

May 15, 2026



MILK MATTERS

The official newsletter for New Brunswick milk producers.



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And more ...

Community Engagement Coordinator

Breanne Wesselius joins the DFNB team as our new Community Engagement Coordinator, a role that will help expand how we connect with communities across New Brunswick. In this position, she will coordinate and attend events and school visits. She will represent local dairy farmers by delivering engaging presentations on dairy to students and families. She will also develop and deliver presentations for both elementary and high school classrooms.

Working closely with the Promotions Coordinator, Breanne's role combines behind-the-scenes organization with hands-on outreach. She will support a wide range of promotional and engagement initiatives, and is available to assist with farm tours, local events, school visits, and other community engagement opportunities across the province.

Breanne recently graduated from Mount Allison with a Bachelor of Commerce and brings a strong interest in marketing and community engagement. Having grown up on a dairy farm, she offers a genuine connection to the industry and a firsthand understanding of the stories she'll be sharing.



May 15, 2026

**BLEND PRICE
APRIL 2026**

\$105.77/hl or
\$23.21/kg of BF

BF: 4.5564 kg/hl,
PRO: 3.4036 kg/hl
LOS: 5.8616 kg/hl

**CREDIT EXCHANGE
DEADLINE**

May 20, 2026
4:00 PM

Please submit credit
bids/offers on
DFNB Portal at
www.nbmilk.org

**QUOTA EXCHANGE
DEADLINE**

June 1, 2026
4:00 PM

Please send bids to
quota@nbmilk.org

DFNB OFFICE 506-432-4330

Steve Michaud *General Manager* Ext. 22
Ashley Baskin *Policy Analyst* Ext. 23
Transportation Ext. 22 or Ext 25
Luke Chase *Producer Services* Ext. 25
Delaney Lewis *Office Clerk* Ext. 26
Katie Bleakney *Promotion Coordinator* Ext. 27
Natasha McKillop *proAction* Ext. 28
Breanne Wesselius *Community Coordinator* Ext 30

Market Update

The CDC publishes a monthly market update on the public facing side of their website. These reports are available at the following link:

<https://www.cdc-ccl.ca/en/2026-market-updates>

Overview of March 2026:

- Total Requirements forecast shows an average growth of 1.6% for January 2026 - December 2026.
- Total Requirements for the 12 months ending March 2026 were 3.62% higher than those of the previous 12 months and saw a 5.04% increase since February 2026.
- Compared to February 2026, consumption increased for all categories of dairy products except yogurt most notably in butter and ice cream. For the 12 months ending March 2026 all categories saw increases with the largest increases being yogurt and butter consumption which increased 8.4% and 7.9% respectively.
- Total Quota decreased from increased in March by 7.4% and had an increase of 4.1% for the 12 months ending March 2026.
- P10 production in kgs of BF saw only a small change of 0.7% in March compare to February 2026 but saw an increase of 2.8% for the 12 months ending in March 2026. In liters of milk there was a decrease in March over February of -0.9% with an increase in the 12 month ending March 2026 of 1.5%.
- Butter stocks remained decreased from February to March 2026 by 2,105 tonnes to 39,833 tonnes total. Butter stocks are expected to be around 31,564 tonnes in December 2026.

DFNB BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Wietze Dykstra *Chair* 506-325-8192
Gilbert Matheson *Vice Chair* 506-434-2357
Becky Perry *2nd Vice Chair* 506-435-0651
Denis Cyr *North West* 506-426-0788
George Wesselius *Moncton* 506-227-0463
John Schuttenbeld *Fredericton* 506-461-9254
John Best *Woodstock* 506-425-0765
Mike Bouma *North East* 506-547-5843
Paul Gaunce *At-Large* 506-650-9595

DFNB MISSION

To represent the interests of New Brunswick dairy farmers in their pursuit of operating sustainable dairy farms that produce high quality milk within a supply management system.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DFNB Board Meeting
May 26

Protein is everywhere right now—and it’s reshaping the food aisle. From fortified snacks to high-protein everything, this once-simple nutrient has become a major marketing driver.



The latest episode of Canadian Pod Cow explores how this trend is influencing consumer habits and what it could mean for the dairy sector.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5bAbLh19YOM>

Freezing Point

Freezing Point Depression results now provided on all samples. A Freezing Point penalty is only triggered by one monthly random sample collected at the direction of the NB Farm Products Commission.

Under New Brunswick regulations, milk quality penalties related to added water are determined solely by the cryoscope result obtained from one random milk pickup sample during the month.

The New Brunswick Farm Products Commission regulatory threshold for added water is a cryoscope result higher than -0.525° Hortvet (moving closer to 0° degrees Hortvert)

Freezing Point Depressions (FPDs) do not trigger penalties.

