



## ***Harvestore: Part of the Past; Part of the Future***

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Gjalt and Corry Mulder emigrated from Holland in January of 1992 to build Ringia Farms, their dairy operation in Lakeside, Ontario, from scratch. They started milking the day before Christmas that year.

The herd has been expanded; barns have been added, but one thing remains the same: their Harvestore silo still looks after storage of their high moisture corn.

Although the Harvestore has been off the books for quite some time, the long-term investment continues to pay off, fitting seamlessly into the adaptation of new technology.

When their commodity barn burnt in 2002 it was a devastating loss. The Harvestore was damaged by the fire, but repairable, and extended from 25 by 80 to 25 by 90 feet as operations continued. The Harvestore has remained the anchor, protecting the valuable high moisture corn as a vital component of a new precision on-farm feed factory for their herd of 370 purebred Holsteins.



The Harvestore feeds directly into the new feeding system, keeping the feed conveniently out of the weather. "The feed is kept from the elements – weather, birds, and rain – so whatever you

put in there is what's going to come out," explained Jan Mulder, who was only 11 years old when his parents decided to install the Harvestore.



With their feeding system, shrinkage has been reduced to almost nothing. There's no HMC blowing away in the wind or rain during the daily ration mixing process, and using the Harvestore with its patented Breather Bag system also means virtually no feed loss to spoilage. As Jan says, "If you pay for it you want to feed it, not have it blow all over the yard."

There have been savings in other feed components with their new feed factory too. Take soybean, for example: before the feed factory was set up, handling losses meant that ten percent of every load was "just given away," says Jan. Now there's no wastage, which has meant an extra week out of every load, resulting in savings of \$8,000 per year.

The new computerized ration mixing system saves Jan time, labour and ultimately, money as the Harvestore payback continues in ways that weren't evident before. Chores now take one and a half hours less per day with the computerized system, and just running the tractor and payloader for half an hour less per day means an annual savings of \$18,250 per year in labour and loader use alone.

The computerized system was designed with help from Embro Farm Systems. It's all pre-programmed to make it easy to use and has been working seamlessly for two years now. "The feeding system is accurate, even on weekends when the help may not be," reported Jan, who says that each 1700 kg batch may only be out by only two to three kilograms.

Looking into the future, Jan is pleased with the decision made by his father to go with Harvestore. The benefits continue in ways yet unseen as their 1,100-acre farm moves into the future. For example, any future compliance with quality or traceability standards will be easy to achieve – their computerized system keeps excellent records and easily tracks inventory, which makes it better for bookkeeping, reporting and management.

Harvestore holds an integral place in the future of progressive dairies like Ringia Farms.

*Is there a Harvestore in your future?*