Tip of the Month – September 2019

Drying off cows with a sealer?

Many cows are set dry with just a ‘teat-sealer’ treatment like Orbeseal.
Three things are incredibly important when it comes to using a sealer.
The obvious first tip is to work hygienically ofcourse.
Second, make sure that you do not insert the sealer to high. The sealer should close the teat canal and not the udder. (That’s just bad for the udder.)

The third and final tip is that you need to make sure that you “don’t include burglars”. So, when you dry-off a cow don’t only look at the cell count but also take the graph on the Cow-monitor in consideration. Set it to an overview of 365 days and you can review the results per quarter/teat. You can overview the last week or last month but also the entire lactation history and assess whether every quarter is clean enough to set the cow dry only with a sealer or have to use antibiotic.

Tip of the Month – August 2019

Dry cows at a distance.

If your farm allows for it, it is much better when you place dry cows at a distance from the VMS station or milking parlor.

It would have to be far enough that they do not hear or see any pulsations, concentrate falling or other cows moving around the AMS. Also, its recommended that the cows have no sight of the VMS.

But place them where you can see them often! (Are they healthy? Is their rumen filling ok? etc.)

Tip of the Month – July 2019

Losses at the silage storage.

It has been discussed many times but the ration what is calculated should be lying at the feeding fence.

Calculations and plans for the feeding rations come from analyses, and a plan, usually made with your feeding advisor.

For some reason it occasionally still goes wrong. The silage might have gotten warm which results in loss of energy and taste. Inevitably, the cows will eat less and receive less energy that what was calculated.

What also happens is that crows, starlings and ducks, spend a lot of time at your roughage storage. Predominantly for the corn kernels. Besides taking away valuable energy and starch, and walking around in the storage, they also shit in the cows food

This also happens in the stable…

By keeping the silage storage as clean as possible, and by pulling a protective cover every day over open silage we can eradicate these forms of energy/taste loss.

Making the stable “bird-proof” won’t be easy.

Also pay attention to what extent the sun can shine on the open surface of the silage, this also dries and heats more than intended.

Tip of the Month – June 2019

Make note of the details

Most engineers are proud of the DeLaval VMS and how it works. They would be eager to tell what they know and what you can do to improve your workflow. What they don’t always know is what you don’t know. For example, a farmer could think that milk cups do not connect properly by a few, or more, cows is normal, or sounds that you now find normal but that are not. If the farmer doesn’t make note of the details, then the technician would have to coincidentally experience the issue in order to solve it.

So, make sure to always have your phone or a pen and notebook with you. Make a list of things for the technician to take a look at and they’ll let you know if anything is out of the ordinary. Having the possibility to take notes would also make your work easier. If you think of something while you’re standing behind your barn or in the middle of the field, you could just jot it down and make note of it.

Tip of the Month – Mai 2019

Making more effective use of activity measurement.

You know that the best time to inseminate cows is usually

between 60 – 90 days after the calving date.
That is the time that the cow has likely been immersed in negative energy for a while. This means she gives already a few month more milk than the amount of energy that she can absorb from the feed she receives.
This also means that the cow does not always clearly show that she is in heat. Sometimes, this means that the cow does not always achieve 1+ 2 ++ and 3 +++.
And this doesn't get any better during hot summer days either …

Most cows only show their heat for 4 – 7 hours and often also at night. During this time, you are not all the time in the stable, but the activity meter is.
Thus, it is very important that the system displays correct measurements. For this it is important to know that the transponders are good – (there's a checklist in DelPro for that) – that they're not too loose or tight around the neck – (place a flat hand between neck and collar) – and that the antenna is not too close to the cow recognition place, such as the VMS, selection gate, or too close to electric motors, thick walls, solar panels, cables, etc.

Since DelPro version 5.2, a "Worklist Activity" is available in which the latest knowledge of possibilities is applied using smart filters.
Through these filters, you can also find those cows that have too little activity for a +.

In this list, cows in heat are categorized as: too early for insemination, correct insemination moment or a return. It then churns out a proposal for the right insemination moment!
Lastly, the category "too little activity" you find the cow who is not fit.
This information worklist results in advice about what you can do with the cow.

Users rate this list very positively, which proves that it

adds value to the system!

Ask your technician or DeLaval DelPro Advisor for this “Worklist Activity” list!

Tip of the Month – April 2019

Flies transfer bacteria: How do you keep the place clean?

Most causative agents of udder inflammation can be divided into cow-bound bacteria and environment-related bacteria.

