

Purina EXT Nuggets Turn Conception Rates Around At Woodedge Farm



Rod Kauffman, right, has seen his herd double its conception rates over the past year on Purina EXT. Joining Kauffman is Purina representative Gerald Burket.

Two years ago, Rod Kauffman was having a lot of trouble breeding cows in his Holstein herd at Woodedge Farm.

He tried to remedy the problem by switching to a new feed company to provide better energy supplements. But nine months later, the herd's reproductive performance was still poor.



Startena gets calves off to a good start on Woodedge Farm.

It wasn't until Kauffman switched to Purina EXT Nuggets a year ago that the conception rates began to turn around. Now they stand at roughly double last year's level.

"Conception rates have really improved a lot," said Kauffman, pointing out DHIA figures for overall success rate of 15-20 percent a year ago compared to 35-40 percent today.

Kauffman manages a 65-cow tiestall operation near Reedsville, Mifflin County, along with his wife Gloria and children, Dustin, 15; Ashlee, 13; and Eric, 11. They grow their own alfalfa and high moisture corn on the 115-acre home farm.

Kauffman and his father Leroy have long relied on Purina Nurse Grow 100 milk replacer and Startena to grow healthy calves. Now, they are also sold on the EXT nugget concentrate to give their cows the energy they need to be bred back in a timely manner.

"EXT is an extremely high-energy product," said Gerald Burket, dairy specialist and the Kauffman's Purina representative. "The nuggets have been tremendous."

In addition to the boost in reproductive performance, the Kauffman's herd has also seen an increase in production with Purina. April herd average this year is 25,600 pounds of milk, 916 of fat, and 773 of protein. April a year ago, the average stood at 23,455 of milk.

Kauffman is pleased with the service he gets from Burket, who visits the farm every other week to balance the rations.

Both of them—farmer and feedman—keep a real close eye on dry matter intake, Burket said.

With a Purina program in place for the milking cows, the Kauffmans have had their confidence restored in the Woodedge herd, which boasts five 88-point cows in the barn today. Two of them are granddaughters of the late Woodedge Mark Pasta, an Excellent-91 5E matriarch bred on the farm.

The Kauffman's management program includes a focus on longevity, foot and leg health, and cow comfort. Evidence is provided by a number of aged cows in the herd, including one 11-year-old.

At the Kauffman's, Purina is clearly a key part of overall good management.

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