

Herd-level management and housing of Canadian robotic milking herds

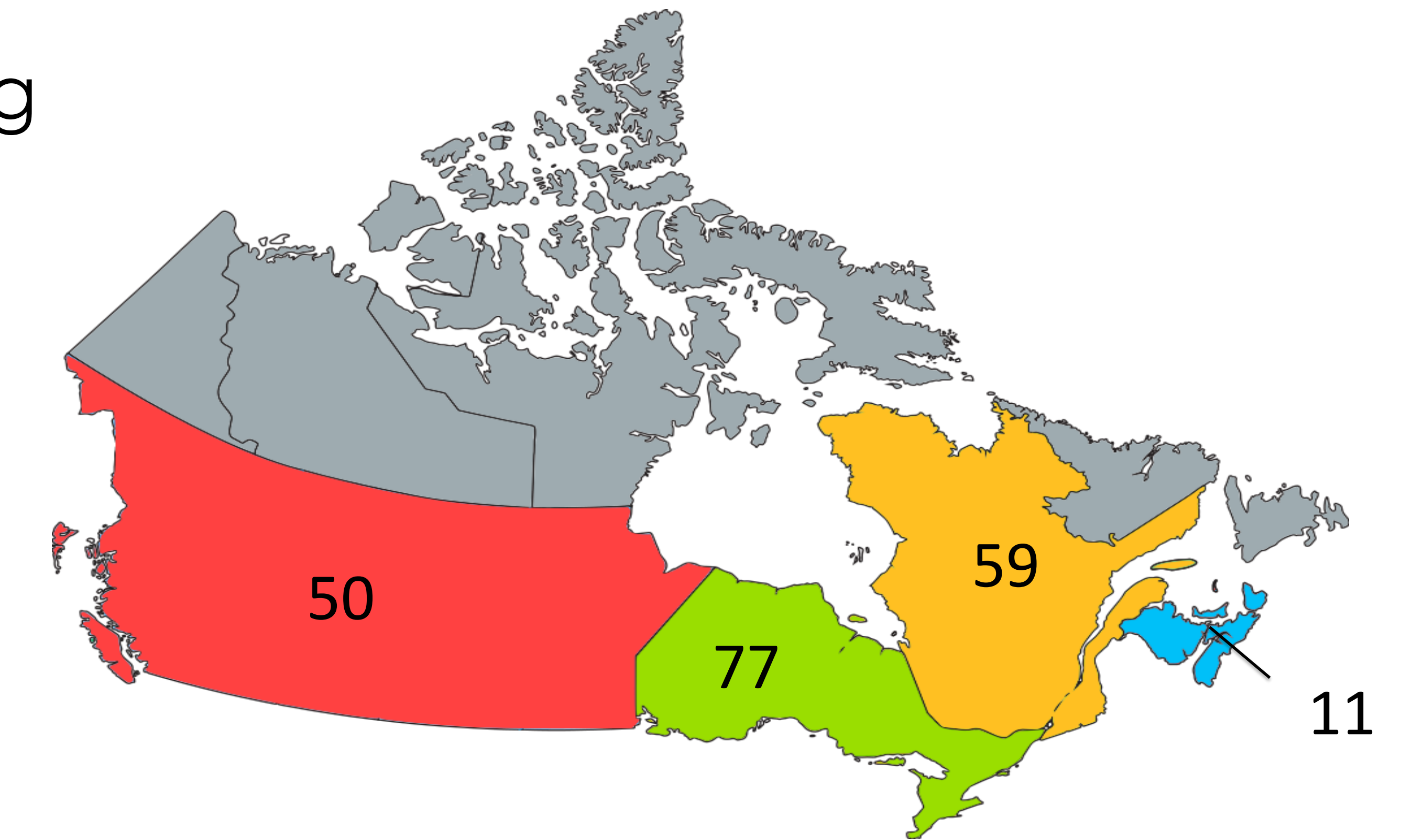
Robert Matson¹, Meagan King¹, Todd Duffield¹, Débora Santschi², Karin Orsel³, Ed Pajor³, Greg Penner⁴, Tim Mutsvangwa⁴, and Trevor DeVries^{1*}

¹Department of Animal Biosciences, University of Guelph, Guelph, ON, Canada, ²Lactanet, Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue, QC, Canada, ³Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Calgary, Calgary, AB, Canada, ⁴Department of Animal and Poultry Science, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK, Canada.