FPDs results are provided on all bulk tank component tests for information purposes only. FPDs are intended to help producers proactively identify and correct potential issues before a regulatory violation occurs.

Below is a general interpretation guide for FPD Hortvet readings and suggested actions:

Hortvet Reading	Interpretation	Suggested Action
-0.530 H or lower	Normal milk freezing point	No action required
-0.526 H to -0.529 H	Slightly elevated	Monitor closely and review wash procedures
-0.525 H to -0.523 H	Warning range	Inspect for possible water sources such as rinse water, plate cooler leaks, condensation, or inadequate line purge
Higher than -0.525 H (Cryoscope Result)	NB Farm Products Commission added water penalty threshold	Immediate investigation and corrective action required

A Multi-Sector Shared Workforce Program

Agricultural Alliance of New Brunswick (AANB) explores the potential to adapt our successful shared workforce program model to various sectors. With over \$1 million in wages already generated through this program in the agricultural sector, we want to ensure any future expansion is built specifically to address the unique labour challenges of your industry. We are eager to see if this success can be replicated for other sectors, but a credible expansion requires a strong foundation of data.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/dairyfarmers>

P5 Message

Changes in Solids-Non-Fat (SNF) Payment Policy – April 1, 2026

Effective April 1, 2026, the P5 Boards have approved changes to the payment policy to increase protein production:

- Increase the market ratio to 2.20;
- Increase the no-pay ratio to 2.30; and
- Modify butterfat and Tier 1 Protein price by changing the distribution of the residual revenue from the other solids, 30% to butterfat and 70% to protein paid in Tier 1.

As observed increasingly in 2025, the demand for protein is strong while the butterfat test at the farm has grown faster than anticipated in the P5. As part of the continuous assessment of the payment policy parameters, the conclusion was reached that to meet the recent and expected market demand for increased protein, the volume produced by the P5 needs to increase more significantly.

P5 Message continued

Therefore, both payment ratios are increased to encourage an increase in the on-farm SNF/BF production ratio to increase volume in P5 to better align with market demand. The market ratio increase is expected to generate additional volumes to reduce the milk shortage while limiting the impact on butter stocks.

To emphasise the importance of increasing the protein and volumes produced, the revenue distribution from other solids for the prices of butterfat and Tier 1 protein are also modified. The effect is expected to increase the Tier 1 protein price by approximately \$2.00 and decrease the butterfat price by approximately \$1.80.

Background

As there continues to be a strong consumer preference for dairy products high in protein, it has increased the demand for protein from the market at a faster rate, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 – Retail sales growth for high protein content dairy products, 2025

Dairy product	Growth in 2025
Fortified milk	9.4%
Yogurt	6.6%
• Greek yogurt	18.8%
• Plain yogurt	14.5%
• Skyr (soft cheese advertised as yogurt)	43.4%
Natural cheese	2.0%
• Cottage cheese	25.8%

For example, Greek yogurt that uses up to six times more milk than regular yogurt now represents a third of yogurt retail sales in Canada. Soft cheeses that are high in protein are also growing categories, such as cottage cheese that now represents 10% of cheese sales. This shift in demand occurred as there continues to be a decrease of the farm production ratio twice as quickly as forecasted which has resulted in shifts in the protein available to serve all markets, and a better return for surplus SNF.

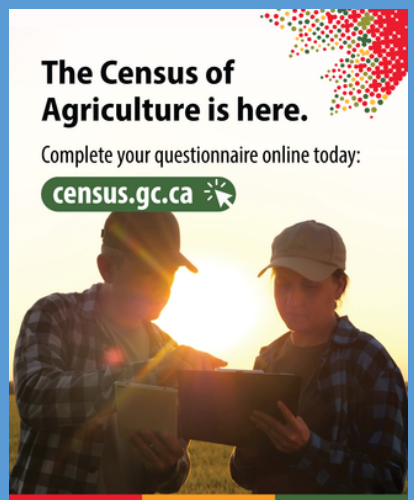
The faster than anticipated decrease of the farm production ratio generating less surplus at the same time as the changes in market demand were seen. The following table summarizes the changes in SNF/BF ratio observed in P5 over the last three years:

	SNF Ratio in P5
2023	2.1707
2024	2.1386
2025	2.1190

The following is a table summarizing the SNF/BF payment policy changes since 2020:

2020	The maximum no pay SNF/BF ratio was adjusted from 2.35 to 2.30.
2021	Two tier pricing, including a market ratio was implemented. With tier 2 pricing paid at 4a price for protein, and lactose and other solids.
2022	The maximum no pay SNF/BF ratio was reduced from 2.30 to 2.25.
2023	The maximum no pay SNF/BF ratio was reduced from 2.25 to 2.20. In addition, the tier 2 pricing was adjusted to 70% of 4a price for protein and \$0.63/kg for lactose and other solids.
2025-08	The tier 2 pricing was adjusted to 4a price for protein and \$0.90/kg for lactose and other solids.
2026-01	Tier 2 pricing was adjusted to 4a price + \$3.00/kg for protein.

