

# EastGen

## New this December *Genetic Evaluation Changes and Enhancements*

Canada has a reputation for continually striving to enhance our national genetic evaluation systems. Providing useful and accurate evaluations to dairymen has always been of the utmost of importance and at the core of genetic improvement efforts in Canada. Most recently, as a result of industry consultation and detailed research, focus has been moving away from Somatic Cell Score (SCS) genetic evaluations to a more comprehensive and accurate measure of udder health with Canada's Mastitis Resistance Index. Accordingly, to follow this national initiative spearheaded by CDN, studs across Canada will only publish the Mastitis Resistance Index\* as a measure of udder health on the December 2018 proof sheets. (\*for Holstein, Jersey and Ayrshire breeds)

Background: Since 1996, milk recording data in Canada has been used to provide Somatic Cell Score (SCS) genetic evaluations for bulls and cows in all dairy breeds. In 2001, SCS was included in Canada's LPI formula as part of the Udder Health Index. Just over 10 years ago, following a coordinated industry effort involving CDN, milk recording agencies, breed associations, A.I. organizations and various veterinarian groups, a national system for collecting health events was introduced. Consequently, in 2014, CDN introduced official genetic

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## ***Upcoming county zone meeting dates located on page 4***

*For the most current information on 2018/2019 zone meeting dates please visit [www.eastgen](http://www.eastgen) and click on **events**.*

## ***December 2018***



**We are pleased to congratulate  
Jordan Snider of Sydenham,  
Ontario, on her grand prize entry  
for our 2018 Christmas card.**

### ***About the Illustrator***



*My name is Jordan Snider. I am an 11 years old. I am in grade 6 and attend Loughborough Public School. I am a member of Central*

*Frontenac 4-H club. I was part of the dairy club this year with my calf Orserdale Expander Countess. She belongs to Orserdale Farm. I enjoy 4-H, working with my calf and attending local fairs. I enjoy all sports, basketball, volleyball and my new found love of hockey.*



**We wish you  
all the joys of the  
season and a  
happy new year.**

**The EastGen Family**

evaluations for Clinical Mastitis for the first time, as well as a comprehensive Mastitis Resistance index for Holstein, Ayrshire and Jersey breeds. A year later, Mastitis Resistance was chosen to be used as the optimal measure for udder health in our two national ranking indexes LPI and Pro\$ in place of the Somatic Cell Score, Udder Depth and Milking Speed. In August 2018, CDN removed SCS from the Genetic Evaluation Summary pages on CDN's website for animals in the Holstein, Jersey and Ayrshire breeds.

**Why Mastitis Resistance:** Somatic Cell Count is an indicator of Sub-Clinical Mastitis while Clinical Mastitis has a bigger negative impact on cow and herd profitability. Mastitis Resistance is an overall index that equally combines evaluations for three traits, namely; Clinical Mastitis in first lactation cows, Clinical Mastitis for cows in later lactations, and Somatic Cell Score evaluated across the first three lactations. Official sire proofs for Mastitis Resistance have a desirable correlation of 79% with current proofs for Somatic Cell Score as well as correlations of 85% and 90% respectively, for Clinical Mastitis in first versus later lactations. Of interest Somatic Cell Score, as a measure of Sub-Clinical Mastitis, has only a moderate desirable association with Clinical Mastitis in first and later lactations (44% and 58% respectively). In other words, Mastitis Resistance is a considerably more accurate predictor for breeders looking to make selection decisions to reduce the overall incidence of mastitis in their herd. The availability of Mastitis Resistance Index evaluations allows for the improvement of both Sub-Clinical and Clinical Mastitis simultaneously.

**SCS Expression is Changed to RBV:** With the December 2018 proof release, SCS will be expressed on a Relative Breeding Value (RBV) scale with an average of 100 and a standard deviation of 5.

**The key advantages include:**

- Consistent across all functional traits
- Current scale was not well understood
- Expression is in a common direction – highest means the most desirable
- Scale is similar to the scale used for Conformation traits

**NEW Hoof Health Index:** Digital Dermatitis (DD) was introduced in December 2017 as a first step towards the direct genetic improvement of hoof health in Canadian Holsteins. Canada's ground-breaking genetic and genomic evaluation will be expanded this December to include an additional seven hoof lesions for Holsteins. The individual trait evaluations for the eight lesions will be added to CDN's "Health" page which is linked to each sire's Genetic Evaluation Details page. Additionally, the eight hoof lesion traits will be combined into a single Hoof Health (HH) index which will also be expressed as a Relative Breeding Value with an average of 100 and range from 85 (undesirable) to 115 (most desirable).

The word "Fertility" is written in a large, black, cursive script font. It is positioned on the left side of a white rectangular box that is part of a larger red graphic element.

At Semex & EastGen, we have one job to do ... Help our clients be profitable. And, in all things bovine, the key to profitability is getting cows in calf.

*This is why at Semex & EastGen we're putting Fertility First. From the barn, to the lab, to the tank, and to the farm gate, we are science driven and results focused.*

Look for the Fertility First icon  on our December 2018 proof sheet!



## Dairy Edge competitors challenged to “Look under the hood”

EastGen's Dairy Edge competition targets dairy producers aged 19 to 30 with a focus on management practices. This year's group of keen competitors spent in-class time gaining knowledge of tools they can use to assess and troubleshoot on-farm, and then applied that information during the on-farm competition component.



