

The National Holstein Convention

The Spirit of the West – Excellence and Enthusiasm!

A year in the making, the National Holstein Convention took place in BC April 15-19, 2026. The 'Spirit of the West' flew high and proud through the week which began with a pre-tour through the Rockies, visiting wineries and breeder herds in the North Okanagan before landing in Burnaby, the Convention headquarters.

Wednesday evening's Welcome Reception was a tasty initiation to a Taste of BC, hosted by David Beaudoin, Canada's Cheese Ambassador. Mid-week events included the Youth Showmanship competition in Chilliwack – sponsored by Abbotsford Veterinary Clinic, the Spirit of the West Sale, WestGen's Dairy Showcase, Fraser Valley Farm tours and alternate tour to Fort Langley, the Past Presidents Reception atop Grouse Mountain, the Convention Show, Holstein Canada AGM and the grand finale Master Breeder Gala. A final post-Convention tour to Vancouver Island amazed participants who visited Victoria, enjoyed a whale-watching trip and saw top breeder herds in the Duncan area.

It was a magnificent Convention week, supported by the hardest-working volunteers and dozens of generous corporate sponsors. Thank you to all who had a hand in making this monumental event a great memory for hundreds of Holstein enthusiasts from coast to coast!

The Welcome Reception

It was a casual affair on Wednesday evening as Convention guests had just arrived from flights and tour buses. Convention Co-Chair, Joan Wikkerink



The Dream Team welcomed Convention registrants in Burnaby on April 15. (L-R) Barry Remus (Finance), Joan Wikkerink, Morgan Sangster, Suzanne Cuthbert (Co-Chairs). Missing – Carl Barclay (Show), Heidi Schurmann (Decorations) and Luke Van Huizen (Young Leader).

welcomed everyone and introduced the Canadian Cheese Ambassador, David Beaudoin. Clearly well-prepared for entertaining the crowd with his effusive love of dairy, David stimulated appetites as he described the tantalizing array of cheeses and pairings across the entire delicious and inviting feed bunk! The local BC cheeses were exceptional and gave dairy producers an entirely new appreciation for what their beautiful milk can create.

Everyone had ample time to graze, mingle and meet others through the relaxing evening.



Cheese Ambassador David Beaudoin.



Atop the World at Grouse Mountain

If the six minute gondola ride up the mountain wasn't exhilarating enough for guests, the views from high up on Grouse Mountain would certainly seal the deal!

This was the site of the WestGen-sponsored Past Presidents Reception – with fresh snow still at the top, it was a boisterous, memorable evening with breathtaking views, especially for guests from outside of BC.

Four of BC's Past National Holstein Canada Presidents were recognized for their past service and had special drinks named humorously in their honour to bring some fun to the evening.



BC's Past National Presidents were acknowledged for their roles in guiding Holstein Canada, as were their spouses for unwavering support – before, during and after their tenures. (L-R) John Blair and Sonya Klemm, Jeanette and Joe Taylor, Suzanne and Ben Cuthbert, Judy and Richard Bosma, H el ene Gagnon and Gilles C ote (outgoing Holstein Canada President).

The Grand Finale – Master Breeder Gala!

The gala hall vibrated with excitement as a full house waited with anticipation for each new Master Breeder family to share their on-farm video, before making their way (dancing in some cases) to the presentation stage with their chosen song playing raucously! Many proud, humble, moving stories were heard and each family was appreciated with pounding applause. We offer our deep congratulations to all the winners, but especially to the three first-time Master Breeders from western Canada!

Holstein Canada photos



Crestomere – the Simanton Family, AB



Missiontrail – the Hueging Family, MB



Mosnang – the Hehli Family, AB



National Convention BC Spring Show

Sadie Strikes Again!

BC Spring Show, held in conjunction with this year's "Spirit of the West" Holstein Canada National Convention in British Columbia, attracted 190 exceptional animals when it was held on April 17th at Chilliwack Heritage Park, Chilliwack, BC, before a huge crowd of Canadian and international spectators. It was an amazing show with quality running deep in every class in an event that drew

103 cows and 87 heifers representing owners from six Canadian provinces and two American states. Confidently lining up the classes was Canadian-born Judge Jamie Black of Batavia, NY, who owns Opportunity Holsteins & Jerseys and is Show Herd Manager for Oakfield Corners Dairy, Oakfield, NY. He was assisted by Associate Judge James Pruiem of Plumblossom Farms, Osler, SK.



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Jenna Jongenotter photo

1 - B&W Grand Champions: (L-R) Judge Jamie Black, Kevin Kooyman with WEST-ADUB LAMBDA SADIE - Champion; Nicole Crosbie with BUTLERVIEW AMZN ALL AMOR - Reserve; Dave Dyment with JENDRO DELTA LAMBDA SANDY - Honourable Mention; Associate Judge James Pruiem.

2 - B&W Junior Champions: (L-R) Associate Judge James Pruiem, Rory Timlin with HAMMING LIMITED DARILYN - Honourable Mention; Tyler Doiron with LUCKY MASTER FROSTY - Reserve; Jeff Kooyman with DREAM MAKER MASTER DECEPTION - Champion; Judge Jamie Black.