Research Question: What are the housing and management practices of robotic milking herds across Canada?

Methods:

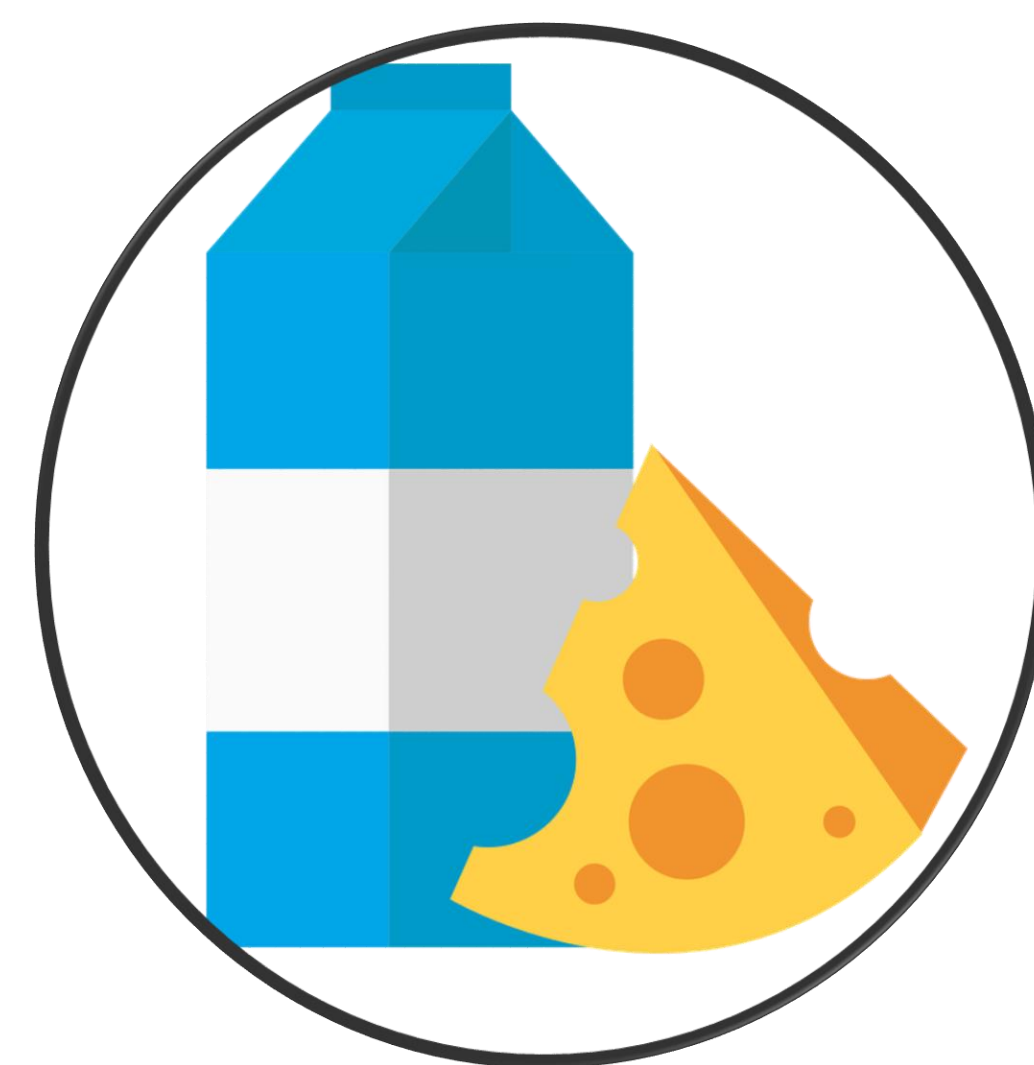
- Visited 197 robotic dairy farms from April to September 2019.
- Collected data on barn design, herd composition and farm management.
- Milk production data (mean ± SD) for the 6 months prior to farm visits were collected from Lactanet.



