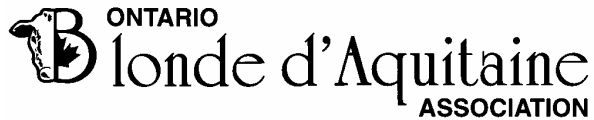


The Blonde Banner

The Official Publication of the Ontario Blonde d'Aquitaine Association

June 2005



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

LOOKING ON THE BRIGHT SIDE:

There is no doubt that the BSE crisis continues to have a devastating effect on all beef farmers across the Country and has many of us wondering why we are still in the business. If not for the love of the animals and the land, we may have thought of doing something else. But there seems to be some light at the end of the tunnel. The continuing increase in slaughter capacity in Canada as well as the SET ASIDE Program seem to be having the forecasted effect, as over the past months the price of stockers has increased although not yet to the level of pre BSE. But, even better, from all the feedback I have received, Blonde and Blonde Cross calves continue to top most sales across the province. As well, with the demand from niche markets like Laura's Lean looking for the type of cattle for which the Blonde Breed fits like a glove, we can well expect this trend to continue. I was also very encouraged to see the demand for Blonde Bulls this spring.

At the Douglas 2 test station, demand for performance tested Blonde bulls exceeded supply and this at reasonable prices. A true anecdote, which as a Blonde breeder I am proud to repeat, is as follows:

" They were even stopping me in the parking lot to see where they could get a Blonde bull."

It will certainly take another year or two before the beef industry stabilizes for cattle of all ages but in the mean time, we as an association of seedstock producers must have a clear vision of:

1. WHERE OUR BREED FITS INTO THE BEEF INDUSTRY

and

2. FOCUS ON BREED STRENGTHS

Define your breeding program based on this information and the future will be bright for both the Blonde breed and its breeders!

Marcel Lachance

Raffle Heifer!

The OBdAA is looking for Raffle Heifer tenders for this year's draw, to be held November 26, 2005. If you have a registered (fullblood or purebred) halterbroke Blonde heifer, who will be bred at the time of the draw, that you'd like to tender to the Raffle Heifer Selection Committee, forward her information/pictures to Marcel Lachance or Laverne McGee. The selection process will begin shortly, so don't delay! *Submission deadline July 1st.*

Cream of the Crop Sale

The 5th Annual Cream of the Crop Sale is scheduled for this fall. The Cream of the Crop Sale selection committee will be looking for animals for the sale in the coming months. If you have an above-average animal that you feel would be a good addition to the sale, contact one of the committee members: Laverne McGee, Steve Acres, or Marcel Lachance. Entry deadline July 15th.

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Upcoming Events:

August 20-21:
Hastings County Plowing Match
Hasting County

September 13-15:
Outdoor Farm Show, Woodstock
www.outdoorfarmshow.com

September 20-24:
International Plowing Match
Listowel
www.plowingmatch.org

September 21-25:
Lindsay Exhibition
www.lindsayex.com

Cream of the Crop Sale: TBA

October 25-29:
North American Beef Congress
London
www.northamericanbeefcongress.com

November 4-13:
Royal Agricultural Winter Fair
Exhibition Place, Toronto
www.royalfair.org

2005 Advertising Rates

(GST extra)

Per Issue:

1 full page.....\$40
3/4 page.....\$35
½ page.....\$25
1/4 page.....\$15
Business cards.....\$5

Four Issues:

1 full page.....\$120
3/4 page.....\$105
½ page.....\$75
1/4 page.....\$45
Business cards.....\$15

NOTE: The OBdAA reserves the right to edit any newsletter submissions for length and content suitability. The goals of this newsletter are:

To **inform** the membership of all the pertinent activities and initiatives being taken by the Association, the Association Board, or its members.

To **provide** educational information in order to assist Blonde breeders in all aspects of the seed stock industry.

To **promote** the Blonde d'Aquitaine breed and the members of the Ontario Blonde d'Aquitaine Association.

2005 OBdAA Annual General Meeting

On April 9, 2005, the Ontario Blonde d'Aquitaine Association held its Annual General Meeting in Peterborough, Ontario. 29 Members were in attendance. The board had a full schedule on the agenda, including many items of business, board elections, a speaker, a fundraising auction, and an excellent meal to finish. Some of the highlights of the meeting were:

- Guest speaker Brian Pogue, from Laura's All Natural Lean Beef Program made a presentation about becoming a supplier for **the Laura's All Natural Lean Beef Program. (See article at right and p.6)**
- Bob Thomas presented the President's Cup to Rheo Machina. **(See p.4)**
- Other awards went to Floyd & Sheryl Blackburn (Show Female Award), Laverne McGee (Show Male Award), Lavelaine Farms, Franmar Blondes, and Knox Innovations (First, Second, and Third Place for The Premier Exhibitor Blonde Show Circuit Awards.) **(See p.5)**
- A Vision Committee was created to carry out a visioning process for the Ontario Blonde d'Aquitaine Association, in order to map out a plan for the future of the Association. Bob Thomas agreed to head up the new committee.
- Dave McNeven led a lively auction, with over \$900 raised for the Association. Thankyou to all who donated items.
- Elections were held, with Marcel Lachance elected as the OBdAA's new President, and Steve Acres, Murphy Baker and Sheila McNeven elected as directors.
- The staff at Rock Haven Motel provided an excellent buffet meal at the conclusion of the meeting.