Bonnie Cooper,
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Impressive Winners

A beautiful group of cows vied for the day's highest award, but "running away with the win" and Grand Championship was WEST-ADUB LAMBDA SADIE, the first 4-Year-Old from Westcoast Holsteins (BC). No stranger to the spotlight, Sadie was All-Canadian and All-American Junior 3-Year-Old last year after being Intermediate and Honourable Mention Grand Champion at the Royal Winter Fair and Intermediate and Reserve Grand Champion at World Dairy Expo. While milking a long time, this Lambda daughter used her combination of dairyness and strength, and added development and width through the front-end, to beat BUTLERVIEW AMZN ALL AMOR-ET, the winning Winter 2-Year-Old and Intermediate Champion who was tagged as Reserve Grand Champion. Acquired just before the show by Westcoast, Butlerview Farms (IL), Walker Dairy Inc. (ON) and Clarkvalley Holsteins (ON), this exciting young cow who, Judge Black said, "will stand a lot of competition this year," was also declared Overall and Intermediate Bred & Owned Champion of the show. Sired by Alligator, her levelness and symmetry of udder, and comfortable way she moved around the ring, put her in a close placing over JENDRO DELTA LAMBDA SANDY, the first 5-Year-Old and Honourable Mention Grand Champion from R&F Livestock Inc. (SK) and Walker Dairy who had been All-Canadian Senior 3-Year-Old in 2024.

In the Intermediate Championship, Amor (the Winter 2-Year-Old) had an advantage in udder quality, length of fore udder, and definition of rear udder crease, to go ahead of SKYCREST BREAKSHOT SHOWTIME, the rambunctious Senior 3-Year-Old winner from Skycrest Holsteins (AB) who was

Reserve Intermediate Champion. The Reserve had more width all the way through and was leveler on the floor of her udder than the first Junior 3-Year-Old, CRESTOMERE LAMBDA VORTEX, from R&F Livestock and Walker Dairy, who was Honourable Mention.

Judge Black set a pattern throughout the day and for him the "logical choice" for Junior Champion was the winning Spring Yearling, DREAM MAKER MASTER DECEPTION, from Westcoast. Deception had more "natural dairyness," being cleaner, silkier and having more spring of rib, than LUCKY MASTER FROSTY, the first Fall Yearling and Reserve Junior Champion who had been bought at showtime by Colin Vanden Brink (BC) from previous owner T&L Cattle Ltd. (BC). In a narrower decision, the runner-up's overall width put her ahead of HAMMING LIMITED DARILYN, the first Summer Yearling who was Honourable Mention for T&L Cattle. Best Bred & Owned Holstein Junior Champion was TAZO LIMITED-P ANGELA, the clean boned and dairy Winter Yearling class winner from Tazo Farms Ltd. (BC).

The Red and Whites

In the show's Red & White division, Judge Black awarded the Grand Championship to EXCELERANT PHOENIX-RED-ET, the fourth 4-Year-Old who had been purchased in the Convention Sale earlier in the week by Hamming Holsteins (BC). This Warrior daughter had the height and width of rear udder, levelness of udder and definition of



2

Claire Swale photo



3

Jenna Jongenotter photo

3. - Intermediate Champions: (L-R) Judge Jamie Black, Nicole Crosbie with BUTLERVIEW AMZN ALL AMOR - Champion; Katelyn Crest with SKYCREST BREAKSHOT SHOWTIME - Reserve; Greg McLean with CRESTOMERE LAMBDA VORTEX - Honourable Mention; Associate Judge James Pruiem.



4

Jenna Jongenotter photo

4 - R&W Grand Champions: (L-R) Judge Jamie Black, Brian Goertzen with EXCELERANT PHOENIX - Champion; Kaycee Meier with LOOKOUT I'M BOUJEE - Reserve; Alberto Medina with MEADOW GREEN ALPHA FERN - Honourable Mention; Associate Judge James Pruiem.

crease to place over LOOKOUT I'M BOUJEE, the Alpha daughter who was Reserve Grand Champion R&W after finishing third in the combined Spring & Summer 2-Year-Old class for Westcoast. The height and width of rear udder, and overall udder quality on this cow, took her ahead of MEADOW GREEN ALPHA FERN, who was cited as Honourable Mention and had been fifth Winter 2-Year-Old for Stanhope-Wedgwood (BC).

Grabbing the R&W Junior Championship was LOVHILL MIRACULOUS ALABAMA, the third Fall Calf from Lovholm Holsteins (SK) whose dairyness and longer head and neck took her over LUCKY CHUBANNA SPARKLE, the Reserve R&W Junior Champion by Altitude who was second Fall Yearling. Owned by Lucky Hill Dairy (AB) and Chubanna Holsteins (AB), the squareness and depth of rib on this heifer was preferred over another Chubanna entry, CHUBANNA LITE IT UP DELULU who was third Spring Yearling and Honourable Mention R&W Junior Champion.

