

Tip of the Month – December 2017

Different Groups on VMS.

If you have the possibility to make groups in your stalls, this could be an interesting feature.

Often, groups are made according to productivity: high versus low. To be honest, the effect can be disappointing, especially when the cows have to go from the high productivity group to the low productivity group. Not only does the ration change, but they also, again, have to go up against tough, older, or in late lactation stronger cows.

But we do see great results when you make a group heifers accompanied by the smaller, second time calving cows. In this case, the animals will stay in the same VMS group for a whole year. One advantage is that these heifers don't have to go up against bigger cows as often.

It is measured e.g. by "Vetvice" that these cows make about 10% more visits to the troughs and VMS because there are less dominant cows in the way.

That results in higher productivity and a healthier development of the young cows.

For the group, perhaps you can choose different VMS settings, smaller or other teatliners and milking jug.

Tip of the Month – November 2017

Lactation Graph

Since DelPro version 4.5 it is not only possible to see the lactation graph for one cow, but also for the whole herd. Go to the tab “Animal”.

We (you and I) are not only curious to see how much your cows produce but also to how it is graphed. How high are the peaks of the cows? How long do they keep it going? Is there a big difference in the curve between heifers and older cows?

In the case that cows peak at around 40-50 days, you can assume that the cow might produce a lot less in the second half of its lactation.

Questions you can ask yourself: Is the peak high enough with cows or heifers? What went wrong? Do they go down quickly after the peak? => Do they get the right ration, the right amount of feed at the right time?

Should I use a different ration when they're set dry? Does the young cattle get the care they need to excel as heifer or cow?

A very interesting graph!

Tip of the Month – October

2017

Cleaning VMS "Eyes".

The Visolux camera in the VMS monitors when a cow arrives in the system. This camera can get dirty quite quickly. Also, in the Smartgates (Selectionport), a camera is keeping track of which cow arrives in the system. (It is hidden in the most recent version of Smartgate.)

The new Body Condition Score (BCS) camera can deliver abundant and explicit information, but only if it has a good field of vision.

To keep the camera's clean, wipe them regularly down with a damp rag.

Side note: use degreasing supplies.

Tip of the Month – September 2017

Free products for fens.

Cows often feel exactly what they need.

For this reason it could be useful to always give some extra hay or straw for free at their troughs. If everything goes well, your well rationed feed of corn, grass and extras should be so good they'll always come back for more of that! The first day they eat the hay for curiosity, but after that they only eat from the hay when they need it. The cows that take some extra hay are the ones that have just given birth or

aren't feeling very well.

Just keep in mind that the hay has to be tasteful and good.

Even if there is, for a moment, not much good food in front of the troughs, the cow will eat some hay and keep its Pens / rumen and PH stable.

If they don't take the hay, it means that the cows feel well with your ration!

There are also dairy farmers that have good experiences with setting a box of sodium bicarbonate or salt at the troughs. You'll see an increase of consumption during warm weather.

Then the cows who don't need it won't take it.

Discuss the possibilities with your feeding advisor.

Tip of the Month – August

Automatic Milk permission

The maximum capacity of a milking robot ranges about between 150-180 milking's per day.

(V300 a few more...)

It is crucial to allocate these milking's to your cows appropriately. DeLaval has created a system to automate this allocation. It's called Automatic milk permission. With this system, your cows will be sorted into 3 different groups. 1) the fresh cows, 2) cows in a further stage of lactation and 3) cows that will be put dry in a few weeks.

It is your decision when period (group) 2 starts and stops,

but often we experience that too many milking's are allocated to cows in group 2. That is positive for the average milking's per cow per day, but cows that have lactated for more than 100 days cut in line in front of the young, new cows that have to learn to go to the robot, or go for the cows that have fresh calved and /or have other trouble.

This demotivates these animals which results in negative outcomes. Additionally, some cows from group 2 get milking permission again even though their utter may only be half full. This results in inefficient milking's (=time).

Thus, it is important for group 2 that the permission hours are set very high with 9-10 hours and in that period permission is given to the cows when they have enough expected yield.

See Tipp of the Month January 2013