Make plans to join us for the 2006 AGM!

Committees & board reps:

The following committees are represented by the following board reps and assistants:

- Ex officio: Marcel Lachance (all committees)
- 4H and youth: John Vink, Steve Acres.
- Advertising: Sheila McNeven
- Performance: Sharon Machina, Steve Acres
- Fairs and Shows: Laverne McGee assisted by John Robinson
- Trade Shows: John Vink assisted by Sharon Machina.
- Cream of the Crop Sale: Laverne McGee, Steve Acres and Marcel Lachance
- Newsletter: Sheila McNeven, Marcel Lachance assisted by Ilse Vink
- Promotion: Sheila McNeven, Marcel Lachance
- Royal: no committee

- 2005 National Show & Sale: Laverne McGee, John Vink, Steve Acres, Murray McVety, Murphy Baker, Ray Chambers, assisted by Sheryl Blackburn.

Laura's Lean Meat Program:

(By Sharon Machina)

Brian Pogue from BIO spoke at the AGM about an opportunity to promote the lean carcass of Blonde and Blonde cross animals through a niche market known as Laura's Lean Meat Program. Blondes are noted for their high rib-eye area, which gives an indication of the muscling of an animal. It is also related to lean meat yield as the bigger the REA the higher the lean meat yield. Requirements for the program were discussed along with incentives offered by Laura's Lean. Some of the members felt that the premiums offered could be higher (no bias here as we all know that Blondes are the best), but all agreed that it was a good starting point and a way to get Blondes into the spotlight! Brian has offered to promote the Blonde breed when in discussion with Laura's Lean. If anyone is interested in being a potential supplier of feeder calves or finished cattle for the Laura's Lean Beef Company program, he can be reached at the BIO office.

Brian Pogue: (519) 767-2665 ext. 303.

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Our cattle are in demand around the world! Interested buyers have commented on the overall eyeappeal and structural soundness of our animals as viewed on our website. They demonstrate natural thickness, muscle expression, milking ability and depth of body. We have done the homework and have selected genetics based on EPD's and performance data! Our Blonde lads and lassies must compete with our high performing crossbred herd and must work hard to earn their place in our herd. Since 1997, we have sent embryos to: Brazil, Costa Rica, Denmark, New Zealand and Sweden! The MBRHEO prefix is working across Canada - New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta! Home of two highly successful Internet Production Sales. Why not take the time to contact us ?

Our breeding program has been featured in the July Aug '99 and Fall '00 issues of the Ontario Beef Farmer magazine. In addition, Holland's National Blonde magazine "de Blonde" did a feature article on our program in their December 1997 issue.

Our dedication to the Blonde Breed is evident by our involvement!

Our dedication to Blonde Breeders is evident by our cattle!

Rheo & Sharon Machina, Clifford, ON, (519) 327-8646
e-mail: rheo@mbrheocattle.com website: www.mbrheocattle.com

Performance Report by Sharon Machina and Steve Acres

PICK OF THE CROP BULL SALE
MARCH 26, 2005

The "Pick of the Crop" Bull Sale was held on March 26 in Listowel, Ontario. As usual, this Premier Sale saw the crowd overflow into the corridor of Carson's Sales Arena! Bill Stocks of Maple Valley Farms consigned MVF 43P, a Polled/Scurred bull. He sold to Bill Weir of Glencairn for \$3150. Rheo & Sharon Machina of MBRHEO Cattle Co. consigned RHEO 413P, a horned Purebred bull. He sold to Mervyn & Donna Skjaveland of Ferintosh, Alberta. Blondes held their own against other breeds and ended with the highest sale average.

Total Sales Average: \$2533
Blonde Sales Average: \$2775

3rd ANNUAL DOUGLAS SELECT SALE,
DOUGLAS, ON MARCH 5, 2005

A beautiful sunny day brought out a great crowd of well over 200 cattlemen to look over 80 bulls in the test group with 20 on offer in the Select auction. Paul Ferguson of Crystal Farms consigned PFER 16P. Once again prices remained steady despite the gloomy forecast that the border would not be re-opening on March 7th!

Total Sales Average: \$2055
Blonde Sales Average \$1950

Congratulations to top participants, sellers, and buyers with their Blonde Bulls! Thanks to **all members** who participated in BIO testing, for your hard work and dedication to advancing the Blonde breed. Hopefully we'll have yet another successful year coming, with better, stronger markets.