The Premier Awards

The final awards of the show were presented during the well attended Pacific Celebration BBQ held that evening on the fairgrounds. The Kooyman family of Westcoast Holsteins, who were owners and/or partners in four class winners including the Grand, Intermediate/Reserve Grand, and Junior Champion Holsteins, went home with the Overall Premier Exhibitor banner. The Overall Premier Breeder banner was won by new

Master Breeders, the Simanton family of Crestomere Holsteins (AB), who were thrilled to see a pair of Crestomere bred cows stand one-two in the Junior 3-Year-Olds. The Junior Premier Exhibitor award was claimed by T&L Cattle Ltd. and the Junior Premier Breeder by Hamming Holsteins. FARNEAR DELTA-LAMBDA-ET was the show's Overall Premier Sire, while the Junior Premier Sire was HYDEN LIMITED-P.

Honoured with the BC Spring Show Dedication award this year was John & Thelma Vanderwal of Rockledge Farms Ltd., Enderby, in recognition of their many contributions over the years to the BC Holstein industry and youth programs.

The hard-working BC Spring Show Committee, headed by Chair Carl Barclay, did a wonderful job of organizing the event which had also been designated a National Show. Tars Cheema of WCDN made the show announcements, while Albert Streutker (BC) was the show's ringman, and Claudia Kessler (QC) provided the French translation of the judge's reasons. The well watched livestream of the show featured informative English and French commentary from Rich Bosma (BC) of Vedderlea Holsteins, and Holstein Canada classifiers Alex Laliberté (QC) and Alex McKay (ON).

A big **THANK YOU** to all the generous sponsors who contributed financially to help ensure the success of this show.



Photos Ketsia Croteau, Holstein Canada

5 - Junior Premier Breeder - Hamming Holsteins, Vernon, BC. (L-R) Brian and Jill Hamming, Dr. Rich Vanderwal (Abbotsford Veterinary Clinic - Sponsor).

6 - Junior Premier Exhibitor - T&L Cattle, Cultus Lake, BC. (L-R) Brian Goertzen and Stéphane Danre (National Bank - Sponsor).

7 - Junior Premier Exhibitor - Tom and Laury De Groot (T&L Cattle).

8 - Premier Breeder - Crestomere Holsteins, Ponoka, AB. (L-R) Luke Van Huizen (BC Dairy - Sponsor), Lee, Lisa, Marylee, Ev, Ava and Easton Simanton.

9 - Premier Exhibitor - Westcoast Holsteins, Chilliwack, BC. (L-R) Darrin Rasmuson (WestGen - Sponsor), Jeff Kooyman, Mike Duncan (WestGen).

PLACINGS

Winter Heifer (6)

- 1. LAVENDER PREPPY ROCKET**
Ashlee McAvoy, Armstrong, BC
- 2. BOONEMILL SALUTE EMMA**
Bonnie Doone Dairy Inc., Harrison Mills, BC

Fall Heifer (24)

- 1. MOSNANG POPROCK IDIDITFOR LOVE**
T&L Cattle Ltd., Cultus Lake, BC
- 2. RF PERENNIAL JAGUAR**
R&F Livestock Inc., Cudworth, SK

Summer Yearling (23)

- 1. HAMMING LIMITED DARILYN**
T&L Cattle Ltd., Cultus Lake, BC
- 2. J-A-TELFORD EYE CANDY MYLA**
Westcoast Holsteins, Chilliwack, BC

Spring Yearling (12)

- 1. DREAM MAKER MASTER DECEPTION**
Westcoast Holsteins, Chilliwack, BC
- 2. TOPPLEN WAR WINNIFREDD**
T&L Cattle Ltd., Cultus Lake, BC

Winter Yearling (14)

- 1. TAZO LIMITED-P ANGELA**
Tazo Farms Ltd., Falkland, BC
- 2. BENBIE DIRECT LENNOX**
Benbie Holsteins, Caron, SK

Fall Yearling (8)

- 1. LUCKY MASTER FROSTY**
Colin Vanden Brink, Chilliwack, BC
- 2. LUCKY CHUBANNA SPARKLE**
Chubanna Holsteins & Lucky Hill Dairy, Lacombe, AB

Best Bred & Owned Jr. Champion

- TAZO LIMITED-P ANGELA**
Tazo Farms Ltd., Falkland, BC

R&W Junior Champion

- LOVHILL MIRACULOUS ALABAMA**
Lovholm Holsteins, Balgonie, SK

Reserve R&W Junior Champin

- LUCKY CHUBANNA SPARKLE**
Chubanna Holsteins & Lucky Hill Dairy, Lacombe, AB

HM R&W Junior Champion

- CHUBANNA LITE IT UP DELULU**
Chubanna Holsteins, Lacombe, AB

Junior Champion

- DREAM MAKER MASTER DECEPTION**
Westcoast Holstein, Chilliwack, BC

Reserve Junior Champion

- LUCKY MASTER FROSTY**
Colin Vanden Brink, Chilliwack, BC

HM Junior Champion

- HAMMING LIMITED DARILYN**
T&L Cattle Ltd., Cultus Lake, BC

Junior Breeder's Herd (7)