The P5 Quota Committee will continue to evaluate the payment policy and update its parameters and objectives as necessary, to ensure markets continue to be met.

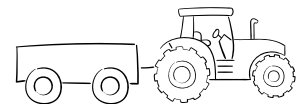


Did you know that every farm or agricultural operation in Canada needs to complete a questionnaire for the 2026 #CensusOfAgriculture? If this applies to you, visit census.gc.ca to complete yours online today!

FARM EQUIPMENT IS A BIG INVESTMENT

Protect it with custom-built canvas covers & tarps made to fit your exact needs. Plus safety & industrial supplies, branded apparel & promo.

How can we help?
shannon@esteygroup.com
 | 150+ years | 5 generations



BUY & SELL

Please send for sale and wanted items to nbmilk@nbmilk.org

May 15, 2026

P5 Message

May 2026 Incentive Day – Conventional

In addition to the changes made to the SNF/BF payment policy to meet the growing protein market which requires additional volumes of milk (not butterfat), the P5 Boards announce one incentive day to be issued to conventional producers for the month of May, on a non-cumulative basis.

The P5 provincial boards' primary objective is to continuously monitor the milk market situation and meet demand in the most optimal way and will continue to adapt production signals to address market changes, as required.

The following table summarizes the incentive days:

2026	Conventional
April	
May	1
June	
July	
August	1
September	1
October	1
November	1
December	



The Social Media Scoop

🎬 CASTING CALL 🎬

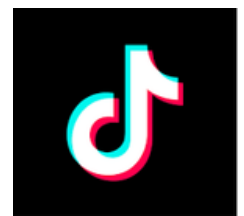
We're looking for social-savvy dairy farmers who want to help create fun, engaging video content for the DFNB social channels! If you love storytelling, filming, editing -or all of the above - we'd love to hear from you.

Interested?

Text 902-877-9355 or email michelle.kempton@dfc-plc.ca



To stay in the loop, be sure to follow, comment on, and share DFNB's posts.





AROUND THE BOARD TABLE

KEY DECISIONS

- Approved the agenda with additions related to Milk2020, Veterinary Response Committee, Minister's Roundtable, and P5 quota.
- Approved amended March 31, 2026 meeting minutes.
- Approved the Producer Information Disclosure Policy.
- Approved support of up to \$10,000 for the Ag Alliance to hire a PR firm to assist with advocacy on veterinary services issues.
- Approved moving forward with the proposed Quota Policy Package for consultation with MEC, P5, and NBFPC.
- Confirmed upcoming meeting schedule for DFNB representatives.

DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS

- Discussed the steps and actions taken to date with the veterinary response committee through the NB Agriculture Alliance.
- Reviewed the first draft of the DFNB 2026-2027 Budget.
- P5 quota committee discussion on the current market and demand situation leading to the issuance of one incentive day
- Extensive discussion took place regarding quota policy changes, mergers, and relocation assessments.
- Dal AC representatives joined the meeting and presented their proposed dairy facility renovations/new build plans.
- It was noted that RPC is raising the cost of samples and directors would like to have a meeting with them to discuss the changes.

**DATE: APRIL 30 & MAY 1
SUSSEX, NB**

ATTENDANCE

Directors: Wietze Dykstra, Gilbert Matheson, Becky Perry, Denis Cyr, John Best, George Wesselius, John Schuttenbeld, Mike Bouma, Paul Gaunce, Robert Speer (NBFPC rep), Brandon Beyer (leader)
Staff: Steve Michaud, Ashley Baskin Sharon Beasley (CFO Center)

REPORTS

Managers' Report: Steve Michaud

Financials: Sharon Beasley

Verbal report provided on Milk2020, PLQ AGM and Ministers roundtable

In-camera session held prior to adjournment.

Next DFNB board meeting scheduled virtually for May 26, 2026 at 10:30 AM.

NATURAL PRODUCTS ACT REGULATIONS

Plans for construction, extension, alteration, installation or replacement

50(1) Plans for the construction, extension or alteration of a dairy farm, including a dairy barn, milking parlour or milk house, shall be submitted to the Commission or an inspector for approval before the work is undertaken.

50(2) Plans for the installation or replacement of a farm bulk tank shall be submitted to the Commission or an inspector for approval before the work is undertaken.