Herd Statistics:



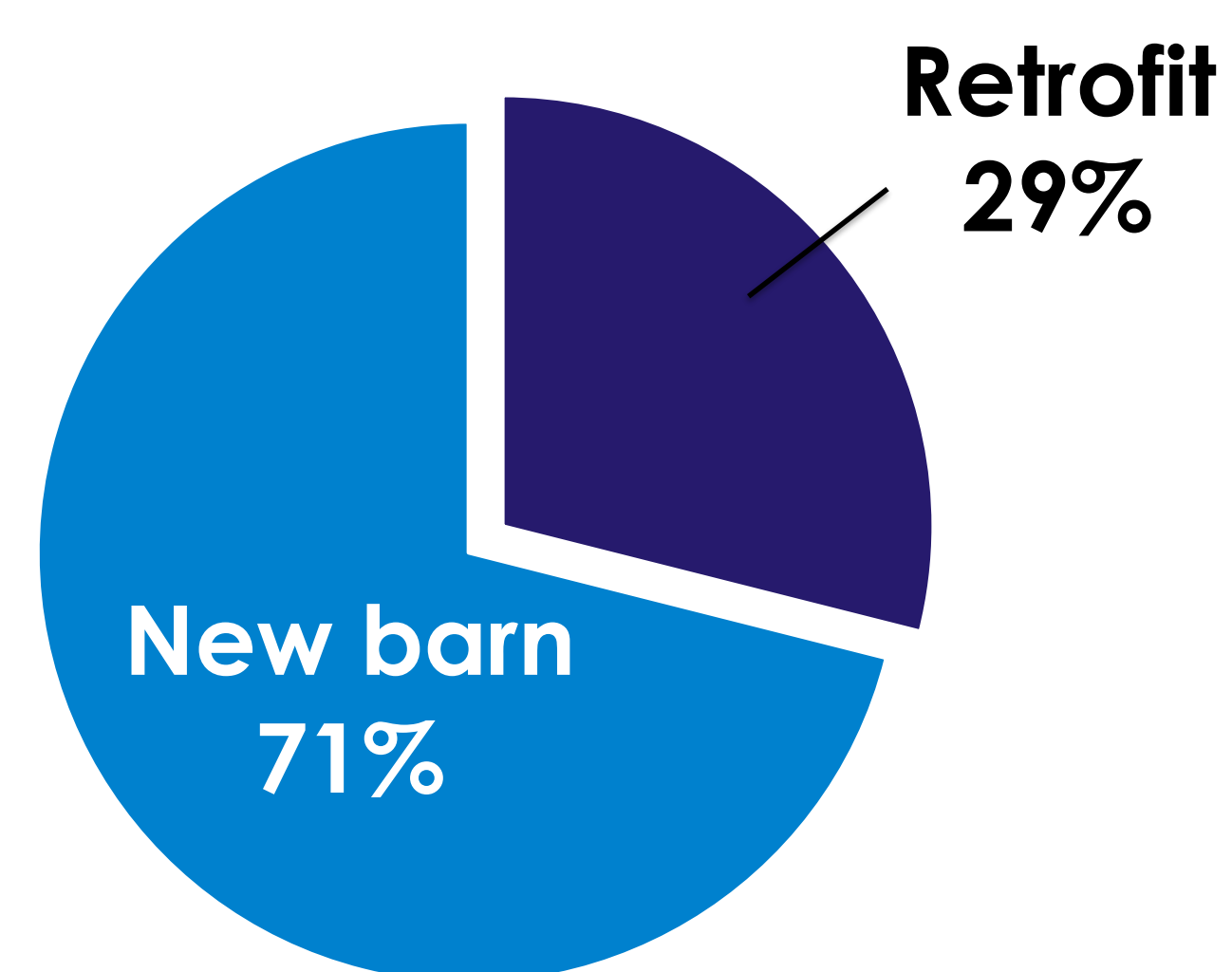
Cows per Farm
111 ± 101 (range 38-1000)
Robots/Farm
2.4 ± 1.9 (range 1-17)
Cows per Robot
47.3 ± 9.1 cows/robot