2004 President's Cup Winner

The President's Cup Award is presented to the highest performing Blonde bull on official test with BIO for the previous year. The 2004 winner is "RHEO Steak's Alive 317N", consigned by Rheo Machina (MBRHEO Blondes).

His measured traits were:

BW 82 lbs., Adjusted Weaning Weight 736 lbs. Weaning Index 111, ADG 4.17lbs., Backfat 5 mm, Ribeye Area 16.5, Marbling 3.1%, Scrotal Circumference 35.5 cm.

These traits created a Beef Builder Index of 3735 which ranks him in the top 7% of all bulls in the BIO system for that particular year.



Bob Thomas (l) presenting the 2004 President's Cup to Rheo Machina of MBRHEO Blondes for RHEO Steak's Alive 317N.

Co-ops doing their share

Campbellford, Warkworth, and Foxboro Co-ops have come up with a great idea to help beef farmers. They have put freezers in their stores, and are buying and reselling beef from local farmers who purchase or mill feed at their locations. The farmer's name whose beef is in the freezer is advertised as well. Recently, one of our Blonde breeders had a chance to put in one of their Blonde steers. Apparently sales were brisk, because they have already been asked to supply another one later this summer. Hopefully other co-ops in the province will follow suit. What a great idea!

CEDARVIEW
Blonde d'Aquitaine

Gary & Anne Hadwyn

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Pictures taken at the 2005 Ontario AGM



Laverne McGee of Lavelaine Farms accepts the first place trophy in The Premier Exhibitor Blonde Show Circuit Awards from Sheryl Blackburn. Congratulations also go out to Laverne for Show Bull of the Year Award for Lavelaine's Prince Rupert 9P.



Darren Dunham of Franmar Blondes is presented with the second place trophy in The Premier Exhibitor Blonde Show Circuit Awards.

*The Ontario Blonde d'Aquitaine Association would like to thank **Floyd and Sheryl Blackburn** of Holburn Farms for their generous donation of 1% of their July Reduction Sale proceeds to the Association.*



Ian Krus of Knox Innovations is presented with the third place trophy in The Premier Exhibitor Blonde Show Circuit Awards.



Floyd Blackburn accepts a jacket won for the Show Female of the Year Award, for Young Crest Heidi Ho 3H.

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Dave & Sheila McNevan (705) 295-6208

REALIZING VALUE

(Submitted by Brian Pogue)

Producers have long wanted to get paid for what they produce. Laura's Lean Beef (LLB) pays producers on a grid for carcasses that are lean and well muscled; a perfect fit for the Blonde breed. Producers must not use hormones (implants) or antibiotics when raising beef for Laura's Lean.

Laura's Lean Beef is a brand label company that is marketing their products in over 5500 retail stores in 44 states. Their marketing targets consumers who are health conscious and enjoy good beef. Their retail sales are more than 130 million. They are a very successful company with the originator Laura Freeman as the CEO who farms in Kentucky. Significant premiums are paid for carcasses that are very lean with large rib eye and little or no marbling. The ideal carcass will see premiums of over \$200 per head in addition to the premium paid for being antibiotic and hormone free.

Blonde cattle have been designed for such a program. LLB provides an opportunity for Blonde breeders to add value to their breeding stock and to see bull customers receive a premium for their calves. The end result will be more producers wanting Blonde bulls and prepared to pay more for those lean well-muscled bulls.

For more details check out
www.laurasleanbeef.com

or call Brian Pogue at 519-767-2665 ext 303.

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Sizes: S, L, XL, XXL. Price: \$30

Jackets: dark forest green with the OBDA logo on the left side.

Sizes: L, XL, XXL. Price \$45

Green Rope Halters: \$8 ea.

An updated inventory will be published in the next newsletter.

To order, contact Sheila McNevan at
(705) 295-6208

OBdAA Semen Sale a Success!!

The semen offered for sale in the last newsletter has been sold. The Ontario Blonde d'Aquitaine Association would like to thank the following members for their generous support of the Association:

- *Butternut Blondes* (Murphy and Judy Baker) for donating semen from WIW Corby
- *Lavelaine Farms* (Laverne and Elaine McGee) for donating semen from Beau Bois Aime and Maple Valley Baxter
- *Donaleen Blondes* (Don Dunham) for donating semen from Beau Bois Café
- *Hilltop Orchard Farms* (Dave & Sheila McNevan) for donating semen from Marmacs Cagney, Sandbrook Vincent, DJ Yankee, and Gelstar 801
- *Holburn Farms* (Floyd & Sheryl Blackburn) for buying WIW Corby
- *Knox Innovations* (Ian Kruis) for buying Beau Bois Aime, Maple Valley Baxter, Marmacs Cagney, Beau Bois Café, Sandbrook Vincent, DJ Yankee and Gelstar 801