

Tipps from 2014

December:

Requirements to Teatdip

It's December again and it can get colder so be extra alert when looking at the condition of the teats.

Cows don't like to be milked when they have sensitive and/or rough teats, especially when it's cold. Both the milking technique and spraying have enormous influence on it.

And it will give more problems with cold and humid weather.

Also make sure the teats are hit well with the spray and if whether your disinfectant spray also has sufficient "skin care".

Be sure to check other tips that have been placed on the site in previous years about what to do when it's cold outside.

November:

Performance Index

On the Delpro Management program you can find in the Reports in Default Rapports => Milking Info => Milking Performance.

The last column is called the Performance Index. This index indicates how well the VMS attaches the teat cups to the cow. Above the 100 is good and above the 130 is better, above 150 is best. Under the 100 is not so good. If you sort on this column you will immediately recognize the highest and lowest cows. A cow gets a 0 if you often manually attach the teat cups.

The "lowest" cow needs to be checked to see if there aren't

other attachment options or adjusting the milk permission can give improvements. You might need to teach the cow again...(see Tipp January 2014), it saves a lot of time and has big influence on robot's capacity.

A few columns to the left show the average of how long a cow spends time in the VMS. These 2 obviously have something to do with each other!

October:

Play with the big differences in grass silage quality

A lot of roughage has been harvested this year and again with very different qualities.

It was possible to mow very early this year, and especially the first cut had a lot of energy in it and a lot of crude protein.

But, especially if it's not really dry it is not good for the cow's rumen.

They simply cannot handle it!

This grass silage with her fantastic contents can only be used when you mix it with other types of silage, and there's been a lot of different silage harvested this year!

It will be better if you can dose special silages over a longer period of time for a year!

That is also with the grass you mow this fall, much crude protein, less energie and less tasty => less uptake!!

Discuss the feed rations well with your advisor, especially the distribution of it over the whole year if you (despite the top quality and large quantities of roughage) don't want to "fool around" for a few months at the end.

September:

The corn harvesting season is coming.

Although we all have quite a lot of experience with corn and corn harvesting, things quite frequently go wrong.

If the corn isn't harvested when it's ripe, you can get acidosis, which will always result in less milk. This means that if you have a VMS, where the cows go to voluntarily and the cow doesn't feel well, she won't go often.

So, does the milk production take a dive twice as much as in traditional milking.

It easily declines the visits with 0.2 – 0.5 visits per cow per day...

If you also have harvested short or wet grass silage and have the problem mentioned earlier, then you know that the food ration simply isn't to correct.

Also old corn silage can give rumen acidosis, so be cautious when feeding that to your cows.

Ripe, well chopped, right height and width associated with the feed-rate and sealing:

You decide a large part of your income in two days!

August:

Generator

Do you currently have a generator?

If so, when was the last time you tested it?

Storm and thunder season has arrived which means that the

power could fall out.

But even in our current networks something could occasionally go wrong and then you won't have any power.

That never works out well, certainly not with milking robots because they must run 24 hours a day!

July:

Disinfect before milking:

VMS not only offers the possibility of disinfecting after milking but also to spray, disinfect before.

This is illegal in the Netherlands because people are afraid of getting too much iodine in milk.

Most of the Mastitis Pathogens can be divided into contagious (they go via the skin or milk, **or flies(!)** from cow to cow) and contextual bacteria (in stalls, manure, straw, etc.).

Do you, for example, now en than have a cow with **E-Coli Mastitis** (contextually-related bacteria) then you should control or do the following;

- 1) clean resting boxes
- 2) clean barn, fresh, airy, etc.
- 3) Clean and disinfect the VMS arm several times a day with a hand spray with disinfection
- 4) Get "risky" cows to be sprayed, disinfected, before milking. Maybe in advance log in to your milking advisor if you are allowed to.

Disinfection before milking only works, or mainly does, with teat dips with sufficient and "fast" iodine like Pro-Active

and Tri-Fender.

Bacteria are simply everywhere:

It's an ongoing struggle to minimize their opportunities.

June:

Color of MDi line

To get down to the use of antibiotics you are having with DeLaval VMS clear advantage.

Not only because of the Milking Technology but also because of early reading problems.