*Mark Carson (Right) presents Eleri Morris with the Champion Competitor award for the 2018 Dairy Edge competition.*

We are pleased to announce that Eleri Morris was the Overall Champion of this year's competition. Eleri is from Kintore, Ontario, and is currently in her third year of Ag Science at the University of Guelph. With a past diploma from Olds College in Agriculture Management with a major in Marketing, Eleri is challenging herself to gain as much experience before returning to the family dairy farm. Her goal is to join her family in the daily operations of the 60-cow freestall dairy.

“My experience at Dairy Edge allowed me to bring home new information we are already starting to implement on-farm,” Eleri explains, “The program really emphasizes the importance of taking a good look ‘under the hood.’ There is always room for improvement in any operation. I am now able to use the new tools I gained to assess and implement new strategies.”

***Interested in joining upcoming Dairy Edge competitions? Contact Christa Ormiston for more information on upcoming dates in 2019.***

## ARE YOU TESTING OR GUESSING?



## Immunity♀

Elevate™ gives you fast, easy access to vital female genomic information that increases genetic gain, corrects parentage errors, manages inbreeding and helps you make confident mating decisions for valuable genetic progress.

Available exclusively to Elevate clients, Immunity female genomic testing will be the most valuable investment you can make on your operation. Globally sought after as the health marker of choice, Immunity female testing is the only way to improve your herd's health genetically.

*Contact your EastGen representative today for exclusive Immunity female genomics, making the decision to Elevate Your Herd an easy one!*

## 2018/2019 COUNTY ZONE MEETINGS

### RENFREW - ZONE 4

*In conjunction with Holstein club meeting*  
Wednesday, December 12, 2018, 10:30 a.m.,  
Cobden Civitan Hall, Cobden, Ontario  
\*\* Delegate elections

### GLENGARRY, PRESCOTT, RUSSELL, CARLETON, DUNDAS, STORMONT

*Special multi-zone meeting notice located to the right.*

### NIAGARA (N&S), HALDIMAND, WENTWORTH - ZONE 10

January 14, 2019, 10:30 a.m.  
Abbylayne Farm, 44234 Highway 3,  
Lowbanks, Ontario  
\*\* Delegate elections

### PERTH - ZONE 11

January 15, 2019, 10:30 a.m.,  
Farm of Bryan Zehr, 6566 Perth Road 121  
Milverton, Ontario

### PRINCE EDWARD - ZONE 5

*In conjunction with Holstein club meeting*  
January 16, 2019, 10:30 a.m.,  
Bethany Christian Reformed Church,  
Bloomfield, Ontario

### OXFORD, BRANT, NORFOLK - ZONE 10

*In conjunction with Holstein club meeting*  
January 17 2019, 11:00 a.m.,  
Stiek Farms, The Rotteveel Family  
884841 Oxford Road 8, Tavistock, Ontario  
\*\* Delegate elections

### WATERLOO - ZONE 9

January 18, 2019, 10:30 a.m.  
Howard and Lucille Martin,  
Marlawn Holsteins, 1847 Three Bridges  
Road, St. Jacobs, Ontario

### HURON - ZONE 12

January 22, 2019, 10:30 a.m.  
Gubelmann Brown Swiss, 82301 North Line  
Road 12, Walton, Ontario

### MIDDLESEX, ELGIN, ESSEX-KENT, LAMBTON - ZONE 12

January 24, 2019, 10:30 a.m.  
Comrie Farms Ltd., The McNaughton Family,  
22543 Richmond Street, London, Ontario

### WELLINGTON - ZONE 9

January 25, 2019, 10:30 a.m.  
Eric and Sarah Martin, Bellwin Farms,  
6728 1st Line, Elora, Ontario

Thursday, December 13, 2018

REGISTER NOW

**Looking for new management strategies to increase revenue in an ever-changing market?**

**Plan to attend EastGen's Eastern Ontario Multi-Zone Meeting**

Prescott, Glengarry, Stormont, Dundas, Carleton & Russell Counties

**Agenda topics include:**

**Guest Speaker - Jack Rodenburg**

**"Managing Your Dairy With Tighter Margins"**

- Elevate • Immune female genetics & Immunity+
- OptiMate - Plan your herds future with OptiMate
- *Catered hot lunch compliments of EastGen\**

10:30 a.m. , North Stormont Place, 16299 Fairview Dr, Avonmore, Ontario. **Call Christa Ormiston to register 1-888-821-2150 ext. 252 Email: [christa.ormiston@eastgen.ca](mailto:christa.ormiston@eastgen.ca)**



## Calf Blankets

Winter's here!

Protect your calves from the cold!

**\$3 Off**

On sale until December 31, 2018

Available now in two sizes:

Small & Large



Locally made

## Postal strike - Alternatives to mail

*If you're receiving your bills by mail or sending your payments by mail, we recommend that you make other arrangements to keep your account current.*

**EastGen electronic payment methods include:**



- Online banking, Credit card or Pre-Authorized chequing
- Alternatively, you may give your cheque to your EastGen Technician or RSR

If you would like to receive your monthly statement electronically or if you have any questions, please contact Dianne Wilson  
Email: [Dianne.wilson@eastgen.ca](mailto:Dianne.wilson@eastgen.ca) phone: 1-888-821-2150 ext: 266