- 1. Hamming Holsteins, Vernon, BC**
- 2. Robella Holsteins, Balgonie, SK**

Junior Premier Breeder

- 1. Hamming Holsteins, Vernon, BC**
- 2. Mosnang Holsteins, Rimbey, AB**

Junior Premier Exhibitor

- 1. T&L Cattle Ltd., Cultus Lake, BC**
- 2. Westcoast Holsteins, Chilliwack, BC**

Summer 2 Year Old (1)

- 1. LOVHILL ROYALL LUPINE**
Lovholm Holsteins, Balgonie, SK

Spring 2 Year Old (10)

- 1. GENOSOURCE DOUBLE DICE**
Westcoast Holsteins, Chilliwack, BC
- 2. WESTCOAST HASALL ARROW**
Westcoast Holsteins, Chilliwack, BC

Winter 2 Year Old (20)

- 1. BUTLerview AMZN ALL AMOR**
Westcoast, Butlerview, Walker Dairy & Clarkvalley, Chilliwack, BC
- 2. ANDREANE LAMBDA MISERY**
Westcoast Holsteins, Chilliwack, BC

Fall 2 Year Old (12)

- 1. CRAILA MEMORY BLACKOUT**
Robella, T&L & Joel Phoenix, Balgonie, SK
- 2. KESSEL PLAYBACK TOOTSIE**
R&F Livestock & Walker Dairy, Cudworth, SK

Junior 3 Year Old (10)

- 1. CRESTOMERE LAMBDA VORTEX**
R&F Livestock & Walker Dairy, Cudworth, SK
- 2. CRESTOMERE DOMINANCE TWEETY**
Crestomere Holsteins, Ponoka, AB

Senior 3 Year Old (11)

- 1. SKYCREST BREAKSHOT SHOWTIME**
Skycrest Holsteins, Athabasca, AB
- 2. ROBELLA DELTA LAMBDA MYGIRL**
Robella Holsteins & Westcoast Holsteins, Balgonie, SK

Intermediate Champion

- BUTLerview AMZN ALL AMOR**
Westcoast, Butlerview, Walker Dairy & Clarkvalley, Chilliwack, BC

Reserve Intermediate Champion

- SKYCREST BREAKSHOT SHOWTIME**
Skycrest Holsteins, Athabasca, AB

HM Intermediate Champion

- CRESTOMERE LAMBDA VORTEX**
R&F Livestock & Walker Dairy, Cudworth, SK

4 Year Old (18)

- 1. WEST-ADUB LAMBDA SADIE**
Westcoast Holsteins, Chilliwack, BC
- 2. ARWAY SIDEKICK LIDIE**
R&F Livestock & Walker Dairy, Cudworth, SK

5 Year Old (10)

- 1. JENDRO DELTA LAMBDA SANDY**
R&F Livestock & Walker Dairy, Cudworth, SK
- 2. MAIFIELD LAMBDA MAINA**
Westcoast Holsteins, Chilliwack, BC

Mature Cow (8)

- 1. LONDAN DAIRY BOJANGLES**
R&F Livestock & Walker Dairy, Cudworth, SK
- 2. EMBRDALE JILLIAN UNIX**
Wendon, Trent Valley & Joel Phoenix, Red Deer County, AB

Lifetime Production (3)

- 1. SKYCREST GOLDCHIP NUT**
Skycrest Holsteins, Athabasca, AB
- 2. HAMMING 1ST GRADE SMARTY PANTS**
Hamming Holsteins, Vernon, BC

Senior Breeder's Herd (6)

- 1. Wendon Holsteins, Red Deer County, AB**
- 2. Robella Holsteins, Balgonie, SK**

Best Bred & Owned Champion

- BUTLerview AMZN ALL AMOR**
Westcoast, Butlerview, Walker Dairy & Clarkvalley, Chilliwack, BC

R&W Grand Champion

- EXCELERANT PHOENIX**
Hamming Holsteins, Vernon, BC

Reserve R&W Grand Champion

- LOOKOUT I'M BOUJEE**
Westcoast Holsteins, Chilliwack, BC

HM R&W Grand Champion

- MEADOW GREEN ALPHA FERN**
Stanhope-Wedgwood, Cobble Hill, BC

Grand Champion

- WEST-ADUB LAMBDA SADIE**
Westcoast Holsteins, Chilliwack, BC

Reserve Grand Champion

- BUTLerview AMZN ALL AMOR**
Westcoast, Butlerview, Walker Dairy & Clarkvalley, Chilliwack, BC

HM Grand Champion

- JENDRO DELTA LAMBDA SANDY**
R&F Livestock & Walker Dairy, Cudworth, SK

Premier Breeder

- 1. Crestomere Holsteins, Ponoka, AB**
- 2. Hamming Holsteins, Vernon, BC**

Premier Exhibitor

- 1. Westcoast Holsteins, Chilliwack, BC**
- 2. R&F Livestock & Walker Dairy, Cudworth, SK**

Premier Sire

- 1. Farnear Delta-Lambda**
- 2. Golden-Oaks Master**

National Convention Tours

Ambassadors of BC's Vibrant Dairy Industry

Providing Convention guests with excellent tour options that combine interesting farms and region-specific experiences is challenging but very important to the overall Convention offering!