De conductivity is measured accurately each milking session and per teat. All this information will be recorded in the Cow Monitoring. That way you can easily look back at the results and see if there is a new situation or it keeps occurring. You could also check to see the differences over the whole lactation or further history results of the cow when you have to treat or she has to be put dry, etc.

Especially the MDi over the past year, the lactation year, is very interesting to look back at. (See Tip of the Month: April 2013) The only problem is the color of the MDi line. The graph is unclear and gray. To fix this you will need to go the "Reports => "Customize graphs". After you search for "Conductivity and Blood Graph" "Total", double click on it, go to "Counter (udder). With "Series Color" you can choose a color that will stand out. Be sure to save all of your new settings.

Now look up an interesting cow in the Cow Monitoring, double click on it and search: "Yield, conductivity & Blood graph". Down under you will see the MDi line in its new color. If you select to see the graph over a period of 30 days or a year, the line will be much more obvious!

May:

Provide dosing speed of concentrate.

Under "Device" you can tell VMS how fast to give concentrate to the cow.

How fast she has to feed depends on how much you feed and how fast your cows are.

It is also important that the cow's visit to the VMS is pleasant as long as possible.

It's no fun when the chunk is already gone, while she is only being pretreated.

If you have a high base ration at the feed fence and feed the cow a maximum of 4-5 kg per day then give the VMS a Dispensing Rate of 0,30 kilograms per minute.

If you have a low base ration and the highest cows need 8 kg in VMS then you should keep a feeding rate of 0,45/0,50.

Note that the average cow eats about 0.40 kg per minute. So if you use 0,50 as Dispensing Rate, then you have to use the possibility for the individual cow to reduce the "Consumption Rate" when, for example, she gets just a little "attraction chunk".

The dosing of the feeding station should never actually be higher than 0,30 kg per minute.

April:

How long should a cow be put dry?

That depends on her condition, how much room she has or if she really needs to recover, etc.

Even more important, the cow has already to be treated towards

a good condition long before she goes dry and the hooves are taken good care of. The share of roughage/structure towards the end of a lactation is much more important than the amount of energy to be prepared the best to do the next lactation well and give more and longer milk.

So make an "attention list" of the cows which are allowed to be put dry over 100 days. Take a look how they are doing, what's their condition: should I change the ration, the concentration portions, or even Milk permission?

And which cows can be put dry next month: hoof trimming?

When put dry: how did it go this year with the production and conductivity, control is possible per teat, and the cell number? Which ones must I put dry with antibiotic or can the cow dry up without? (See Tip April 2013)

March:

Work routines

In The Netherlands you get a Logbook, a map, which you received at the start-up, and where the mechanics often put their visit-reports in.

In this logbook we put also a list "A few tips for good VMS usage" : At the bottom is an error number of your VMS region etc. This list is very important.

It is often shown at the start-up and used as a guide to learn the first steps in successfully use of your new milking robot => Read and watch carefully again, does it still match?

For who doesn't have this list (anymore), I have a digital copy called "Work routine", (supplemented with what I think is important too) (-:

Please email me.

February

Three teat set well?

With a three-teat milking cow the fourth teat will gradually dry up and will gradually be less easy for the robot (lasers) to be seen or the lasers will no longer distinguish the teat from the udder.

Especially with drying up front-teats it can be difficult because the robot uses its positions to find the back-teats. You will see the robot arm searching for a long time or even on the wrong place.

On the COWCARD in "VMS Settings" uncheck "existing teat" and it the machine will find the other three teats a whole lot easier!

2014 January:

Save teat positions

It will take about 3-10 seconds after the robot arm has grabbed a milking cup and attaches a teat. That's fine, nice and smooth and then the data from the teat positions are saved each time so that the VMS follows the changing udder and continues being smoothly connected.

If the time frame of the attachment exceeds 15 seconds, the teat positions will not correctly be saved because the positions aren't quite right. The disadvantage is that the next time the VMS will start looking for the same false positions.

Keep a close eye on the cows which take too long. With most

cows just teaching one more time is enough for it to work correctly again. For others, you may want to make use of the special teat settings, adjust Milking permission, or is it just a three teat cow?