



Setting Goals to Improve Breeding Strategies

William M. Graves, Extension Dairy Scientist

Problem identification is the first step in establishing objectives and goals to improve reproductive management in a dairy herd. Management is determining what must be done and achieving results through the efforts of yourself and your employees.

Use the following worksheet to evaluate herd reproductive performance and set goals to improve your breeding strategies. Then develop a tactical plan to achieve these goals using the second worksheet. List those involved on your management team and their responsibilities. Include your extension agent, veterinarian and other consultants.

Herd Summary Reproductive Management Worksheet

Name: _____ Herd Code: _____

Using your herd's DHI information, identify the following:

	Your Herd	Southeast Average	Goal
Preg Rate Current		12.4	> 20
Actual Calving Interval		14.4	< 13.5
Days to First Service		105	85
First Service Conception Rate		49	> 55
% Bred to Proven Bulls		61	> 85
% Bred Non-AI		35	< 15
% Heifers with Sire ID		79	100
% Birth Difficulty		5.5	< 5
# Calves per 100 Calves		84	> 90
% Left Herd for Repro		6.1	< 6.5
SCC Score		3.5	< 3
% Dry < 40 Days		15	< 10
% Dry > 70 Days		31	< 20

Next, you need a plan. Use the following form to better define your goals. Tasks should be precise and itemized for each plan of action. Tasks describe exactly who, what, when, where and how activities will take place in order to accomplish each goal.

Finally, remember that re-training is essential. Your goals should be important to the overall breeding strategies of the operation. Assign the right person to each task. Consider a pay incentive for completing each task or accomplishing each goal. With your plan, make sure you know what is going to be measured, who is going to do it, when it should be done and how you are going to know things are better.

Goal	What task or activities are to be done?	Who is responsible?	How and/or where should the task be done?	When to perform task or activity (deadline, frequency, under what conditions)?

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