The 2026 National Convention Tours included a Pre-Tour through the Rockies and Okanagan, Fraser Valley Farm Tours and a Post Convention Tour to Vancouver Island.

- 1 - The Convention Pre-Tour started in Calgary April 12, treating visitors to jaw-dropping vistas through the Rockies en route to Okanagan wineries and wonderful Holstein breeder visits and D-Dutchman ice cream! Thanks to DeWitts, Hammings and Gietemas for hosting!
- 2 - While snow was still falling in many parts of the country, those who visited Vancouver Island for the Post-Convention tour could hardly believe the flowers and carpets of green grass at Mile 0 in Victoria. Whale watching followed the intriguing farm visits to Wedgwood Holsteins, J.W. Wikkerink Farms, Willswikk Holsteins and Cowichan Milk Company (Van Bovens). Thank you to these families for putting in all the extra work ahead of hosting visitors!
- 3 - Thursday farm tours in the Fraser Valley were varied and unique. Bus passengers could hardly believe the state of harvest they witnessed as they passed numerous farms with fields recently harvested, cut or ready to cut! Remember - much of Canada was still emerging from Winter! Farms on tour were Lorenzetti Acres, UBC Dairy, Corners Pride, Bonnie Doone, Gracemar, Rose Gate, Wisselview and Academy Farms.
- 4 - WestGen hosted tour guests for a leisurely lunch and relaxed tour through their Best in the West Dairy Showcase displays, spread through two barns at the ARC (Advanced Reproduction Centre). Forty six impressive, high genomic animals were immaculately presented in beautiful facilities, originating from 17 breeders in BC, AB and SK. Great idea!
- 5 - Happy, hard-working and ever-conscientious, sisters Nicki and Kaycee Meier had the WestGen Dairy Showcase barns and animals in *show-shape* for the hundreds of visitors that came through during Convention week.
- 6 - This Convention's Alternate Tour took guests to explore the lovely historic hamlet of Fort Langley, including a tour of the BC Farm Museum. It wrapped up with a floral finale at Quik's Farm in Chilliwack - innovative greenhouse growers of fresh cut flowers.



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Holstein Canada Annual General Meeting

Adjusting to a Changing Industry



1 - On hand to receive two of the six HC educational award scholarships from outgoing HC Director Karen Versloot (centre) were Cailyn Charlton (ON) and Dorian de Lange (AB).

2 - In his final address to the membership, outgoing President Gilles Côté began with high praise for BC's "producers with a vision," Convention co-chairs, their committees, the tour farm hosts and the western exhibitors - "You make us so proud."

3 - (L-R) CEO Greg Dietrich spoke with appreciation for the 'Hometown Heroes,' presenting awards to Luke van Huizen and Carl Barclay of British Columbia, with President Gilles Côté.

4 - HC extended heartfelt thanks to the BC Holstein Convention Committee. (Back L-R) Gilles Côté, Barry Remus (Finance), Luke van Huizen (Young Leaders), Carl Barclay (Show), Greg Dietrich. (Front L-R) Convention Co-Chairs Joan Wikkerink, Morgan Sangster and Suzanne Cuthbert.

5 - The 2025 Cow of the Year award was won by JACOBS HIGH OCTANE BABE EX-96-2E-6*, bred and owned by Ferme Jacobs Inc., Cap-Sante, QC. Ferme Jacobs was presented with a True Type Model featuring Babe's markings and a painting of Babe, created by BC artist, Tanya R. Loewen (right).

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Attendees at the "Spirit of the West" National Holstein Convention in British Columbia turned their attention to business on April 18th when the 143rd Holstein Canada (HC) Annual General Meeting of members took place at the Delta Hotels Burnaby Conference Centre, Burnaby, BC. The meeting was also livestreamed (viewing only) for members unable to attend the session.

Changing Industry Presents Challenges

"Nothing is permanent except change," HC President Gilles Côté told members in his address. During the past year, Côté said "change, modernization and a commitment to act," were the principles that guided HC's Board as they thoroughly reviewed the Association's By-Laws and governance policies and appointed Greg Dietrich as the new HC CEO in December following the departure of the previous CEO in May 2025. He said the Board's Strategic Plan, based on the pillars of member and producer engagement, leadership and governance, industry partnerships, and innovation and research, will serve as the Association's roadmap for the next three years.

Speaking in both English and French, Greg Dietrich presented a frank and honest assessment of where the Holstein Association is today, in his first CEO report. "We are operating in a changing industry. And the reality is we are in a declining environment for classification and registrations. While financially 2025 may appear to have been a fantastic year, in reality our truer position is closer to a deficit. We had \$780,000 that was not paid for staffing, and a good amount of our revenue came from the return on our investments. 2026 is a 'reset' year," he said. "We are going to look at rebuilding internal capacities inside the office to allow us to provide top notch service to members. We are going to invest in our people and systems. We need to take advantage of tools like Artificial Intelligence and position ourselves for long-term relevance and value for generations to come."

