

What Flag Is Flying Over Your Dairy?

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Perry Co. Dairy Agent

NEW BLOOMFIELD (Perry Co.) If you have watched a car race for any length of time, you know that no one is more important to the race than the flagman in the tower. His job is to monitor the track for problems and if a problem develops, he

has to fly a different colored flag to let the drivers know that a problem exists ahead. The driver depends on the flagman to warn him of problems, because he is concentrating so hard on "the windshield view" — the challenges that are directly in front of him.

What view do you have in managing your dairy? Do you

have the "long view" of the flagman, or do you operate week after week with the short-sighted "windshield view" of the driver?

The flagman at a race is looking for situations that are very apparent — accidents, breakdowns, etc. As the "flagman" for your dairy, what you need to look for may not be so obvious.

Milk Components-
True Protein % = 82-88%
Milkfat %
Monitoring these factors will help to assure that the green flag continues to fly over your dairy — and that the race for producing quality milk in a profitable manner

continues in your business. If you would like to discuss these or other critical profit indicators of your dairy, please feel free to call your county cooperative extension office to talk to a dairy extension agent.

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Following are some items that will help you to measure whether the "race" is running well at your dairy. These factors are related directly to your profitability, and can signal some hidden problems with your nutritional program.

Your nutritional consultant should be monitoring these control points with you every month. If they are not doing this, I encourage you to start tracking these indicators.

Peak Milk-
In first lactation Holsteins — should be higher than 85 pounds.

In 2nd lactation and older Holstein — should be higher than 105 pounds.

Remember the old rule- for each extra one pound of milk at peak, you get 250 pounds more milk during the lactation (this is without bST).

Persistency-
1st calf heifers — lactations should be at 95 percent persistency.

From the 1st to the 2nd test, the herd should average 110 percent persistency.

All cows in the first 100 days should average 100 percent persistency.

Udder Health-
70 percent of your herd should have a weighted SCC score of three or less.

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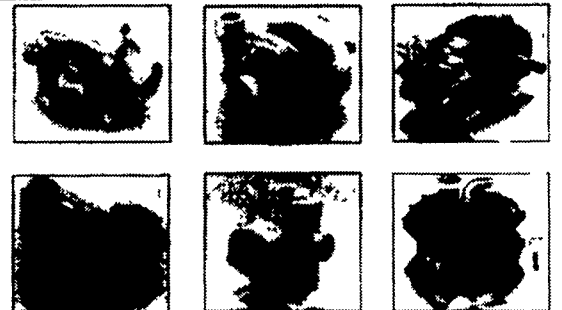
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