<http://laws.gnb.ca/en/ShowTdm/cr/2010-19//>

QUALITY MILK

Additional testing is available from RPC. Please contact RPC directly by email dairy.rpc@rpc.ca Or 506-452-1212

Bulk milk graders are trained and licensed to grade milk. They only reject milk according to regulations. Once rejected a producer is required to dispose of that milk and correct the problem that contributed to the rejection and clean their tank before adding their next milking.

Producers are welcome to reach out to the public safety inspectors for assistance in determining the causes for the rejections.

MILK PENALTY FUNDING

Pro-active funding: Producers advised of second or subsequent milk quality infraction, prior to a penalty assessed, is allowed to offset, once per year, cost of a visit from milk quality technician to a maximum of \$1000. Producers may apply for funding by forwarding paid invoices to DFNB office.



**Dairy Farmers of New Brunswick
Milk Matters: Production and Payment Summary Report for April 2026**

Quota Exchange for May, 2026

Price in Dollars	# of Sellers	Kgs Offered By Sellers	Total Cum. kgs	Difference Between Sellers/Buyers	Total Cum. kgs	Kgs Wanted By Buyers	# of Buyers
\$24,000.00		5.8	5.8	860.1	865.9	865.9	
TOTALS	1	5.8				865.9	67

QESP = Quota Exchange Selling Price

5.8 of 865.9 kgs wanted at or above the Quota Exchange Selling Price of \$24,000.00 were purchased.

There was a total of 5.8 kgs offered for sale and total bids to purchase of 865.9 kgs.

QESP = Le prix de vente de quota

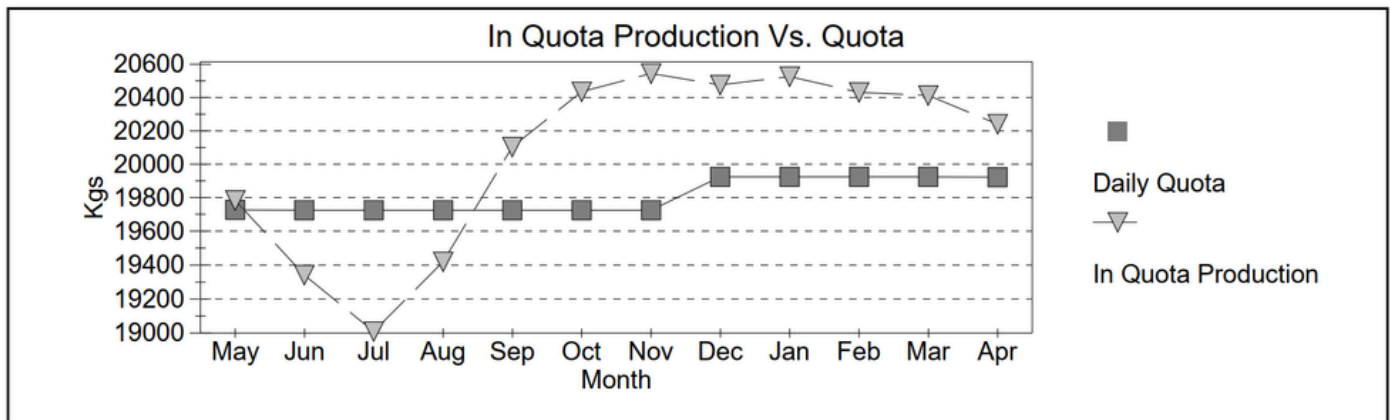
5.8 des 865.9 kilos demandé au prix de vente de \$24,000.00 ou au dessus ont été acheté.

Il y avait un total de 5.8 kgs proposés à la vente et le total des offres pour l'achat de 865.9kg.

Next Exchange closes at 4:00 p.m., Monday June 1, 2026

Results are available Thursday June 4, 2026

Month	May	Apr	Mar	Feb	Jan	Dec	6 month avg.
Clearing Price	\$24,000	\$24,000	\$0	\$24,000	\$24,000	\$24,000	\$24,000
Kgs on Exchange	9.4	2.0	.0	32.3	2.9	15.0	12.3
Kgs by Transfer	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0	.0



QUOTA CORNER

Quota Exchange Procedures

Bids/Offeres must be submitted on forms provided prior to 4:00 p.m. on 1st working day of month. All bids must be accompanied by confirmation of funds from your lending institution if bid is greater than prior month's "Due Producer". Producers will not be allowed to combine their "Due Producer" amount with their confirmation of funds from a financial institution to bid for quota equal to the combined amounts. Bids or offers above \$24,000 will not be accepted. Producers selling all of their quota on an exchange will be subject to a security deposit of \$1000/kg that will be returned 30 days after effective date of the transfer.