In reviewing 2025, Dietrich cited enhancements in HC's classification program, creation of the Homebred Excellent Award, more meetings with Branches, modernized production awards, committee restructuring, and continued research using 3D imaging and Artificial Intelligence for animal phenotyping, as some of HC's achievements. The classification program marked its 100th anniversary last year. In the coming year,

Dietrich said the Association plans to look at modernizing the Herdbook and exploring additional multi-breed opportunities and industry partnerships that will add value to HC members.

Finances and By-Laws

National Director Benoît Turmel presented a very detailed financial report to members. He said most of the surpluses HC has realized in recent years are the result of the Reserve Fund's returns on investments, not from business growth or efficiency in services. This will remain a "challenge" for HC because "growth is limited."

In 2025, HC reported "operational" revenue of \$16,775,987, expenses of \$16,349,748, and a surplus of \$426,239. When investment income from the Reserve Fund is considered, the surplus climbs to \$1,011,874. There is \$6.9 million in the Reserve Fund. Memberships, transfers and classification activity were down last year, while registrations were up 2.1% and genomic tests rose 14.6% from a year ago. Several key staff positions at HC remained unfilled last year which has delayed the implementation of some changes, particularly in the classification program.

For 2026, the Board is budgeting "operational" revenue at \$16,722,097, expenses of \$17,457,157, and a deficit of \$735,060. "While the coming year will be a period of restructuring and redirection, the Board will remain very vigilant about expenses," assured President Côté.

The Association's amended and restated By-Laws were presented for approval at this meeting. During the discussion, members raised concerns about not having adequate time to study the document, voting in British Columbia on amendments that directly impact members in Ontario and Quebec, and not permitting online voting. Despite the objections, all of the By-Law amendments were approved by a majority of the 108 registered voters present at the meeting.

The majority of By-Law changes were minor and simply "modernized" the structure of the Association to prevent future governance issues. The most significant amendments that were approved reduce the number of National Directors in both Quebec and Ontario from "four to three" and give the Board the flexibility to appoint up to two "independent" directors with specialized expertise to help the Association. These independent directors will have voting rights but can not be an officer or serve more than two years. This change means the overall size of the Board will not increase (10

elected directors + 2 independent directors) and considers declining dairy producer numbers and budget constraints. HC Past President, 87-year-old Joe Taylor (BC) reminded the group that in the 1980s there were 32 Board Directors. When that number was later reduced, the work continued to get done. "It's our responsibility," he said, "to ensure the right people get elected to the Board."

Other AGM Highlights

* Members approved seven resolutions:

- 1) that HC support a working group to investigate the use and acceptance of component information from robotic milking systems as an "official" test
- 2) that the judges' names, and complete voting results, for the All-Canadian contest be published
- 3) that national and provincial production awards, plus club awards, be put on animal pedigrees
- 4) that selection criteria weightings for the Cow of the Year award be reviewed
- 5) that lactation numbers and fresh dates be put on show harness cards
- 6) that bulls who sire "crampiness" be clearly identified on AI proof sheets and Lactanet/HC websites
- 7) sire search results be enhanced for online registration.

A resolution asking that all AI bulls be classified was defeated after Doug Blair (AB), retired Alta Genetics CEO, remarked that "very little correlation has ever been found between what a bull looks like and what the progeny results are." Also turned down was a request that participation in the Breeder's Herd class at shows be based on the "breeders" area of the registration, rather than the "prefix."

* The age eligibility for HC's Young Leaders program is being changed to 21 to 35 years old. It was previously 19-30.

* Appreciation was expressed to the dedicated staff at HC for their contributions and specifically Linda Markle, Director of Member Services & Operations, who served as Interim CEO twice in four years; Chris Bartels, Director of Innovation & Research, who was Interim Co-Chief Operating Officer; and Pascal Lemire, Registrar, who served as Interim Manager of the Classification Program. Also thanked was Paul Larmer, retired Semex CEO, who has been a Special Advisor to the Board since October 2024. CEO Dietrich announced that Valérie

Tremblay, current Director of Marketing & Field Service, will be transitioning to Manager of Classification and that HC is currently seeking a new Business Development manager.

* The 2025 Cow of the Year award was won by JACOBS HIGH OCTANE BABE EX-96-2E-6*, bred and owned by Ferme Jacobs Inc., Cap-Sante, QC. Ferme Jacobs was presented with a painting of Babe and a True Type Model featuring Babe's markings, the first True Type Model awarded since the creation of a new model by HC. The new model is now being produced in-house at HC via 3D printing and is identical in conformation, shape and size to the 2004 Mature Cow model, but features individual serialized numbering, a certificate of authenticity, and walnut display base.

* Next year's National Holstein Convention will be held in Brantford, ON, from April 20-24, 2027, with a theme of "Come Home to Holstein."

