



## **19. Milk Recording Workshop Modern Tools for Milk Recording Management**

### **Title presentation**

eDHI – Integrating sensor data and eliminating farm visits

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### **Abstract**

Increased investment in on-farm milking and sensor technologies, lower profit margins, and the changing expectations of the next generation are driving demand for new convenient milk recording service options. Traditional issues related to data accuracy are generally not as important and often overshadowed by the belief that electronic systems provide similar levels of integrity or at least sufficient levels for day to day management. To adapt to the changing customer expectations, Lactanet Canada has introduced a service option without milk sampling that eliminates the need for farm visits and remotely accesses on-farm data, including component sensor data where available. Customers using this service must provide access to their bulk tank results so that volumes, components and SCC can be used for higher level validation checks and industry equivalent information for benchmarking purposes.

While sensor data are not currently used in genetic evaluations or used on pedigree records, the process is in place for when the information becomes accepted by the industry. eDHI service customers have the option of “official” milk production records, without components, that meet breed association requirements for publication, if using ICAR approved devices.

The service is scheduled in advance and data access does not require any customer time. Data are subject to the normal edit process which assists with maintaining a high level of data integrity within the herd. Availability of genetic evaluation information and the ability to easily share herd information with farm advisors in a standardised and validated process are some of the key advantages. The elimination of laboratory analysis, travel and on-farm time is reflected in a lower cost of service. A strategic advantage of the service is that it is easy to add sampling when necessary to address specific issues such as increased SCC levels.

Our target market for this service are herds that have not used milk recording in the past, herds that have recently stopped using services and herds considering terminating service. In the early stages, the service is particularly of interest to larger farms looking to minimize expenses or where the logistics of sample collection are challenging, and yet want to receive the benefits of genetic evaluations, annual performance summaries, benchmarking and participation in industry recognition programs. An internal business challenge is the potential cannibalization of our higher margin customers who routinely collect milk samples.