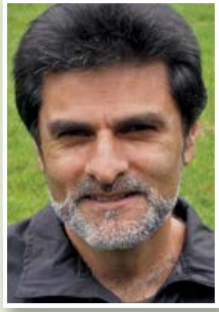


# SUSTAINABILITY *Ensuring a Dairy Future*



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Our Summer issue theme is Milk Production and Sustainability. You may notice we incorporated three icons from proAction into our Sustainability banner. We believe proAction is a necessary and valuable part of the industry's systematic public assurance system. We know it's just another layer of work that doesn't directly help your farm's bottom line – but we are producing milk in a much different world than we did a generation ago. Maintaining public support will, in part, require strong and transparent participation in proAction.

High/efficient milk production is closely linked to better sustainability because we use fewer resources to produce a unit of milk. **That** is an excellent starting point which has seen the industry lighten its carbon footprint significantly over past decades. I know 'Sustainability' has already become grossly over-used, which doesn't help us as we try as an industry to adjust our farming methods to retain our reputation and our place in consumers diets.

Sustainability is far more than just reducing our carbon impacts. Here's a few key elements – some we may have more influence over than others.

- 1) Consumers are imperative in the equation. Anything that doesn't reassure consumers weakens our sustainability. Things like animal care, environmental responsibility, food safety/purity, employment ethics, and GHG emissions are serious hot buttons that can turn the public and consumers away from us. Younger consumers are choosing based on what they feel are responsible/ethical food choices.
- 2) Economic sustainability is critical for any business and lately, dairy farmers have had some difficult challenges. I don't need to tell you about increasing costs and imports. Economic survival is also imperative – but people need to eat, and so far, dairy continues to be supported.
- 3) Political sustainability might be the most frustrating since we need government support for our supply management structure and it's not a guarantee. This is where we need producers to both follow proAction and support industry leaders. We need a cohesive industry from coast to coast – if we can't be aligned with our provincial producers across the nation, what message does that send to our politicians as they are pressured by international forces seeking access to our market? A unified industry with highest standards – that's our best chance.

We made a brief trip to Boston recently to celebrate our daughter's graduation from MIT, which was postponed due to Covid in 2020. I was tickled to see areas of the city which had plaques explaining the history of the 'Commons' – large acreages in central locations that allowed the common grazing of many settlers' cattle. These areas are now shrunk down to public green spaces, but the plaques recognize the historic value of cattle in the early history of – almost certainly – all the big cities throughout the 'new world.' History here is long and entwined with battles for independence. I'd like to think that cows were a critical part of history, feeding families as they established new communities and economies. That makes me smile. **Have a safe, productive summer everyone!**



**Boston Commons was once an important common grazing area for cattle.**

## June is Dairy Month!

While there is plenty of weight on everyone's shoulders, let's not miss the opportunity to celebrate Dairy Month! Producers are gaining much more positive traction through social media when they can tell the honest stories of humble, caring dairy farms. Connecting with people outside of farming matters. Building/maintaining trust matters. Listening to concerns matters. Adapting our practices and systems to continuously improve matters.



**Promise Valley Farm and Creamery – kids showing their Dairy Month smiles!**

**Thanks to the families that captured these pictures celebrating Dairy Month! This is who we are.**



**Henry, Nora and Max Larson of JTL Cattle Co., of Mill Bay (Vancouver Island) celebrate Dairy Month with a new calf!**



**Adorable Rayna Hoften of Manitoba invited her friends to her first World Milk Day party!**

**Bessie the Bovine shares her stage at Farmer John's Market in Grindrod. Sarah (L) and Sam (R) take a moment after scooping the kids' ice creams!**



**Wellsley Matlak (Matlak Dairy Farm, Dewdney) looks to big brother Luke for instructions on how to celebrate her first World Milk Day!**



**The Kampman kids of Kambro Farms, Abbotsford, are all smiles as they help feed the calves.**