HC Officers & Directors

During the AGM it was announced that Quebec at Large National Director, Nicolas Lalonde of Ferme Blondin/Blondin Sires, Saint-Placide, QC, had advised the Association that he would be leaving the Board after the meeting. President Côté thanked Mel McLean of Stoneden Holsteins, Gananoque, ON, who was completing his term as Western Ontario National Director, and Karen Versloot of Combination Holsteins, Keswick Ridge, NB, who was defeated in the election for Atlantic Director, for their service. Also finishing his Board term and retiring is Eastern Quebec National Director and HC President Gilles Côté of Ferme Lacnor (prefix Jeanri), Saint-Bruno-Lac-Saint-Jean, QC.

At a Board of Directors meeting held following the AGM, Harold Sweetnam of Sweetridge Holsteins, Stanley, MB, was elected HC President for the coming year. He is the first HC President from Manitoba in 88 years. Benoît Turmel of Beaucoise Holstein, Sainte-Marie, QC, is the new Vice-President, while the new third member of the Executive Committee is Brian Hamming of Hamming Holsteins, Vernon, BC.

Three new Directors are joining the Board this year: Atlantic - Luke McLellan of Lellavan Holsteins, Noel, NS; Western Ontario - Gerrit Wensink, Hoenhorst Holsteins, Woodstock, ON; and Eastern Quebec - Hubert Guimond, Bard Holsteins, La Pocatière, QC.

Spirit of the West National Convention Sale

Bonnie Cooper,
becooper2010@gmail.com



The Spirit of the West National Convention Sale kicked off the 2026 Holstein Canada National Convention in British Columbia and what a great success it was with the sale averaging \$7380 on 63 lots, which included five choices and eight embryo packages, in addition to an incredible lineup of live cattle. Held on April 15th at Chilliwack Heritage Park, Chilliwack, BC, the offering sold to in-person and online buyers from seven Canadian provinces and the state of Illinois.

The Convention Sale was managed by Brian Hamming of Hamming Holsteins (BC), Duane Wisselink of Wisselview Farms (BC), and Martin Rypma (BC), a sales representative for Blondin Sires. Keeping the sale moving at a brisk pace was auctioneer Jim Doan (ON), while Martin Rypma made pedigree announcements.

Igniting the sale's top bid of \$21,000 was WESTCOAST SALUTE PRINCESS, a September 2025 Salute heifer calf from

the Prude family, who was purchased by Roswitha Holsteins (MB) from consignors Westcoast Holsteins (BC) and T&L Cattle Ltd. (BC). This calf is a daughter of WESTCOAST SIDEKICK PRUDE EX-96-3E, a sixth generation EX daughter of WENDON DEMPSEY PRUDE EX-95-2E-3*, who was All-Canadian and All-American 4-Year-Old in 2016.

Best selling milking female at \$15,000 was EXCELERANT PHOENIX-RED-ET VG-89, a show winning Warrior-Red daughter milking 42 kg/day and backed by an EX-94-USA Defiant dam and EX-91-USA Destry grandam in the WINDY-KNOLL-VIEW PROMIS-ET EX-95-3E-USA family. Consigned by Westcoast Holsteins and T&L Cattle, this 4-year-old would be Red & White Grand Champion at BC Spring Show two days later for new owner Hamming Holsteins.

CHUBANNA DELTA LAMDA LADY, a Lambda bred heifer due in July to Triton PP, was claimed by Westcoast Holsteins and Weststar Holsteins (BC) for \$14,500.



A successful sale executed by a great crew - pictured with the high seller WESTCOAST SALUTE PRINCESS, purchased by Roswitha Holsteins (MB) for \$21,000.

Consigned by Chubanna Holsteins (AB), she is from an EX-93 Legend dam who completes 10 generations of EX/VG and traces through BRAINWAVE GOLDWYN LAURAMIE EX-95-2E-6*, a 2X All-Western winner.

Butlerview Farm (IL) paid \$13,500 for ZESSEN LIMITED ROSES, a September 2025 Limited-P calf consigned by Vanzessen Dairy (SK). She is from a VG-87 Master dam who completes seven generations VG/EX, with the sixth dam being THRULANE JAMES

ROSE EX-97-2E-5*, the 3X Royal Winter Fair Grand Champion and All-Canadian.

The "choice of any heifer" born in the Lovhill herd of Lovholm Holsteins (SK) during 2025 sparked a final bid of \$13,500 cast by Beckholm Holsteins (ON). The buyer will have his pick of 50 heifers from 17 cow families from this highly classified herd which has bred World Dairy Expo Grand Champions in 2025 and 2015 and achieved a string of Superior Production, lifetime production and Star Brood cow awards.



2026 BC Spring Show Dedication

The BC Holstein Branch dedicated the 2026 Spring Show to John and Thelma Vanderwal with gratitude for all the time they have given to the landscape of BC Holsteins over the past several decades, and especially for their investment in BC's dairy youth.