Minimum Quota Holdings Policy

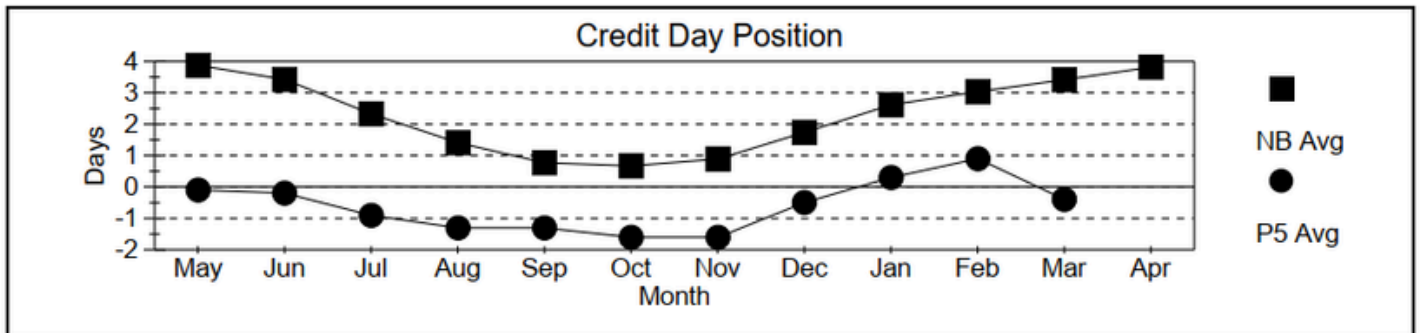
The Board will cease picking milk up when the farm's total daily quota falls below ten (10) kilograms.

An over quota penalty of \$20/hl is in effect.

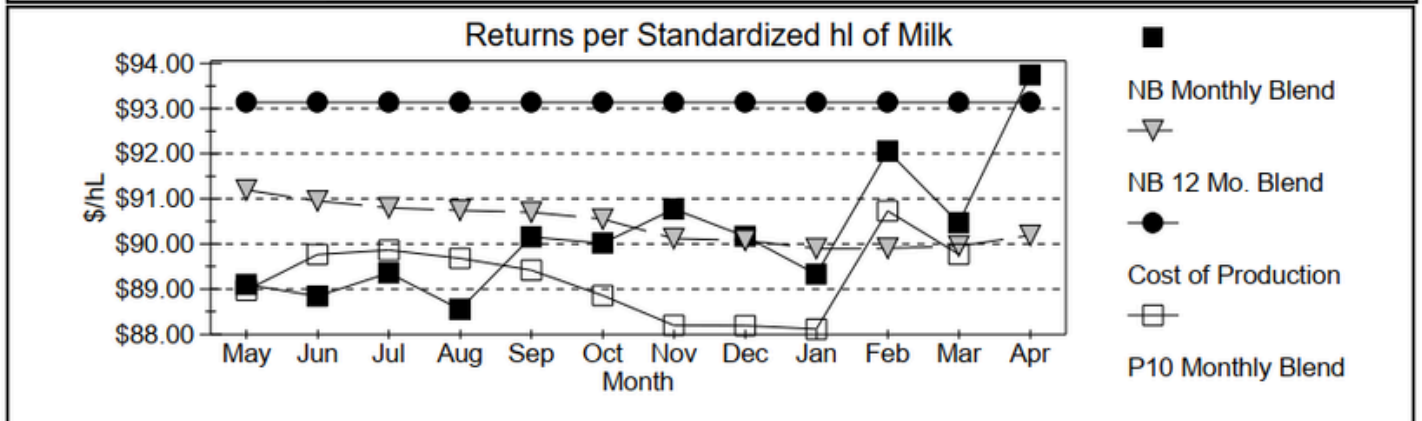
Daily Quota Transfer Order

Section 3 b) j); Producers must pay the Board the QESP for the Daily Quota so purchased on or before noon of the 20th day of the month or noon of the first working day thereafter if the 20th falls on a holiday or weekend. Payment received after that is subject to a 2% penalty applied on the value of the purchased Daily Quota and deducted from the producer's statement. The producer will also be prohibited from purchasing on the following month's exchange. If payment is not received by the last working day of month, that purchased quota will be revoked and be offered for sale on the next month's exchange. Any losses incurred from the resale of the revoked Daily Quota will be charged back to the producer along with an additional 2% penalty.