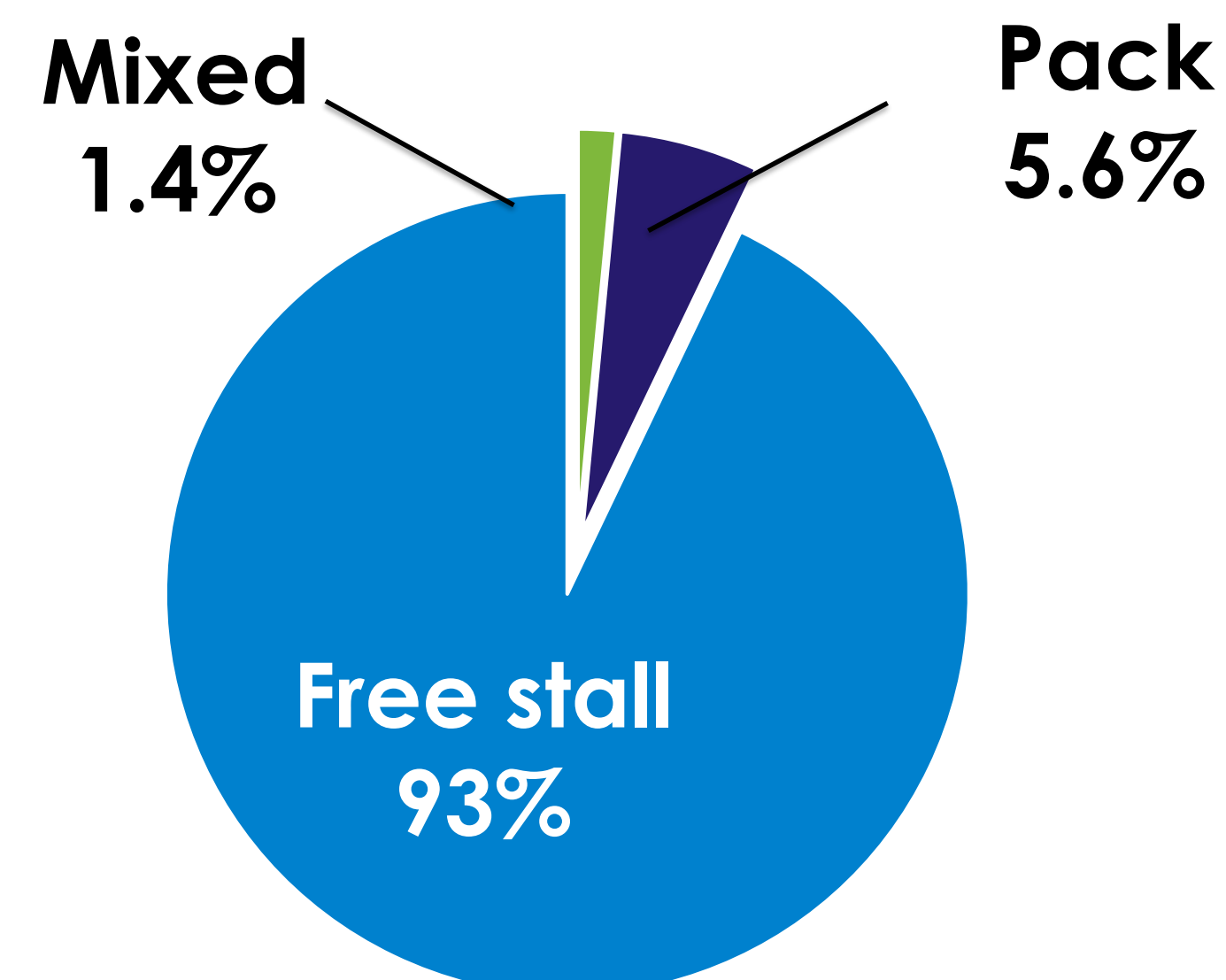
Milk
36.6 ± 4.9 kg/cow/d
Fat
4.12 ± 0.33 %
Protein
3.41 ± 0.18 %



