

Canadian Dairy Network, Holstein Canada, Pfizer Animal Health, The Semex Alliance and its owners partner to support delivery of genetic services to the Canadian dairy industry

Alliance gives dairy producers access to new genetic testing services

Kirkland (Quebec), May 7th, 2012 – Canada’s dairy producers have long recognized the benefits of identifying desired genetic traits in their herds. Now, with the creation of a new alliance, producers will have greater access to genetic testing services that will provide clear, uniform information regarding the genetic potential of their cattle and provide insight on how to apply the data to make more informed herd management decisions.

Effective May 1, 2012, Pfizer Animal Health joined the existing alliance between the Canadian Dairy Network (CDN), the Holstein Association of Canada (Holstein Canada), the Semex Alliance and its owners CIAQ, EastGen and Westgen (Semex). In doing so, Pfizer Animal Health brings its expertise in dairy genetics and a new genetics testing service to the Canadian market. The new alliance will foster a collaborative approach to delivering predictive genetic information to the Canadian dairy industry, promote female genotyping and assist Canada’s dairy producers to use genetic information to make sound management decisions and propagating desired traits.

“Our organizations are committed to working together to help dairy producers increase the effectiveness of selection and herd management,” said Brian Van Doormaal, General Manager, Canadian Dairy Network and Chief Executive Officer, Holstein Canada. “Our ultimate goal is to ensure all producers in Canada have access to genetic information and the delivery of genetic services is a crucial step in that direction.”

Genetic testing can identify the potential of young animals quickly, targeting traits such as future milk production as well as health traits such as future reproductive performance and udder health. It can also help achieve selection goals much faster than conventional breeding.

“Genetic testing of desired traits is the next animal health frontier. The technology already provides a wealth of information but it is only the tip of the iceberg. We are also excited about the research opportunities that will come through this alliance – opportunities that will lead to the discovery of new health protocols and new farm management practices,” said Paul Larmer, Chief Executive Officer, Semex.

Pfizer Animal Health’s CLARIFIDE® now available in Canada

Genomic services is a new area for Pfizer Animal Health in Canada and a key part of the company’s goal of being able to work collaboratively with producers and the animal health industry, offering products, services and diagnostic tools. In conjunction with the creation of the alliance, Pfizer Animal Health is introducing its CLARIFIDE® genetics service in Canada and training dairy practitioners as CLARIFIDE Accredited Veterinarians. These veterinarians will work with producers on testing and interpretation of test results.

“Access to information from genetic testing is a tremendous asset for producers and we want them to have the confidence to make informed decisions. As with any new technology, navigating the data and knowing what to do with it can be a challenge. The support of these specially trained, CLARIFIDE Accredited Veterinarians will help producers make the most of the genetic information obtained,” said Dr. Melodie Chan, technical services veterinarian with Pfizer Animal Health.

Using a range of tools developed by Pfizer and Semex, CLARIFIDE Accredited Veterinarians will work with dairy producers on testing, helping them interpret the results so that they can make more informed decisions about sire selection, reproductive strategies and overall herd management. Pfizer expects to have approximately 75 CLARIFIDE Accredited Veterinarians across Canada by June 2012.

Producers can submit samples through the CLARIFIDE service effective May 1, 2012 which will provide them with genetic evaluations provided by CDN. Through the CLARIFIDE service, producers can access customer reports based on samples submitted. For more information about CLARIFIDE, please visit: <http://www.pfizeranimalgenetics.ca/>

About the alliance

Through the partnership, Holstein Canada and Semex will continue to work together to promote the promotion and delivery of female genotyping services. Holstein Canada will also continue to receive samples from Semex or producers directly, submit samples for genotyping with designated laboratories and manage verification and correction of parentage information. CDN will calculate the genomic evaluations based on the genotype data received. Semex and Pfizer Animal Health will work with producers on farm to assist in the application of the genetic information for herd selection and management. All members will also participate in research projects of common interest.

Canadian Dairy Network (CDN)

CDN provides genetic evaluations for all dairy cattle breeds in Canada. In addition, the organization coordinates industry-funded research and development projects in the area of dairy cattle genetics and genomics, the establishment of national standards associated with supervised herd recording, publishable lactations and information used for genetic evaluations and maintains a national dairy database for the dairy cattle improvement industry in Canada. For more information visit <http://www.cdn.ca/>.

Holstein Canada

With a history of 127 years, Holstein Canada is the largest breed association in Canada having 11,000 active members. Its mission is to provide the membership with the opportunity to enhance their profitability and competitiveness through genetic improvement programs. For more information visit <https://www.holstein.ca/>.

Pfizer Animal Health

Pfizer Animal Health, a business of Pfizer Inc., is a world leader in discovering and developing innovative animal vaccines and prescription medicines, investing an estimated \$300 million annually in animal health product research and development. Pfizer is dedicated to improving the safety, quality and productivity of the food supply, enhancing the health of livestock, and helping pets live longer, healthier lives. For more information visit www.pfizer.ca/animalhealth.

Semex

World renowned for delivering high quality bovine genetics, Semex has been solving problems and satisfying producers through its distributor network for over 35 years. Working shoulder-to-shoulder with their clients, Semex's staff is the best trained in the industry, offering profitable genetic solutions for producers worldwide. With a successful history as its foundation, Semex is committed to ensuring success for its clients, owners, employees and partners for generations to come. For more information visit www.ciaq.com (Quebec), www.westgen.com (western Canada) or www.eastgen.ca (eastern Canada.)

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