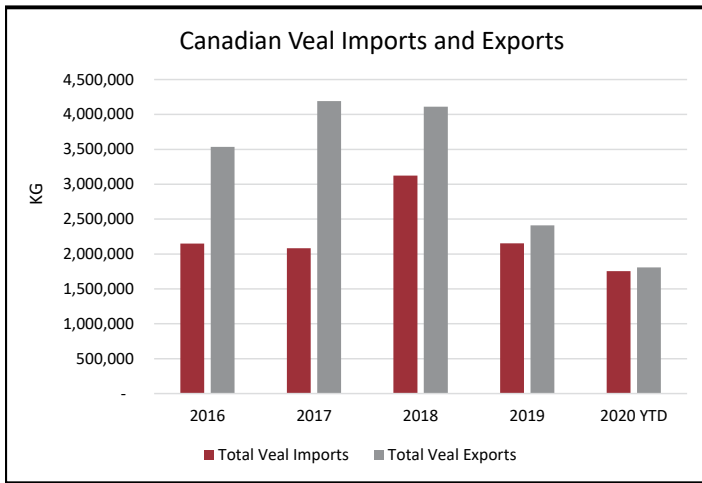
This information is collected from producer contributions on a weekly basis. Once the numbers are collected a weighted average is calculated. The weighted average gives a more realistic price of what is happening in the market. This information is used to follow trends.

## Finished price compared to bob calf prices (Seven months previous)

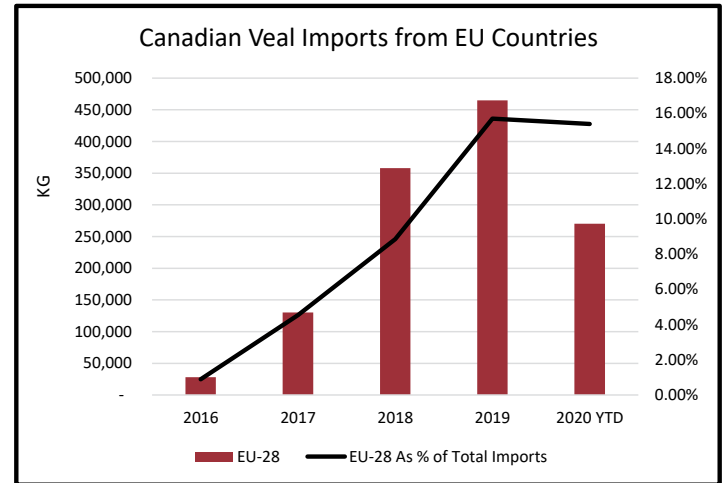


This graph is used to compare the finished price from both the sale barn and rail grade pricing to the bob calf prices seven months prior. This information could help when deciding on the purchase prices of calves and what market they will be shipped in. This information gives a quick glance at both bob calf pricing and finished veal pricing.

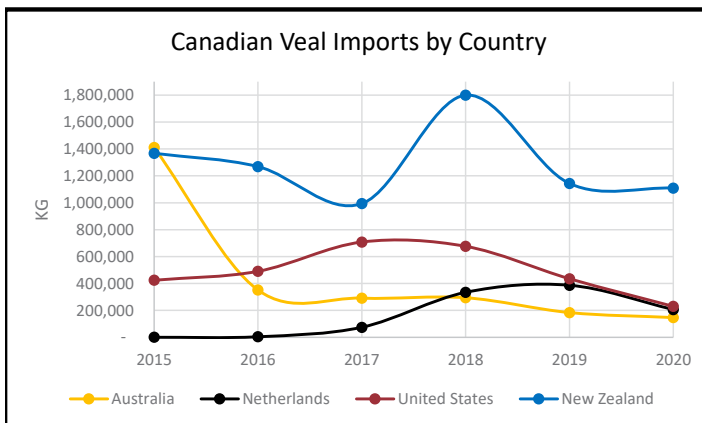
A quarterly snapshot of Canada's veal trade



While veal has maintained a trade surplus (exports>imports), in recent years exports have been declining faster than imports. 2020 appears to be continuing this trend with exports volumes down 15% and import volume increasing year to date (YTD).



