

USING GENOMIC DATA AND IMMUNITY RESULTS TO DRIVE DECISION MAKING

Jim Stanton, Stanton Farms, Ilderton, Ontario

"It's a great program! We've used Elevate® for years and it's really simplified my life. My wife helps me with the testing and she's a lot happier now with a lot less work for her.

We did 23 animals and it took 5 minutes to get all the information ready to drop in the envelope to send away. On that end, it is very quick and easy. It's great to have the information on my phone when I'm walking through the barn and I can pull up a cow's pedigree and her US and Canadian genomics. An added bonus is that we know everything is accurate with parentage verification."



Genomic testing is becoming a critical part of genetic decision making in progressive dairy operations for these key reasons:

Right-Sizing Heifer Inventory

Genomic testing identifies a heifer's potential years before she ever produces a pound of milk. This allows the herd owner to adjust heifer inventory by accurately identifying the top and bottom heifers for breeding and culling decisions. A heifer inventory should be only 75-80% of the size of the lactating herd when everything is running correctly. With heifer rearing being one of the top three costs for a dairy farm, it is important to keep the population in check with herd goals.

Higher Accuracy of Mating

Fixing parentage and more accurate values for individual traits that the herd is focused on will bring faster genetic gain through genomics, not to mention the ability to accurately control haplotypes and recessives within a dairy herd with precision. With all this information, herds can decide which animals get sexed, conventional or beef semen for rapid genetic gain.

Immunity Genomic Results

Available only with Semex Elevate®, immunity genomic results are the ultimate genetic health measurement. Initial studies have shown a 12-30% reduction in mastitis when comparing high versus average and low immune responders. Managing immunity genetic results with Semex's line-up of Immunity+® sires will lead to healthier future generations of cows.



Chris McLaren, Larenwood Farms, Drumbo, Ontario

"On a monthly basis, we test every newborn heifer calf and use the results for breeding and culling purposes. The top 15% is bred to sexed semen when they come to age and the bottom 15% are put on the list to be culled to save heifer rearing costs and take the pressure away from our heifer facilities.

We use the immunity results to breed for improvement in that area. When we began to use Elevate, we had 25% low responders in the herd. Now with selective breeding and breeding all the low responders to Immunity+ bulls, we hardly ever will see a low responder calf born. It's really a great tool."