GLENN'S UDDERINGS

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Herd Reproductive Summary

In my last column, I discussed volunteer waiting periods (VWP) and how they can be used as targets for getting cows bred early enough to achieve your desired calving interval. I also mentioned that if you wanted to achieve a 12.5-month calvin interval, average days oepn would have to be around 100.

If you average 2 services per conception, days to first service would have to be 21 days less, or about 79, that is if you didn't miss any heats. If your heat detection rate is around 50-60 percent, deduct another 8-10 days. That brings you back to 70 days. And, to end up with an average of 70 days to first service, you'll have to start breeding cows 60 days after calving because some cows will come into heat on the 61st day and others won't be in heat until the 81st day (average of 70 days) depending on their heat cycles.

What are your goals and how well are you doing? How do the younger cows compare with the older cows? What are the average days between heats or between services and how successful are you in detecting heats? What percentage of your herd are repeat breeders?

The Penna. DHIA Herd Summary Report II and the Raleigh DHIA Herd Summary Report can help you answer these questions. The average for Lancaster County herds in May is shown on the Raleigh report in table 1.

(Table 1)

REPRODUCTIVE SUMMARY OF TOTAL HERD

	DAYS OPEN AT 1ST SERVICE: NUMBER FEWER THAN VWP	NUMBER FROM VWP TO 100 DAYS	NUMBER OVER 100 DAYS	AV. DAYS TO 1ST SERVICE	SERVICES PER PREGNANCY: PREG COWS	ALL COWS	PROJECTED MINIMUM: CALVING INTERVAL	DAYS OPEN
1ST LACT	3	8	5	93	1.8	2.2	13.6	133
2ND LACT	2	6	3	90	1.8	2.3	13.4	128
3 + LACTS	3	9	5	90	1.9	2.4	13.5	131
ALL LACTS	7	24	12	92	1.9	2.3	13.5	131
% OF ALL 1ST SERVICES	16	56	28					

SERVICE OR HEAT INTERVALS: INTERVAL LENGTH	NUMBER INTERVALS
18-24	11
36-48	7
OTHER	19

SERVICES FOR PAST 12 MONTHS: SERVICE NUMBER	NUMBER SERVICES	% SUCCESSFUL	SERVICE SIRE PTA $
1ST	47	48	218
2ND	23	51	216
3RD +	20	49	208
TOTAL	92	48	216

ABORTIONS(PAST YEAR)= 2

The performance of 1st lactation heifers to 2nd lactation and older cows were very similar. Average days to first service for all cows was 92. This is about 1 heat period more than the 70 days I discussed earlier in the second paragraph; and it lengthened their projected calving interval by about 1 month, to an average of 13.5 months.

This is the projected minimum calving interval, based upon days open which is currently averaging 131. If breeding problems persist, days open will continue to increase and projected calving intervals will get longer. If you have a seasonal-calving herd, this could throw you out of cycle and affect your milk base. For this reason, it may be beneficial to have cows calving somewhat uniformly throughout the year. That way, as one group of cows moves out of the base building period due to breeding problems, another group slips into their spot and you will still be able to build a base.

Why are these cows averaging over 130 days open? If we look at table 1, we can see that 28 percent of the cows are not serviced for the first time until after 100 days! Some questions to ask are: were heats being missed? Were these cows not being bred intentionally, because they lacked sufficient flesh, they were milking too much, or it was too hot to expect them to conceive? Were they potential culls to be milked off and sold with no intention of ever being bred?

Another problem that can stretch out days open is repeat

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