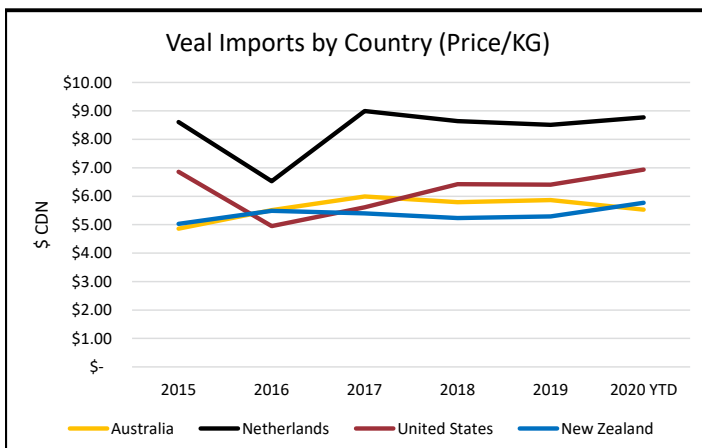
The volume of veal imports from the EU (red bars) and the percentage of total imports from the EU (black line) has been increasing since the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) was signed. The Netherlands represents over 90% of EU imports, with Italy being the remainder.



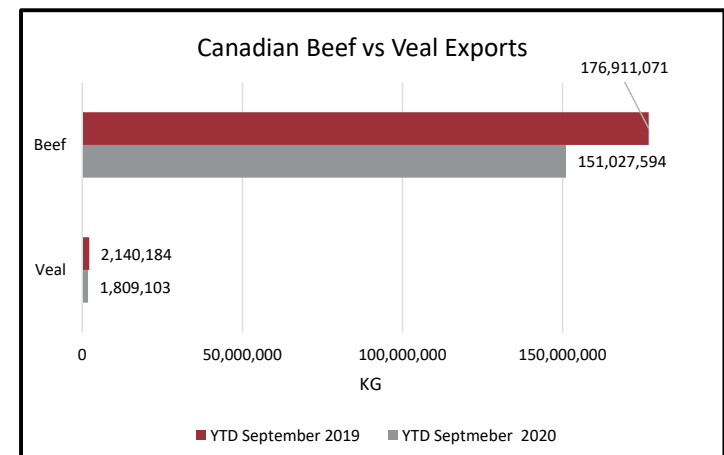
The plurality of Canada's veal imports come from New Zealand. Recently imports from the Netherlands have seen growth while US and Australian imports continue to decline. 2020 numbers are YTD.



The vast majority of Canadian veal is exported to the United States. A small amount is exported to the Middle East, namely to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.



Imports from the Netherlands are higher quality cuts and command a higher price when compared to the value of imports from other countries. All prices are in Canadian dollars.



Veal represents just a small fraction of Canada's red meat trade.

All data retrieved from AAFC and Statistics Canada, red meat section.



# Five-year holiday planner for producers

This chart lists religious holiday dates to assist with shipping planning. For veal farmers who plan their shipping, taking holiday timing into consideration is important, as it does affect pricing. For example, Easter is a time of the year when the processing plants are very busy with the harvest of lambs and kids, leaving little room in the cooler for veal.

This chart will help producers to plan accordingly, and time their purchase of male dairy calves or pre-conditioned calves by determining if they will

be ready for market around a holiday. This information applies regardless of your preferred shipping method, direct to packer or to the sales barn. Prices reflect cooler space availability.

**Note: Dates may vary based on religious calendar observed. Also note that some holidays are observed over several days. Consult with your buyer to ensure accuracy. ■**