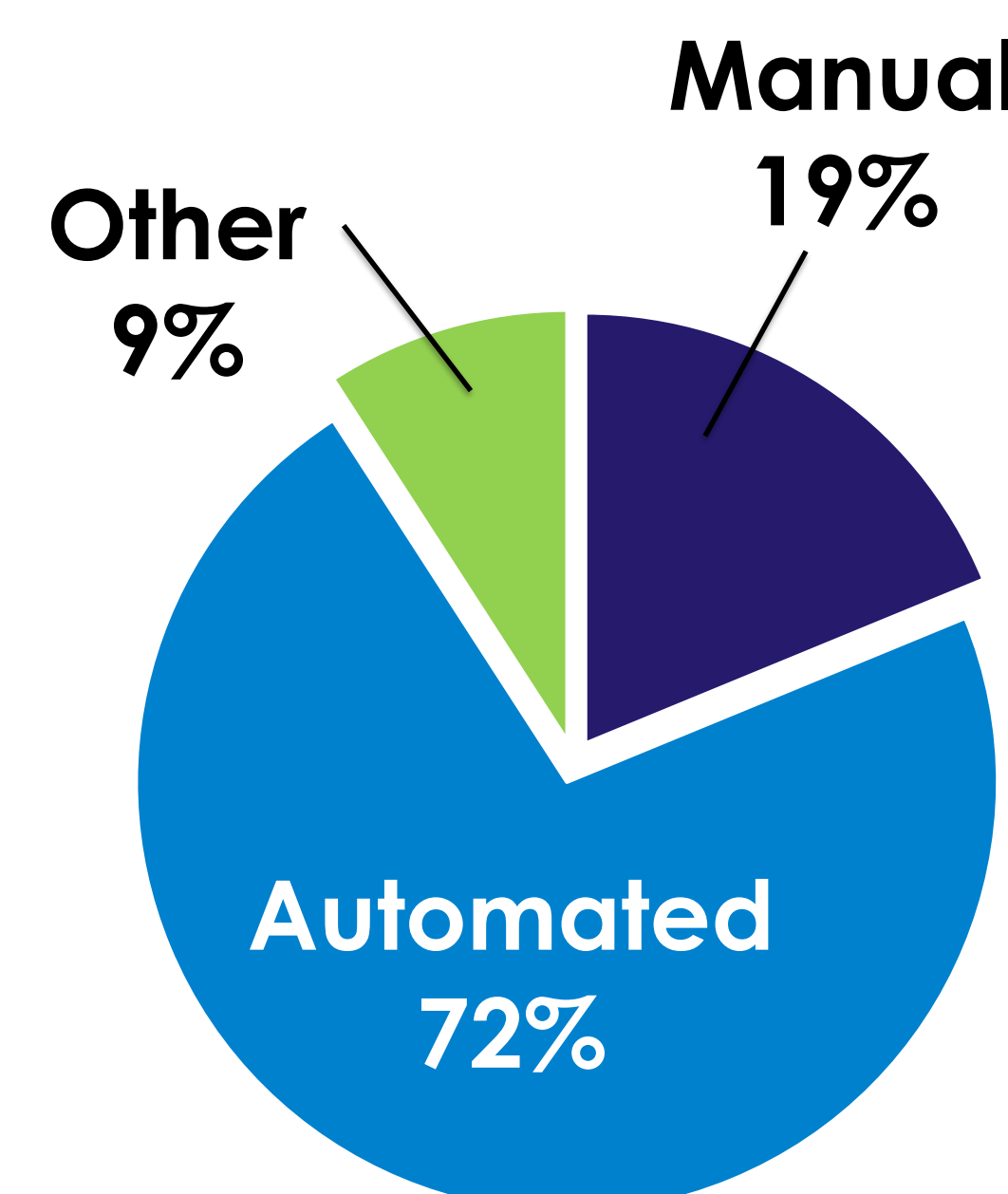
DIM
174 ± 20 d
Parity
2.4 ± 0.3 lactations
Breed
Holstein (90.4%), Other (9.6%)



