

# HERD COMPARISON REPORT

## Explanation of Terms

This report provides a comparison of selected management statistics for your herd with your peers. Use this comparison to identify management items that could be improved to make your dairy more profitable. Also, become aware of your management strengths. The groupings to compare your herd with are the State, Local Association and other similar sized herds. The herd size groupings are <250, 250-499, 500-749, 750-999, 1000-1499, 1500-1999, and >1999 cows. For Jersey herds the size grouping is replaced by all Jersey herds. The number of herds in each grouping is listed at the top of the report. Be aware that the values listed are averages for the group and there may be substantial variation among the herds.

### A. AVERAGE DAILY HERD PRODUCTION

This section contains Test Interval Daily Average values for the most recent test period for each herd. Test Interval Daily Average is the estimated daily average during the entire interval of approximately 30 days. It usually consists of the average for two test dates.

**Cows per herd** – This is the total number of cows in the herd on test day, milking and dry.

**% Cows in milk** – This is the percent of days the cows in the herd were in milk during the Test Interval. This is calculated by dividing the total days in milk in each test interval by the total number of cow days in that test period. The normal range is 83 to 90. If the herd has a seasonal calving pattern, the value can vary throughout the year.

**Average days in milk** – The average days in milk for all milking cows. For herds with year-around calving the goal should be under 170. If the herd has a seasonal calving pattern, the value can vary widely throughout the year.

**Milk lbs** – The average milk pounds all cows is calculated by dividing the Test Interval total pounds by the total cow-days. Multiply the value by 300 to make a crude estimate of what the yearly average will be if the cows continue at the current rate of production.

**% Fat / % Protein** – This is the average percent fat and protein in the Test Interval milk.

### B. YEARLY AVERAGE

The yearly averages provide a historical measure of herd production during the past year. However, it is

not very sensitive to management changes in recent months.

**Milk lbs** – This is the average annual production for all cows in the herd, also known as the Rolling Herd Average (RHA). It is the average milk production for the 365-day period ending on the most recent test day.

**% Fat / % Protein** – The average percent fat and protein in the milk produced during the past year.

**Fat corrected milk** – The fat corrected milk (FCM) is the yearly average milk pounds adjusted to a 3.5% fat equivalent.

**Energy corrected milk** – The energy corrected milk (ECM) is the yearly average milk pounds adjusted to a 3.5% fat and 3.0% protein energy equivalent.

**% Cull** – The percent culled is the number of cows sold during the past year divided by the number of cows in the herd. Typical value ranges from 30 to 45. Remember, replacing cows is an additional expense for the dairy. Setting a goal of 35 may be reasonable upper limit for many dairy managers.

### C. PEAK PRODUCTION

**Days in milk** – This is the average days in milk at the point of the highest recorded milk production. Typical values are in the range of 55 to 70 days. Values outside this range should be treated investigated as to the cause.

**Milk lbs** – The peak milk pounds is the average of the highest daily-recorded milk production for all cows currently in the herd. The higher the milk yield at peak flow, the higher the yield for the remainder of the lactation. A crude estimate of lactation yield is to multiply peak milk by 250 in high producing herds.

### D. SCC SUMMARY

**Bulk Tank SCC** – This is an average of the test day bulk tank SCC during the past year. The test day bulk tank SCC is estimated by weighting the SCC with individual daily milk weights.

**1st / 2nd / 3rd+ lactation average SCC** – This is an estimate of the annual SCC if the entire lactation group milk production was pooled in a bulk tank.

### E. DRY COW SUMMARY

**% Dry cows** – This is the average daily percent of the total herd that was dry milking during the past year.

**Average days dry** – The average days dry before the

most recent calving for animals currently in the second and later lactation.

**% Cows with days dry less than 40** – The percent of cows with previous dry days with length less than 40 days. Research has indicated that cows that do not have at least a 40-day dry period produce significantly less milk in the following lactation.

**% Cows with days dry 40 - 70** – The proportion of cows with previous dry days between 40 and 70. This is the portion of cows that have the correct dry period. Good managers should exceed 80 percent in this category.

**% Cows with days dry more than 70** – The percent of the cows with previous dry days more than 70 days. These cows are profit robbers. Cows do not need dry periods this long. The cows are included in the rolling herd average contributing zero pounds of production per day.

## F. REPRODUCTION

**Average calving interval – months** – The average time between the current and previous calving date for animals in their second and later lactations. A long calving interval generally reflects poor reproductive herd health and/or a low level of herd management. It is an “after the fact” statistic indicating that a problem existed 1-2 years ago. A reasonable goal is to maintain a calving interval less than 14 months.

**Average open days** – The average open days is calculated beginning with the calving date and ending with the last reported breeding date for cows reported pregnant, or more than 90 days since the last reported breeding date. It is a prediction of the future calving interval. A value of 115 days open predicts a calving interval of 13.0 months. An average days open value greater than 145 may indicate a potential breeding problem.

**Days at 1st breeding** – The average number of days in milk at first breeding. This statistic is a good measure of: proficiency of heat detection, reproductive health following calving, and the length of the voluntary waiting period.

**% Cows open less than 100 days** – The percent of the cows assumed pregnant that were open less than 100 days. A reasonable goal for good managers is to exceed 35 percent of the cows open less than 100 days.

**% Cows open 100 – 130 days** – The percent of the cows assumed pregnant that were open between 100 and 130 days.

**% Cows open more than 130 days** – The percent of the cows assumed pregnant that were open between 100 and 130 days. A reasonable goal for good managers is to have less than 25 percent of the cows

open more than 130 days.

**Services per conception** – The average number of services per cow for cows assumed pregnant. This does not count services for cows that have not yet become pregnant or left the herd due to infertility. The normal range for Holsteins is 1.9 to 3.3 services.

**% 1st service** – The percent assumed pregnant of the cows that were only bred one time. The average value for all herds is 23 percent. Large herds have more difficulty maintaining above average values.

**% Pregnant** – This is the percent assumed pregnant of the cows currently in the herd. An achievable goal is 50 percent. However, if the herd has a seasonal calving pattern, the value can vary throughout the year.

## G. IDENTIFICATION

**% Usable ID** – This is the percent of cows that have enough identification to have records accepted by the USDA for genetic evaluation. Animals must be identified by eartag or registration number and have a known birth date and sire identification.

**% With sire ID** – This is the percent of the cows in the herd that are identified by sire.

**% With cow ID** – This is the percent of the cows in the herd that are identified by a uniform series eartag or registration number.