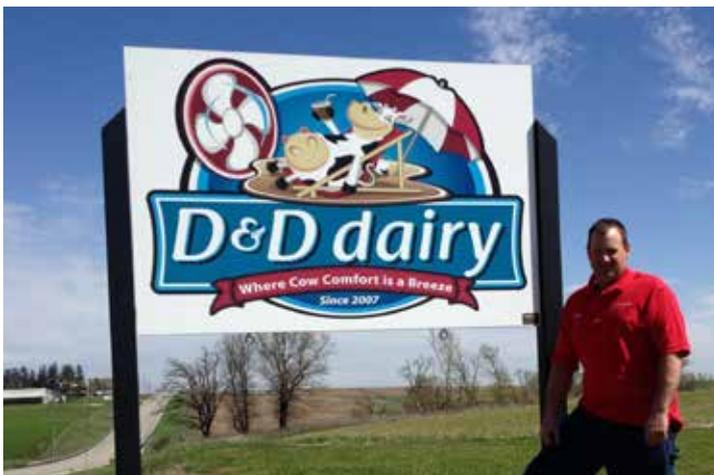# Rumination monitoring helps D&D to focus in on herd health and catch issues earlier then ever before

AT A GLANCE

- Farm established in 1973
- 1070 Milking and dry cows
- Equipped with SCR solutions for 1 year
- 650 HR-tags Heatime Pro System
- 32 % Reduction in Deaths, 28 % Reduction in culls due to mastitis
- Preg Rate before Heatime Pro was 21, currently running 26 since last July and 28 for the last 150 days
- A single point increase in pregnancy rate can increase income by as much as $15 per cow per year
- % preg by 100 days in milk has increased from 50% to 57%
- % preg by 150 days in milk has increased from 72% to 77%

"we will probably see a one year payback"
Dean Smith

Background

D&D Dairy, located in Rushford Minnesota, first began producing milk for the Smith family with a modest number of animals in 1973. Through the years the Dairy has continued to prosper and grow and in 2007 Dean Smith partnered with his brothers to usher in the next generation. Today, D&D Dairy milks over 1000 cows on two locations with all crops grown and harvested by members of the partnership.

Challenges

Dean was getting "frustrated with all the shots" that needed to be given in his herd for reproductive purposes. With all the different options for sync protocols and the varying results he was experiencing, Dean began looking for another way to manage the reproduction in his herd. The activity portion of the system was certainly what Dean was looking for to help reduce his Dairy's reliance on hormones. In addition, Dean states that "with the rumination we felt we would be able to catch the sick cows quicker."

SCR
Make every cow count

System

Jake Kempel, partner development manager for Semex, introduced Dean to the SCR Heatime system. D&D currently uses the SCR Heatime Pro system on both locations with 650 HR-tags to monitor cows beginning in the pre-fresh group and continuing until they are approximately 80 days pregnant.

The Heatime system setup is very flexible and customizable to any number of different configurations. This flexibility came in very handy at D&D, with two locations and the need to be able to access the information at both of these locations. From either location it is possible to see information about any animal in the herd.

Technology can have many benefits, but it needs to be managed and as Dean states "You need to have someone responsible for the system", for Dean that someone is his lead herdsman Cayetano. Cayetano works with the system daily, using Heatime to determine which animals need to be inseminated and also which animals should be checked for health concerns.

Benefits

The system has certainly addressed Dean's desire to reduce the use of synch shots in his Dairy, while improving reproductive performance. Many of the key performance indicators on the farm have been steadily improving since D&D began using the Heatime system. "Our preg rate has increased to 24 and will probably be up to 25 or 26 in the near future", stated Dean and "94% of the inseminations are from the system." In addition, since installing the system, an astounding 57% of the herd is pregnant by 100 days in milk and 77% percent by 150 days in milk.

The SCR system has become the sole source of heat detection on the farm. This brings with it a level of performance and consistency that is nearly impossible to attain when working with multiple sites and employees who all see things slightly differently. The results speak for themselves, "59% of our herd is pregnant", states Dean "this allows for better culling decisions, more pregnancies give me more flexibility in my decision making." It has also allowed the farm to choose which offspring they will raise. "We can now look at a cow with issues, somatic cell, feet, udder and say her genetics in our herd stops with her," Comments Dean.
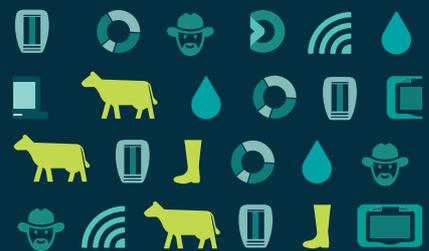
Furthering the benefits of the SCR system is the rumination component of the technology. Just as Dean had predicted, rumination has helped them to focus in on herd health and catch issues earlier than ever before. "I can look at the reports and see which cows I need to go check, this saves me a lot of time," States herdsman Cayetano. "...I love the system!"

The use of Heatime has helped D&D to more quickly and efficiently manage their fresh cows. Instead of taking the time to check every fresh cow individually, Cayetano can now use the reports to identify which animals need his attention. This not only improves efficiency, but also reduces lock up time and stress on the healthy individuals.

Originally Dean and his partners were a little concerned about the upfront cost of the system. How do they feel now, currently D&D has been using the system for 11 months, "we will probably see a one year payback", stated Dean.

ABOUT SCR

Building on over 35 years of meaningful innovation, SCR is the leading pioneer of Cow and Milking Intelligence. Monitoring millions of cows worldwide, our data-driven solutions are trusted by successful dairy farmers to deliver the insights and analytics needed to optimize the productivity of every cow. Improving efficiency and driving growth, we help to ensure a secure and prosperous future for their farms and families. SCR. Make every cow count.

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