Holidays		2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Christian	Epiphany	Wednesday, Jan. 6	Thursday, Jan. 6	Friday, Jan. 6	Saturday, Jan. 6	Monday, Jan. 6
	Western Roman Easter	Sunday, April 4	Sunday, April 17	Sunday, April 9	Sunday, March 31	Sunday, April 20
	Eastern Orthodox Easter	Sunday, May 2	Sunday, April 24	Sunday, April 16	Sunday, May 5	Sunday, April 20
	Christmas	Saturday, Dec. 25	Sunday, Dec. 25	Monday, Dec. 25	Wednesday, Dec. 25	Thursday, Dec. 25
Jewish	Passover/Pesach	Sunday, March 28	Saturday, April 16	Thursday, April 6	Tuesday, April 23	Sunday, April 13
	Rosh Hashanah	Tuesday, Sept. 7	Monday, Sept. 26	Saturday, Sept. 16	Thursday, Oct. 3	Tuesday, Sept. 23
	Hanukkah	Monday, Nov. 29	Monday, Dec. 19	Friday, Dec. 8	Thursday, Dec. 26	Monday, Dec. 15
Islamic	Ramadan	Tuesday, April 13	Sunday, April 3	Thursday, March 23	Monday, March 11	Saturday, March 1
	Eid ul-Fitr	Thursday, May 13	Tuesday, May 3	Saturday, April 22	Wednesday, April 10	Monday, March 31
	Eid ul-Adha	Tuesday, July 20	Sunday, July 10	Thursday, June 2	Monday, June 17	Saturday, June 7
	Muharram	Tuesday, Aug. 10	Saturday, July 30	Wednesday, July 19	Monday, July 8	Friday, June 27
	Mawlid al-Nabi	Tuesday, Oct. 19	Saturday, Oct. 8	Wednesday, Sept. 27	Monday, Sept. 16	Friday, Sept. 5
Hindu	Navadurgara or Navatra Dashara or Dassai	Wednesday, Oct. 6	Monday, Sept. 26	Monday, Oct. 5	Thursday, Oct. 3	Monday, Sept. 22
	Diwali	Thursday, Nov. 4	Monday, Oct. 24	Sunday, Nov. 12	Thursday, Oct. 31	Monday, Oct. 20



*Wishing you a very*  
**Merry Christmas**

Happy Holidays and all the best for the New Year

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## Licensed dealers

As a veal (bob calves and finished veal cattle) producer, you should be dealing with licensed dealers who are remitting veal licence fees (check-off) on behalf of the farmers they are collecting from.

If you are selling bob calves from your dairy farm, the \$5.50 check-off is to be collected by the person purchasing those calves. If you sell your calves to a sale barn, the check-off is remitted on your behalf. Please contact the Veal Farmers of Ontario (VFO) office to ensure we have your updated contact information, including your e-mail address.

If you are dealing with an unlicensed dealer, you are not protected under the Ontario Beef Cattle Financial Protection Program (OBCFPP). You could be in jeopardy of losing the money from the sale, especially if you received a cheque for payment. If it is unclear if the dealer is licensed, ask to see the licence, check the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA) website at [bit.ly/omafralicenseddealers](http://bit.ly/omafralicenseddealers) or contact the VFO office.

## Licence fee reminders

In order to assist those who have not yet remitted their bob calf purchases from private treaty or dealer sales, the VFO has a **Monthly Licence Fee Remittance Worksheet** available to assist in calculating remittances from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020.

Please take the time to fill this worksheet out if you are not currently remitting on a regular basis. As a reminder, Regulation 58/15 (i) requires any person who receives veal cattle to deduct from the money payable for the veal cattle any licence fees payable to the local board by the person from whom the veal cattle is received and to forward the licence fees to the local board. Bob calves are considered veal cattle.

If you have not already sent in Form 1 identifying yourself as a veal producer, please do so. They can be e-mailed, faxed, or sent by regular mail to the office.

If you require additional copies of the **Monthly Licence Fee Remittance Worksheet, Form 1** or **Form 5**, please visit [bit.ly/licencefeeforms](http://bit.ly/licencefeeforms) or contact the VFO office.

## Ontario Beef Cattle Financial Protection Program

Agricorp is the Delivery Agent of the OBCFPP and Administrator for the Livestock Financial Protection Board. All communication, including but not limited to: Late Payments Reports, Claims to the Fund, and Licensing inquiries, must be directed to Agricorp. Visit [bit.ly/agricorp](http://bit.ly/agricorp) or call 1-888-247-4999 for more information. ■

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## **VIRTUAL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**



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