Bacteria related to the environment, such as the common Uberis Streptococci, is often spread through beds that are unclean. Or uncleaned areas, such as those near or under water troughs, cow brushes, fences, etc. This dirt is taken back into the cubicles. The cow will lie down in it and spread it further. Or Milk equipment / cluster is not clean enough between milkings so could also play a role.

Cow-bound bacteria such as Staphylococci Aureus and Streptococci Agalaction spread from cow to cow or from milk to cow. So milk leakers, wet cubicles, and uncleaned milk utensils should be cleaned properly on the outside *and* the inside, since spreading could begin there.

But these cow-bound bacteria can also be passed on by flies!

And they are always in every puddle of milk….

Tackle fly control consequently in time. This is also very important for udder health.

And are you already grazing or are you planning to graze?

Read more tips on this topic below:

http://www.harrytuinier.nl/en/2018/08/01/tip-van-de-maand-augustus-2018/

http://www.harrytuinier.nl/en/2017/05/01/tip-van-de-maand-mei-2017/

Tip of the Month – March 2019

Do you have a good replacement?

Do you have a manual for when you're suddenly unavailable? Is there someone who knows enough about your farm and your cows? Is there someone to replace your job around the VMS, the calves or feeding practices?

In the meantime, trainees at agricultural schools and agri-business farm care services in the Netherlands are learning about the possibilities to replace a farmer with an automatic milking system. It's even possible to complete exams in these courses!

In general, it is smart to be a proponent of these initiatives. More important, it could prove incredibly useful for when you yourselves are suddenly unavailable.

Tip of the Month – February 2019

Feeding concentrate at "Peak Yield"

From the version DelPro 5.2 it is possible to use a feeding table at "Peak Yield".

The concentrate feed for cows up to about 100 Days In Milk (DIM) is often a point of solid discussion:
Do we use an invariable feeding table or not?

These cows must be given the opportunity to give a lot of milk, even though they could temporarily decrease production. Of course, these cows require a lot of energy, (concentrated) feed.

But many advisers and veterinarians observe that during this period some cows who aren't very comfortable and do not give a lot of milk in general, they are worse off with too much of concentrated feed.

Since DelPro 5.2 there is the possibility to operate at Peak Yield.

This is a nice system for feeding cows after the start-up period, for example up to 40 DIM, and then from about 40 days to 100 DIM go feeding on Peak Yield table.

Then the cows that give a lot of milk get the food that is due to them, but cows that for some reason give too little milk, for example: she has calved too soon, then she will only grow from much concentrate, which is too expensive and gives often problems later on.
Or she has problems with her rumen or claws and therefore too little roughage intake, and therefore she never gets (for longer time) high production. That cow should get less – for

her – rumen acidic concentrate feed.

If a cow that gives a lot of milk still temporarily decreases in production, she will continue to keep the concentrate that belongs to the highest production she has given as a 7-day average during this period.

So the concentrate feed amount remains stable.

After 100 days in milk, the negative energy balance period should be depleted. If the cow gives less milk, then you should also decrease the concentrate.

So then the advice is: just feed on “Milk Yield” table.

Tip of the Month – January 2019

Make the most of good silage

It’s been another special year for harvesting. After a very good first cut, most dairy farmers were not able to get much from second cut. Most of this was of less quantity and quality with a lot of stalk and containing less nutritional energy because of the drought.

The corn was also different this year. Some farmers got a very good harvest while others were stuck with too little amount and containing too little starch. On top of that, during feeding it seems very hard to keep cold.

What does your roughage stock look like and how many months of good quality supply do you have for your cows?

If that’s considerably less than the supply you need during the winterperiod, then it is crucial to take measures to stretch the duration of your supply.
We don’t want to have to think about the possibility of good cows eating poor quality roughage.

Some example measures you can take: Give non-lactating cows and young cattle other feed (Dry cows could get **hammered** straw).
Give the lowest producing cows, in a production group, different roughage, perhaps.
Or, strictly select the bottom end of the herd and dry off cows on time (or earlier).

Correct the ration with by-products as well, both on quantity and type of supplementation. This year, this will be a special field of interest.

Consult with your advisor on these issues. Don’t just take the quality or quantity of silage for what it is. S/he will also experience new situations this year and can tailor solutions to your specific region.

Tip of the Month – December 2018

Use the good qualities of your machine.

Currently, there are 6 to 7 milking robot brands on the market. And guess what, they all can milk cows.

Experts however, claim that each robot has its strengths.
All brands have their good and less good points.

Do you leverage the strengths of your milking robot ? You paid for it! Consult your advisor to what extent you can use the strengths.

And if you focus on automatic milking: can you objectively choose which strengths of a brand are best for you and your company?