

Tip of the Month – December 2016

How much Automatic Feeding?

With Delpro by DeLaval you can choose on how far you'd want to operate the feeding of concentrate automatically: from 0% to 100%. From keeping part of the work in your own hands to not having to do any work! (Look at the tip from February 2015)

Operating fully automatic is easier, because you'll never forget to do your job. However, you will miss the finer points regarding the differences in condition and / or fitness from your individual cow.

During the winter, dairy farmers spend relatively more time in their barns and with their cows. So, I think it is time to work less on automatic and having the farmer run a more thorough checkup.

DeLaval advises to let the computer calculate weekly and, depending on the amount of different types of feed, set the deviation, "Max ration threshold" back to 30% – 50%.

The more types of feed available, the higher the percentage can be.

This is due to the fact that the increasing or decreasing amount of levels of concentrate measured in grams are little, but still a lot in terms of percentages.

The lower the percentage, the more influence, the more cows on the attention list

You can adjust this in: Feed => Feed Table Assignments => Feed Table Parameters

Then you have to check the List: "Ration Calculation Log"

weekly!

I can imagine you put the percentages higher in the summer than in the winter.

Tip of the month – November 2016

Efficiency Sponge.

The VMS has an integrated sponge where the camera passes for cleaning purposes.

We notice sometimes that the sponge is not very clean, but more often we find that the sponge doesn't brush the camera right.

Note that the camera should hit the sponge perfectly.

Not pressing to much because all it will do is press and not wipe the camera and damage itself. Likewise, make sure that the sponge is not touched too thin, that doesn't help either.

Additionally, the sponge is often set to wipe too high which causes the cap to be flattened (over the Lasers?), which in return causes the lasers and camera not to be brushed sufficiently and the sponge can't clean the lower part of the camera. If the camera touches the sponge too low, it will mostly brush the screws, thus missing the lasers, and still wear out quickly..

In both of these cases the sponge is worn out without having done its job well.

On the touchscreen in the menu Teachen you can adjust these settings with the joystick. It is smart to do first an Endpoint Calibration before adjusting other setting.

It is also good to program in PC that the VMS cleans the camera after every milking, it takes no time and gives a clear view on the teats..

The more times a day you rinse the sponge, the cleaner it is, the better job he makes!

(Washing your boots? => wash the sponge!)

PS Read the tip from December 2012. The same issue occurred in this year!

A lot of grass silage has been won, so much has been grown. Quite different from 2012, now with more sun, but just like then, grass silage has less energy, so it's hard to get good milk from it.

Tip of the month – October 2016

Longevity: Maximum or Optimum?

A cows longevity is a crucial aspect to operating income. A cow needs 1.5 lactations to cover the purchase and rearing costs. So, getting many lactations is important.

But actually it is not about whether a cow gets old and how many lactations she makes, but it is about how many kg of

milk, rather how many kg of fat and protein she delivered in the tank during her productive life with the lowest (vet – feed). -) costs. (LDY: *Lifetime Daily Yield*)

A couple of things are important to know:

1. Heifers that calve at 23-24 months produce 15000 litres more in their lifetime than heifers that calve at 27-30 months;
2. Using consequently DelPro's 2-Minute-Check, information concerning cows with abnormalities are detected earlier: timely intervention makes a difference in longevity;
3. Giving a cow after calving the right amount of a certain feed assists her through the transition period and also helps thereafter going through the period with negative energy balance. Additionally, making sure these two periods the appropriate amount and speed is crucial in these periods;
4. Precisely estimating if a treatment has a big chance or a little chance of success for the cow.
5. Or can/will she transmit infectious diseases? That could make a difference in the longevity of the cows stable mates;
6. Etc. Etc.

But:

If a cow has calved ca. 4 times already, then ask yourself: must I have her inseminated again?

Or is there a bigger chance that the next lactation is better for the vet, hooftrimmer and cattle dealer than it is for my wallet?

Tip of the month – September 2016

Risks on high Somatic Cell counts.

We're in the time again of higher somatic cell counts. It is crucial that you know what the causes are.

Are they cow-related or environment-related bacteria?

For example, an Aureus (cow-related bacteria) cow, which is very contagious and difficult to control, needs to have a very good reason why she is still walking around on your dairy with this milk price.

Aureus is difficult to treat well and very contagious! In the cow monitor it is quite easy to recognize because of its high peaks and lows in the graph.

Uberis is the most common environment-related bacteria. You can spot Uberis by noticing the cow has a high cell count but relatively little increase in the graph.

Environment-related bacteria are easily spread throughout the barn, boxes, manure and dirty milking equipment.

With the monthly milk test, you get a list of somatic cell numbers, split into heifers, 2nd calf and older cows but also columns for the first days after calving and later periods during lactation.

Again, a lot can be learned from this: are there many fresh cows with a high cell count the first month after calving? Was the place where they calved clean enough, did they eat and drink fast enough after calving? Haven't they been calved in good conditions? (to fat or thin, or ... it's all possible)

Or if there are too many cows that peak with cells in

lactation between 60-150 days, this could come from too long period of negative energy balance which in turn would cause them to be weakened to resist a bacteria-attack.