With early years spent at Cedarwal Farms and engaged in the Sumas 4-H Club, John and Thelma moved to Enderby in 2005, starting Rockledge Farms with their son Shawn.

While breeding and marketing high calibre genetics were strengths, their passion lay in encouraging youth. From supporting 4-H clubs to eventually leading WCC, they loved their time developing and uplifting keen dairy youth.

A highlight at Rockledge included their first calf born CEDARWAL SASSY ALLEN EX-92 2E, becoming Grand Champion at the NOK Spring Show. She has 39 daughters (17 EX, 15 VG and seven GP), earning her 29* stars and counting.

We honour John and Thelma for their selfless service to the dairy industry and to the many community organizations they continue to support today.

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National Convention Young Leader Program

Enthusiasm, Camaraderie, Dairy-Building Experiences!



Hannah Woodhouse, Ph. D
(BC Young Leader Participant)

The 2026 National Holstein Convention, held in Burnaby from April 14-18, welcomed approximately 35 participants in the Young Leaders program. Selected based on their interest in and contributions to the dairy industry, the 19-30 year old Young Leaders came from across Canada. Each participant represented their province while taking part in a variety of educational sessions, networking opportunities, and Convention events.

The program began Tuesday evening with a 'meet and greet' networking session with other Young Leaders and with members of the YL Advisory Committee.

On Wednesday, the group attended a series of engaging classroom sessions, with a variety of speakers covering topics such as dairy nutrition, calf health, genetics, and farm succession. The afternoon featured a Master Breeder panel where representatives from Crestomere (Alberta) and Missiontrail (Manitoba) shared their journeys to becoming Master Breeders and lessons learned along the way. That evening, the Young Leaders met with the Holstein Canada Board of Directors before attending the Taste of BC Welcome Reception featuring Canadian Cheese Ambassador David Beaudoin.

On Thursday, the Young Leaders toured three farms (Hessels, Pickmick, and Donia) and also participated in a classification demonstration. The Past Presidents evening reception was held at the top of Grouse Mountain, featuring stunning views while networking with industry members and enjoying a variety of local d'oeuvres and spirits.

The National Holstein show took place at Heritage Park on Friday, where the Young Leaders competed against one another in the judging of the 3-year-old class. The day concluded with an outdoor BBQ attended by Convention participants and local dairy farming families.

Holstein Canada's AGM took place on the final day. Young Leaders attended the meeting and had the opportunity to vote on behalf of their prefixes. The week concluded with the Master Breeder Gala, an exciting evening celebrating the 2026 Master Breeder award recipients, followed by dancing to cap off an unforgettable week of learning, networking, and new friendships.

On behalf of the 2026 Young Leaders, I would like to thank the organizing committee and Holstein Canada staff for facilitating such an outstanding event and for their continued investment in the future of our industry.



Young Leaders from across Canada enjoyed their farm visits to Pickmick, Donia and here at Hessels' in Delta.



A classification tutorial was just one of the wide-range of dairy-building experiences for participants of Holstein Canada's Young Leader programme.

Holstein Canada photos



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National Convention Youth Showmanship

Sponsored by Abbotsford Veterinary Clinic

Abbotsford Veterinary Clinic was once again pleased to sponsor the Youth Showmanship event at the BC Spring Show. Judge Ian Crosbie of Caron, Saskatchewan, meticulously handled the judging duties for two dozen keeners from pre-clubbers to seniors. A veteran of many a showmanship competition, Ian methodically handled each class with increasing expectations with the age and experience of each category. He never failed to patiently provide useful and specific feedback to the young competitors.

But perhaps most appreciated were the prizes and hoodies provided by Abbotsford Veterinary Clinic to every participant – everyone went home a winner with a smile.



- PEEWEE (3)**
 - 1. Kennedy Prinse, AB
 - 1. Forrest Telford, BC
 - 1. Taylor Prinse, AB
- JUNIOR (3)**
 - 1. Colton Schurmann, BC
 - 2. Raelyn Lovich, SK
 - 3. Sawyer Prinse, AB
- INTERMEDIATE (12)**
 - 1. Addison Dunne, BC
 - 2. Kayla Schurmann, BC
 - 3. Everleigh Boerchers, MB
- SENIOR (8)**
 - 1. Natalie Boonstoppel, MB
 - 2. Hannah Vanderlinde, AB
 - 3. Adyson Wildeboer, AB
- GRAND CHAMPION**
Natalie Boonstoppel, MB
- RESERVE CHAMPION**
Hannah Vanderlinde, AB
- HONOURABLE MENTION**
Addison Dunne, BC

Jenna Jongenotter photos

- 1 - Showmanship Champions: (L-R) Judge Ian Crosbie, Natalie Boonstoppel (MB) – Champion; Hannah Vanderlinde (AB) – Reserve; Addison Dunne (BC) – Honourable Mention; Dr. James Patterson (Abbotsford Veterinary Clinic – sponsor).
- 2 - Junior Showmanship Winner – Colton Schurmann (BC) with Judge Ian Crosbie.
- 3 - Every year, the Peewee contenders steal the show (and our hearts)!

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