Credits



Month	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Incentive Days Issued	0.81	0.79	1.79	2.72	3.67	3.59	2.59	0.66	0.73	0.44	0.76	0.76
Incentive Days Used	0.60	0.54	0.87	1.41	2.05	1.96	1.69	0.64	0.68	0.42	0.73	0.72
Days Over Quota	0.06	0.05	0.03	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.05	0.08	0.17	0.18	0.15	0.07
Days Lost	-0.07	-0.11	-0.26	-0.19	-0.10	-0.08	-0.10	-0.11	-0.14	-0.08	-0.06	-0.06
Days Exchanged	1.23	0.94	0.70	0.80	0.80	0.97	1.03	1.11	1.00	1.20	1.22	1.01
Credit Exch Clearing Price	\$15.15	\$10.00	\$4.50	\$4.01	\$6.03	\$10.00	\$14.00	\$14.00	\$15.15	\$16.00	\$15.10	\$14.24



Month	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
SNF Market Ratio \$/kg	\$1.91	\$2.00	\$2.06	\$2.98	\$2.98	\$2.66	\$2.66	\$2.59	\$5.69	\$6.21	\$6.84	\$7.47

A standardized hl of milk contains 3.60 kg/hl BF, 3.23 kg/hl PT and 5.69 kg/hl LOS

CREDIT CORNER

Credit Exchange Procedures

Bids/Offers must be submitted on forms provided prior to 4:00 p.m. on the 2nd working day after the 15th of the month. Results are available on the morning of 4th working day after the 15th. Producers exiting industry may purchase/sell credits one month following effective date of sale. If you do not receive your statement in time to review your credit position, please call the office and we will fax /email your statement to you.

April 2026 Credit Exchange \$14.24/kg

20,106 of the 20,559 kgs wanted at or below the CESP were purchased.

Effective May 1, 2025 the 0-day limit was removed which allowed producers to buy or sell regardless of their credit positions.

At a later date, producers with quality penalties will also have the percentage of credits that they can buy reduced for a number of months. DFNB will notify producers 2 months prior to this policy taking effect.

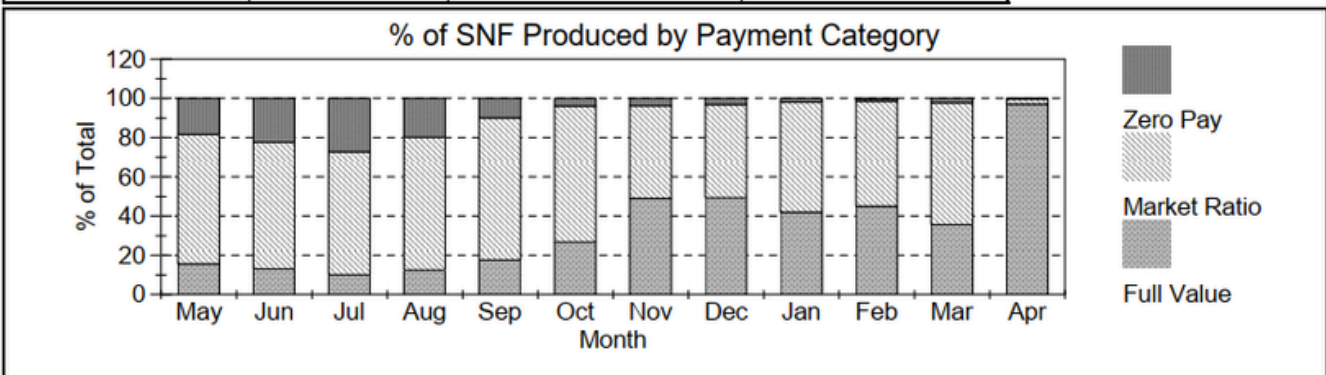
NB Domestic Milk Pool									
Over Quota	BF Kg	BF \$/kg	BF \$	PT Kg	PT \$/kg	PT \$	OS Kg	OS \$/kg	OS \$
April 2026	1,448	-\$2.7327	(\$3,957)	1,077	-\$1.9107	(\$2,057)	1,941	-\$0.3917	(\$760)
12 Months	17,273	-\$2.7327	(\$47,201)	12,692	-\$1.9107	(\$24,250)	22,597	-\$0.3917	(\$8,851)
SNF > 2.30									
April 2026				50	\$0.0000	\$0	97	\$0.0000	\$0
12 Months				14,926	\$0.0000	\$0	27,708	\$0.0000	\$0
SNF 2.20<=>2.30									
April 2026				197	\$7.4689	\$1,474	367	\$9.9000	\$330
12 Months				178,181	\$3.0298	\$539,848	320,899	\$7.8800	\$252,860
Domestic Market									
April 2026	605,525	\$11.9647	\$7,244,927	452,081	\$13.5116	\$6,108,336	778,433	\$9.9000	\$700,590
12 Months	7,300,982	\$13.4092	\$97,900,371	5,271,652	\$10.8749	\$57,328,927	9,212,538	\$9.9000	\$8,291,285