Or do heifers already have a high cell number? This is often CNS: a collection of cow bound and environment-related bacteria. This may have to do with young cattle rearing, but also due to the fact that they live in old stables which is no longer suitable as a clean and comfortable habitable environment due to neglect. Also old drinking watersystems which doesn't flow as quickly as it should is a paradise for bacteria and can cause CNS. As a result, they often have an infection even before the calving is incurred.

All dairies have bacteria. Which bacteria gets a chance on your dairy?

Tip of the month – August 2016

Disinfect camera body.

Our preparation cup washes and stimulates perfectly, but sometimes it happens that afterwards a (front)teat is touched by the camera body.

“Every advantage has its disadvantage”, said Johan Cruijff, but we want to keep the disadvantage to a minimum.

Therefore, it is very wise to not only wash the glass a few times a day, but also the camera body.

It is wisest to clean with a chlorine solution.



Hydrogen peroxide (PeraDis) was also advised, but if it is not thoroughly rinsed, it may lead to corrosion.

With a bucket of chlorine solution, made according to the instructions, and a brush on long steel or carwash brush, clean the camera house frequently in order to prevent bacteria transfer during milking.

The rubber flap, preparation cup and other parts can also be cleaned in this fashion.

Tip of the month – July 2016

Opening Entrance Door.

More often than originally thought, the entry gate of the VMS is not situated correctly. The entry gate is completely adjustable, which gives DeLaval the opportunity to milk very large cows, from Fleckvieh, Buffalo's (for Mozzarella) but also very small, thin cows like Jersey's. However, cows at your farm will most likely not differ that significantly.

The entry gate can open up to 300 times a day. So, it tends to shift away from its original place.

If the entry gate is too narrow, it means that the sensor on the cylinder does not notice that the cow is far enough in

because the gate is not closed enough. You often see this occur with fatter cows. Or maybe because of the feed manger is to far back, that they are pushed too far back in the VMS. It results in the robot not allowing to start milking the cow.

Or the door is set too spacious and then small or young cows can move from left to right too much.

If you have normal or small Holstein cows, then you should be able to stick a hand between the arrow and the entry gate. If you have Fleckvieh or MRIJ cows, then you should be able to stick a fist between the arrow and the entry gate.

Tip of the month – June 2016

Ruminating activity.

On average, 50-60% of the cows should be ruminating.

And at the times that you are observing if there are any cows in heat you can also check / count this behavior.

In the meantime, count the jaw movements of an individual cow between two regurgitations.

That should be between 60-70 movements.

Less is not good, then she needs to do less movements because the food has not as much structure as it should have, or she has eaten to little amount!

More is also not good because the extra times she chews implies she is making more saliva.

That in return could entail that the cow wants to neutralize

the pH in the rumen which possibly indicates subclinical acidosis!

You will also notice that by changes in grass silage also could have an influence on the amount of jaw movements a cow needs to do.

Also warm weatherstress could influence this phenomenon, at first she ruminates more often when she has problems making enough sodium bicarbonate on her own, and then she ruminates to few because she needs to much time to breath. And eating less because of warm weather also means she ruminates less. And an empty feedlot for a few hours.

Tip of the month – May 2016

Better milking empty an problem udder / quarter

It occasionally happens that after an mastitis infection or another cause, a teat never fully recovers. Thus, resulting in it not coming back to normal production.

Also, it could be more difficult milking empty this udder quarter .

The default settings will sometimes cause the teat to be taken off earlier because the flow of milk is, even briefly, too low.

Such a quarter will be removed too soon, and will dry up.

Of course, this is not the idea.

The options you have now are: select on the Animal card (Configuration) the “Base take-off decision on lower flow” and maybe too “Extended pre-milking time” (she gets more time to

let the milk flow).

Also, you have (by Cleaning) the possibility for teat cleaning to "Clean twice", because that stimulates also often the milk flow.

But the most important thing is that you discover on time that this can happen!

Tip of the month – April 2016

Check with light how clean the lens is

A flashlight is very common these days, even more common on smartphones. Aim the flashlight at the camera, daily, from the side (!) and see if the glass is clean. Not only where the camera is is important, but also the corners on top from where the main laser and teat laser have to do their job.

Tip of the month – March 2016

Efficient Milkings

Increasing the capacity of a VMS is always interesting.

In retrospect, each milking costs time. Thus, each milking costs money. So, a VMS visit must be efficient. In the Report MILKINFO => MILKING PERFORMANCE you see, among other things, which cows use the most time Milking Duration but also which cows give the least yield per milking (= average milk yield per milking from the past 7 days.)

Little milk per visit is not efficient!

Also, take a look at "Animal" => Group Milkings (be sure to set it for 24 hours) and then sort according to milking yield. It should be self-explanatory that we would rather not see any milkings under 5 liters. This, of course, is theoretical.

But, one dairy has more than the other. And many of these milkings are often from the same cows. Often, these milking jobs are incomplete and don't let yourself be appalled at the minutes this milking has taken in the next column...

If these cows have just calved, or you have a good explanation then it's fine. It will pass.

Otherwise, could you put them dry?

Is the milk permission for these cows set well?

Do they need to come less often or do they need more time between milkings after an incomplete milk job?

Are they, almost, three teated?