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## Major Dairy Cattle Feed Efficiency Research Proposal Funded by Genome Canada

**GUELPH – July 21, 2015.** Genome Canada recently approved \$3.8M in funding for a major research proposal aimed at improving feed efficiency and reducing methane emissions in dairy cattle. The 4-year project with a total budget of \$10.3M is led by Dr. Filippo Miglior, Adjunct Professor at the University of Guelph and Chief of Research & Strategic Development at Canadian Dairy Network (CDN), with project co-leader Dr. Paul Stothard, Associate Professor at the University of Alberta. On behalf of the Canadian dairy cattle improvement industry, CDN has committed \$400,000 in cash through its research committee, the DairyGen Council, as well as \$460,000 as an in-kind contribution to this important research initiative.

Gary Bowers, CDN Board Chairman stated, “CDN is very pleased with the news from Genome Canada to fund this project, which will undoubtedly position Canada among world leaders in terms of the opportunity for genetic and genomic selection to improve feed efficiency and decrease methane emissions in dairy cattle”. “The Board recognizes and appreciates the significant time and effort invested by CDN staff, other industry personnel and the highly qualified team of research scientists involved in this project to reach this successful outcome”, he added.

The foundation of this research proposal is the collection of individual daily feed intake data for cows and heifers at two research herds in Canada, namely the newly opened Livestock Research and Innovation Centre at the University of Guelph as well as the Dairy Research and Technology Centre at the University of Alberta. In addition, a novel part of this project is the collection of similar data from two large commercial herds in Canada using the GrowSafe feeding system. Another important component is the international scope of this research effort since it includes research scientists as well as feed efficiency and methane emission data from Australia, Switzerland, United Kingdom and United States. An ultimate outcome of this major research initiative will be routine genetic evaluation services by CDN for feed efficiency and methane emission to allow for genetic selection and improvement of these novel traits. Canadian dairy producers will benefit from having more profitable cows in their herds and a positive impact is also expected by reducing the environmental footprint for the industry.

Canadian Dairy Network is the national genetic evaluation centre for dairy cattle and provides services to Canadian dairy producers and member organizations including breed associations, DHI agencies, A.I. organizations and Dairy Farmers of Canada.

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