Production & Payment

Revenue	\$/HL	BF \$	PT \$	OS \$				Total Paid \$
April 2026	\$105.77	\$7,240,970	\$6,107,753	\$700,160				\$14,048,884
12 Months	\$100.92	\$97,853,170	\$57,844,525	\$8,535,294				\$164,232,989
Deductions	Transport	Promotion	Admin	Lab Fee	Research Levy	Total Ded Per HL	Total Deductions	
	Per HL	Per Kg of Total Solids						
April 2026	\$4.30	\$1.1015	\$0.0786	\$0.0080	\$0.0016	\$6.92		\$922,092
12 Months	\$3.80	\$0.929	\$0.0786	\$0.0081	\$0.0016	\$6.27		\$10,261,870
Quality	Somatic Cell Count	Standard Plate Count	Lab Past. Count	IBC			Rejected Loads	
April 2026	160,805	0	0	44				0
12 Months	171,399	0	0	52				0
Production & Component Tests	Production Volume	Butter Fat	Protein	Lactose & O.S.	Total Solids	SNF Ratio		
April 2026	13,321,243	4.5564	3.4036	5.8616	13.8216	2.0334		
12 Months	163,202,278	4.4842	3.3562	5.8723	13.7127	2.0580		

SNF Policy

Current SNF Ratio Values	Full Value: < 2.20	Market Ratio: 2.20<=>2.30	Zero Pay: > 2.30
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SNF/BF: Avg Ratios

Month	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr
Full Value	1.94	1.95	1.95	1.93	1.92	1.92	1.93	1.93	1.93	1.93	1.93	2.03
Market Ratio	2.10	2.11	2.12	2.11	2.10	2.08	2.07	2.06	2.06	2.08	2.07	2.22
Zero Pay	2.26	2.26	2.28	2.26	2.25	2.24	2.26	2.24	2.27	2.24	2.25	2.35
Provincial	2.10	2.12	2.14	2.12	2.08	2.05	2.01	2.00	2.01	2.01	2.02	2.03

Maritime Quality Milk

Maritime Quality Milk (MQM) is a research and service program at the Atlantic Veterinary College, located at the University of Prince Edward Island in Charlottetown.
www.milkquality.ca

Milk 2020

MILK 2020's mission is to develop and enhance knowledge and innovation, through its leadership and its actions, with a view to encouraging the sustainable growth of New Brunswick's dairy industry.

www.milk2020.ca

Co-operators Group Insurance

Group rates as of Dec 1, 2025
Monthly single coverage: \$151.45
Monthly family coverage: \$411.77

Claims, rates, enrolment:
Emily Murphy 506.850.1643
emily.murphy@gotoinsure.ca
David Scott 506.450.7732
1.800.994.5155

NB Research & Productivity Council

RPC is New Brunswick's provincial research organization (PRO), a research and technology organization (RTO) offering contract R&D and technical services at our locations in Fredericton and Moncton, New Brunswick.

506.452.1212

NB Environmental Farm Plan

Contact Likhita Potluri
by phone at:
506.452.8101
506.259.0020
or by email at:
efp-pfe@fermeNBfarm.ca

Composition & Microbiology Testing

Composition testing
contact Jill Hay at:
jill.hay@rpc.ca
Microbiology testing
contact Corrie Maston at:
corrie.maston@rpc.ca

Hoof Trimming

Contact E. Duivenvoorden
Phone:
506.433.1864
or
Peter Jones
Phone:
506.866.0531

Crop Specialist

Contact Jason Wells
Phone:
506.434.2543
Email:
Jason.Wells@gnb.ca

Agropur

Cooperative Advisor
Jeanette Van der Linden
1-800-574-5585 Ext. 3224
Jeanette.Van-Der-Linden@agropur.com

Sample Testing

Dairytown
inhibitor testing
Kris Byers
506-424-0769
RPC for further testing
506-452-1212

Dairy Specialist

Contact
David Dykstra
Cell phone:
506.434.5755
Email:
David.Dykstra@gnb.ca

Links

GNB Livestock Sector Development
https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/contacts/dept_renderer.137.203310.4073.html#employees

Bob Calve Prices
<https://www.fpbq.upa.qc.ca/infoprix/BovinReforme/BRInfoPrixHebdo.asp?Langue=A>

Research Council: Free webinars
<https://www.beefresearch.ca/resources/webinars.cfm>

Canadian Dairy Commission
<https://www.cdc-ccl.gc.ca/>

Dairy Farmers of Canada News Centre
<https://www.dairyfarmers.ca/news-centre/document-library>

AgriStartNB
<https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/10/pdf/Agriculture/FarmingInNewBrunswick-RoadMapForNewEntrants.pdf>

BULK MILK TANKS

All bulk milk tanks needing calibrated will be coordinated by DFNB staff using the calibration services of both Dairy Farmers of Ontario (DFO) . If you are planning to install a new tank or have installed one recently, please call 432-4330 so your farm can be added to the schedule. Before replacing your bulk milk tank remember: New tanks of 1000 US gallons (3780 liters) must have a minimum outlet of 3 inches with a butterfly valve; New tanks less than 1000 must have a minimum tank outlet of 2 inches with a butterfly valve; Used tanks of any size must have a minimum tank outlet of 2 inches with a butterfly valve.