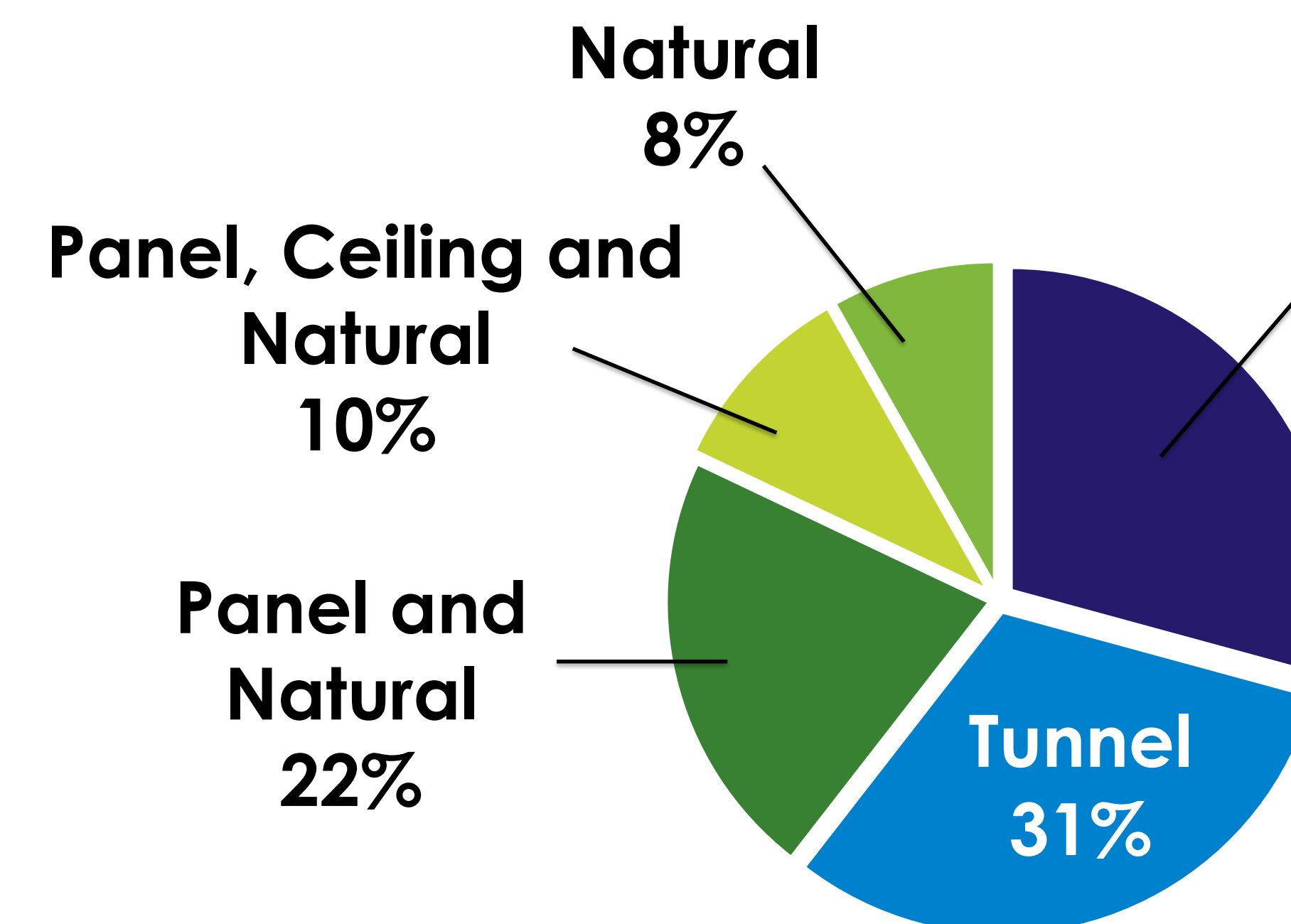
Build Type



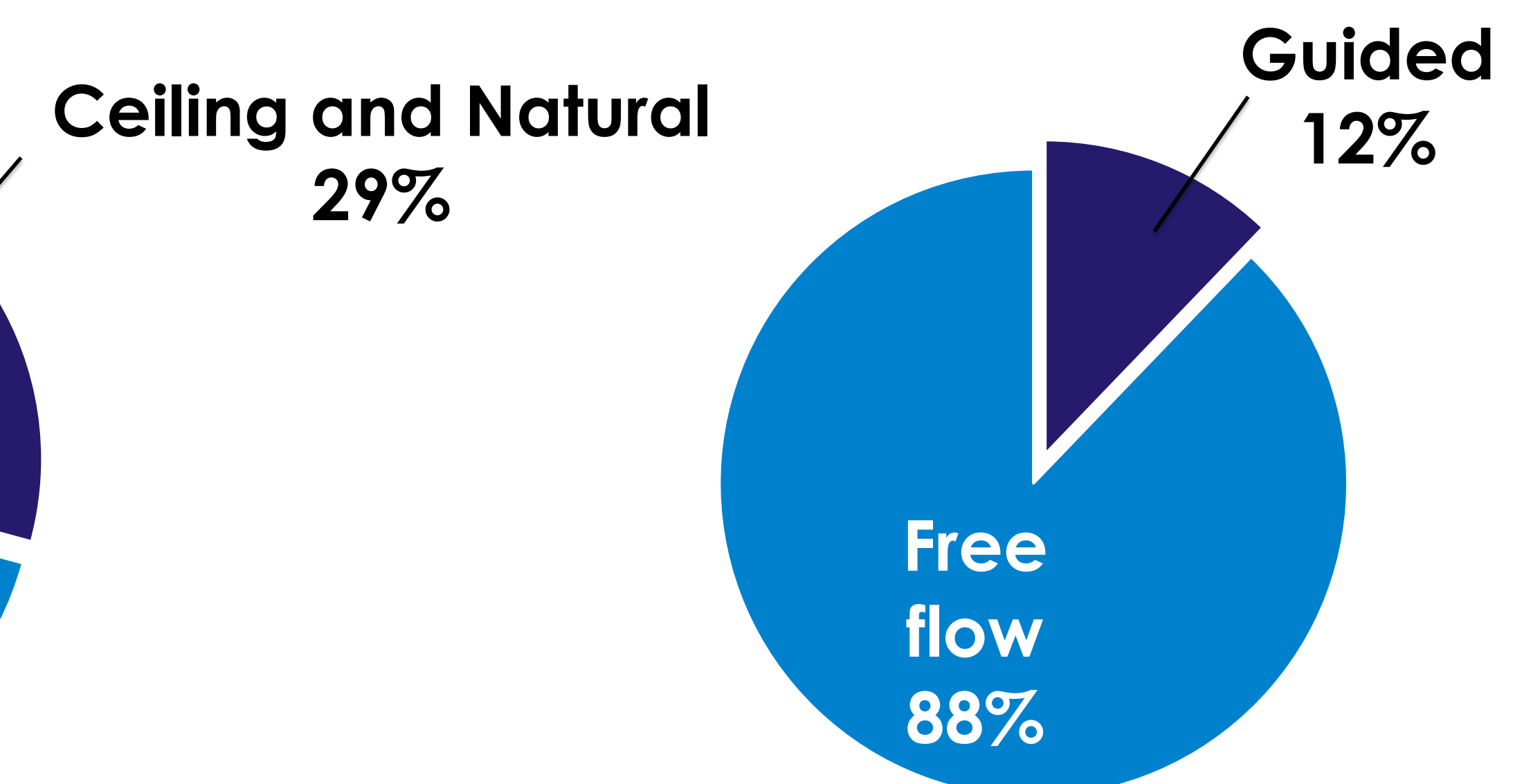
Housing Type



Feed Push-ups (12.8 ± 8.4 x/d)



Ventilation



Cow Traffic System

Take Home Message:

This study describes the current trends in management and housing practices across robotic milking farms in Canada.