

“ Drug and semen savings cover three-fifths of the SCR system cost. DA-related savings – surgery, selling and replacement – cover the remainder. I’m confident it will pay for itself in 18 months. ”

Trent Bowman, Co-Owner, Bowman Dairy Farm



Bowman Dairy virtually eliminates DAs and synch program costs, with SCR ruminant and activity monitoring system

BACKGROUND

Bowman Dairy Farm, founded in 1958 by the parents of current owners Trent and Bennie Bowman, is today on a second lease of life. After milking stopped in 1984, the dairy operation was revived in 1996 when Trent rejoined his brother Bennie on the farm after many years away. Mindful of the challenges of supporting two families from a single farm, the brothers have invested in facilities and technologies to support and drive growth. After expanding the old barn and milking parlor themselves, saving crucial funds, the dairy quickly grew to 500 cows. Then, in 2006, the brothers bought their grandparents’ nearby farm, eventually adding 500 cows there.

CHALLENGES

Initially, breeding was done using the Bowmans’ 40-50 bulls, but they later instituted a fully synched AI operation. “With six groups of cows on two sites three miles apart, it was just too hard to watch enough to breed off standing heat,” recalls Trent Bowman. “But I was not pleased with the drug costs and results of the synch program.” In addition, the dairy was experiencing about nine DAs and culling or losing 4-5 cows a month, incurring considerable costs.



AT A GLANCE

Farm: Bowman Dairy Farm
Location: Hagerstown, IN
Herd size: 1,000 cows

Challenges

- Raise standing heat breeding rate; reduce costs of synchronization drugs and semen
- Improve early detection of health issues and reduce DAs
- Improve decision making on medical treatment and cow retention
- Reduce herd-wide calving interval

System

- SCR’s Heatime® HR Tag with rumination, heat detection and cow identification functionality

Benefits

- Standing heat-based AI now 82% vs. 2%
- Reproductive drug costs reduced by 75%
- Heat detection time reduced from 2 hours per day to 10 minutes
- Daily fresh cow protocol reduced from 1.5-2 hours to 30 minutes
- DA rate is down from 9 to 0.5 per month
- Cow losses down from 4-5 each month to 1 in 6 months