TRANSPORTATION

If you have concerns about your scheduled pickups, you can contact:

Kingsco Transportation:
Dispatcher
Bliss Price
506-435-1584

Hauler Supervisor
Conrad Hachey
506-435-2293

General Manager
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How to get good results when transitioning to social housing of calves:

Science-based recommendations based on calf behaviour

Social housing for calves is now recommended and will become a requirement under proAction in 2031. This is based on scientific evidence of the benefits, which many farmers have seen in practice. However, social housing can go poorly without the right management. This article provides some key reasons to house socially, and practical tips for how to avoid potential challenges such as cross-sucking.



Why house calves socially?

Social housing has practical, economic and calf welfare benefits. Dr. Shawn McKenna, veterinarian and Professor at the Atlantic Veterinary College, says that social housing saves labour and is often easier for farmers. He also said, "They're eventually going to go to a group sometime, so why wait?"

When calves are kept in pairs or groups, they eat more solid feed before weaning and gain more weight. Grouping close to weaning time does not have such strong benefits. Housing with other calves also allows natural social behaviours, including social play, which improves welfare by giving

them positive experiences, but also helps them develop social skills important for life in the herd.

Calves that are fed more, or are eating better because of learning from their peers, are likely to be more resilient to disease. Shawn adds, "For my clients that have gone from individual to group housing, health didn't get any worse. If anything, it probably got better."

Research suggests calves with full social contact early in life are less afraid, show more normal social behaviour, and can learn what to do in new situations more easily. Shawn agreed with this from his experience, saying "When they get to an age where you're

having to go catch them to breed, they're so much easier to handle. The behaviour is just different. They're a socialized animal instead of a scared animal."

How? Top tips for reducing of cross-sucking:

It's important to know why calves cross-suck. Suckling is a normal behaviour for calves, but when they do not have a dam to suckle from, calves "re-direct" this behaviour toward abnormal targets, such as other calves or things in the pen. To reduce cross-sucking, it's important to think of ways to mimic the calves' natural feeding behaviour.

- Feed enough milk. ProAction recommends at least 20% bodyweight from 7-28 days, but more is needed in cold weather. For Holsteins that means 8 L in warmer weather, but 9 or 10 L as temperatures get closer to 0°C.

- Feed from a teat and try to increase time spent feeding. For example, increase the number of feedings per day if feeding manually, and use teats with small holes to slow milk flow.

- Offer solid feed and forage from a young age. This gives the calf something to explore and, in the case of forage, manipulate with their mouths.

- Provide safe outlets for natural sucking behaviour outside of feeding time. This includes giving water through a teat after milk feeding, or leaving a dry teat fixed in the pen.

- Limit stressors during weaning and use gradual weaning. This may help ease the transition and reduce unwanted behaviours during this stressful time.

If they do cross suck:

· Don't panic! A few individuals might do this even if you get all the management right because their motivation is so strong, but it does not mean all of them will. Importantly, there is not much direct evidence it causes udder damage or other health problems, although some calves sucked on may develop abscesses.

· When possible, separating pairs who cross-suck may break the pattern. Cross-sucking after weaning often happens consistently between certain pairs of calves.

Although individual housing used to be best practice, times have changed. As Shawn says, "How do we get better if we don't challenge the norm?"

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Resources / references:
<https://calfcare.ca/management/feeding/strategies-to-prevent-cross-sucking-in-unweaned-calves>

Dairy Code of Practice:
<http://www.nfacc.ca/codes-of-practice/dairy-cattle/code2023> - section3.

More detail on the supporting evidence is also given in the scientific reports put together during Code updates, found here: <http://www.nfacc.ca/codes-of-practice/dairy-cattle>

Are you a dairy farmer in PE, NS, or NB who is interested in adopting social housing for milk-fed dairy calves on your farm? Join a cohort of farmers with similar goals. Participation will be farmer-led, and involve three meetings over approximately 8 months, with 2 on-farm visits (about 2 hrs each), and 1 phone call (45 minutes).

If you are interested, get in touch with Katie Koralesky, researcher at the UPEI Atlantic Veterinary College!

Participants will receive \$75 in gift cards for each on-farm interview.

For more information, scan the QR code, or text or email Katie Koralesky: kkoralesky@upe.ca ; 778-681-0864. [Click here to join the cohort!](#)

