



Sheri Gallant

BMATH, CPA, CMA, CFF | Partner/Senior Vice President

Forensic Accounting Expert in the Agriculture Industry

Growing up, Sheri Gallant remembers spending summers on her uncle's dairy and cash crops farm in PEI. She says, "I learned early on that farmers are extremely hard-working and knowledgeable. They're also very down-to-earth, and they want to work with people who have a similar approach. I think MDD's agriculture practice is successful because we have the same values as the people we're trying to help."

When Sheri first began her forensic accounting career in Toronto over 30 years ago, she received a steady stream of agriculture claims in addition to her other work. However, when she moved to Southwestern Ontario, Sheri consciously changed the focus of her practice so that she could begin quantifying damages for more agriculture claims.

As seen in the chart below, Sheri knows there's no such thing as a one-size-fits-all approach when dealing with agriculture losses. That's why her first step is to always ensure she has a solid understanding of the farm's activities. This approach means that she knows which documents to request so that she can fairly and accurately assess the claim.

Type of Loss	Things to Consider
Poultry	Flock loss documentation and flock management reports, marketing quotas and instances of disease such as Avian influenza
Egg	Monthly egg production reports, documentation detailing the number of eggs of each grade and size, premiums paid for organic eggs, feed costs, producer prices, flock health, flock age and flock replacement
Hog or Cattle	Breeding and weaning schedules, average animal weight at market, savings in feed and freight, marketing board fees, sales reports and the ability to relocate any animals post-loss
Dairy	Monthly milk reports, herd management reports, closed/open herd, butterfat percentage, review of incentive days as they relate to production days, over/under credits and calf birthing schedules, quota changes, quota lease post-loss
Crop	Planting reports, weekly production reports, crop cycles, whether or not the farmer changed crops in the post-loss period, the number of crops naturally destroyed by insects and animals, weather, currency fluctuations and make up production
Greenhouse	Review of plants produced in the previous year, size and categorization of plants produced, acreage planted, size distribution, pounds produced per acre and potential savings in packaging, labour and utilities

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Whenever possible, Sheri recommends bringing her team on board early so they can help manage expectations. She's also able to talk with the insured about any plans they may have to mitigate their losses since this may affect how Sheri and her team quantify the claim.

Sheri has quantified hundreds of agriculture related files since her move to London. Today, she is widely acknowledged as one of the top experts in her field. Clients across Canada talk about Sheri's industry knowledge, impressive credentials and ability to present compelling analyses as a key reason for bringing her on board. The respect Sheri has earned is evidenced by the fact that much of her work is repeat business. To learn more about Sheri's expertise, please contact her at sgallant@mdd.com.

Relevant Expertise

Barn Fire at a Dairy Farm – MDD was retained to quantify the losses sustained after the majority of a herd of cows perished in a barn fire. To assess the lost profits, MDD analyzed quota and milk prices to determine the revenue the farm would have made and also factored in the extra expenses the insured incurred by paying a large portion of the milk cheque to the farms that were caring for the surviving cows. MDD's calculations also took into consideration saved expenses such as not having to feed and care for the cows that had perished. The farmer also opted to expand the facility after the incident and was able to buy additional quota and earn revenue in this fashion, which helped to mitigate the loss.

Farrow-to-Finish Farm Liability Claim – Feed given to a sow and her piglets was infected with a disease that ultimately killed all of the piglets. Because the loss occurred early in the life cycle of the pigs, MDD assessed the loss based on hog market prices for a date that matched when the grown piglets would have gone to market. We also looked at the average size and index of hogs at the affected farm to help determine what the piglets' potential sales value would have been had they lived long enough to be sold. MDD then deducted saved expenses such as feed, utilities, freight, board fees and levies to determine the overall lost profit. While MDD was retained for this file by the insured directly, the claimant was impressed with MDD's knowledge and later hired us directly on a separate litigation matter.

Heat Prostration Loss at an Egg Laying Barn – Failed ventilation inside a barn led to the death of an entire flock of hens. To help quantify the damages, MDD reviewed the number of eggs produced for each hen on a weekly basis, the typical size and grade of the eggs, at what point in the flock cycle the hens died and how long the farm had to wait for the next flock to come into the barn. MDD also factored in a premium price upon learning that these hens produced omega-3 rich eggs. MDD then reviewed saved expenses such as feed to arrive at the total damages incurred.

Cucumber Greenhouse Fire – A fire at a greenhouse that grew long English cucumbers and miniature cucumbers resulted in the complete loss of both crops and the shutdown of greenhouse operations for one year. MDD helped quantify this multi-million dollar claim by using historical information and considering greenhouse production for similar crops in close proximity to the loss location. We used this information to help determine pounds of cucumbers grown on a weekly basis. We then applied the appropriate pricing model (contract or market) to arrive at the revenue shortfall for the greenhouse. Upon determining the deficit, MDD looked at what point in the crop cycle the loss occurred to determine the impact of saved expenses such as packaging, utilities and labour.



Testimonials

"Sheri is no stranger to walking into tough environments and winning people over with her personality, intellect, credentials and ability to communicate with farmers in all agricultural sectors, adjusters and lawyers in a manner they can easily relate and understand.

Several years ago I worked with Sheri on a very difficult multi-million dollar hog operation fire. Sheri won over our stern insured with her common sense approach. When Sheri's report was presented in the subrogation case, it was accepted without argument from the opposing insurer or their lawyers. Her analysis truly helped swing the entire case in our insured's and company's favor. She did a great job!"

- David Colquhoun, CFEI

Claims Manager, Lambton Mutual Insurance Company

"Whenever I work with Sheri, I know I'm working with someone who understands the production process and what measurements need to be used based on the type of crop involved. She's also able to speak the Insured's language. Because of their confidence in her, we're often able to resolve the claim more quickly.

Sheri is particularly adept at noticing anomalies in production levels. When she sees something unusual, she digs deeper to find out whether or not it has an impact on the claim. On one particular assignment, Sheri went through historical data and determined that prior to the loss, the Insured was already 11.5% behind in production. Once the Insured realized the impact this had on his claim, we were able to settle for significantly less than anticipated."

- Spencer Bailey, CIP

Crawford & Company (Canada) Inc.

About MDD Forensic Accountants

Tracing our roots back to 1933, MDD is a leading international forensic accounting firm. Every day, global professionals like Sheri Gallant provide economic damage quantification assessments for thousands of clients around the world.

When needed, our highly trained and experienced specialists also deliver both expert witness testimony and reports.

With more than 40 offices on 5 continents, we are proud of our firm's exceptional dedication, singularly qualified experts, and demonstrated results in this highly specialized area of accounting.

