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## **Milk recording in the service of herd improvement, quality milk production and herd management in Hungary**

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Dairy herd recording has 88 years of tradition in Hungary.

In harmony with the supervisor and control organisations of the Hungarian cattle breeders and according to the Breeding Law enacted, the country-wide company network with seventeen Regional Centres of Livestock Performance Testing Ltd., has initial data for almost 860 dairy herds with 270 000 cows and their offsprings (66% of the dairy cattle population) to record of herds, and are equipped to provide regular and instant information on cow status and yields by monthly contact for herds as the company's own service.

Another one of our services is to provide regular monthly information via the National Database according to the regulation in the Codex of Cattle Performance Tests.

The regular services for assisting selection are described in bi-lateral information service contracts between the Company and the owners of recorded herds.

There is an additional contract with conditions of surplus information service assisting quality milk production by regular Somatic Cell Count tests. This service has already been required by 95% of registered herds and this rate is still increasing.

More and more herds intend to use our recently introduced "Udder Care" service with extended use of SCC test results and advisory programme. The development of an extension project for urea test and a feed monitoring programme was also introduced in 250 herds.

New information services have recently been introduced, namely: an information service for assisting reproduction biology and AI activity in recorded herds and two versions of an "Economic Breeding" System: One is for herds not having on-farm PCs and a more advanced version developed for herds having their own PC.

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## **1. Information services**

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### **1.1 Services via the company network of Livestock Performance Testing Ltd.**

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#### *1.1.1 Data collection and tests of data*

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#### *1.1.2 Herd Recording Information Service*

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The monthly managed data collection and data tests (in-built error-check), need no paper.

The forms and contents of former "input-sheets" now used in the PCs of regional centres and fist computers (hand-held data captors) of herd recording staff are identical to the standards used in the database.

The schedule of recording data of herds with planned error correction and data transfer to the central computer of the database, provides predictably fast output return to the herds.

After the monthly test day is completed during the preparation of data supply for the database, the fast information service is ready for the herds, according to the equipment of herds available:

A) Right after the test day ends:

- the barn-book can be completed with the cow survey, their status and milk yields, if there is a printer or an on-herd computer available;
- the instant transfer of milk yield data from data-captor to the on-herd computer may take place.

B) After milk samples are tested in the central laboratory for fat, protein, somatic cell and urea content, the test data are transferred back overnight on the PC > FAX-MODEM > PC of the Regional Centre and the following services are completed (2-7 days after the test-day) by the regional centres and sent to the herds:

- the barn-book is completed with data of milk components;
- the individual cow survey is completed with somatic cell count data and tables for drafting cows according to milk quality classes.

The following services are on floppy disk for contracted partners when requested:

- individual cow sample test for *urea*;
- a unique service for those partners who have compatible modem contact to get complete information service back as fast as 2-4 days after test-day.

The “SAMPLE TEST EQUIPMENT > CENTRAL PC > FAX-MODEM > PC of REGIONAL CENTRES” System of Livestock Performance Testing Ltd., was installed two years ago. Since then this system has made its own information service more effective and faster.

- 3.1 Monthly reports based on S.C.C. tests.
- 3.2 Feeding monitor information monthly reports based on urea tests.
- 3.3 Reproduction biology reports.
- 3.4 Information service and extended service for dairy herds udder care programme.
- 3.5 “Breeding Economy” projects.

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*1.1.3 Herd  
Management and  
Extension  
Information Service*

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The official dairy herd recording has a large database, information about the “history” of individual cow performance and lactations in progress can only come from the archive database. The data flow from the regional centres of Livestock Performance Testing Ltd. is obviously aimed at the central database and the following information service is sourced in the database.

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**1.2 Services via  
the central  
database**

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1. Monthly services:
  - monthly herd report;
  - list of cows with completed lactations;
  - individual cow charts with ancestors, yields and offsprings.

The monthly services processed in the database reach the herds 15-25 days after the test days or rather 10-15 days after the data sent for processing.

2. Periodical services:
  - yearly herd surveys of the cows with completed standard lactation;
  - yearly surveys of all the cows with various status.

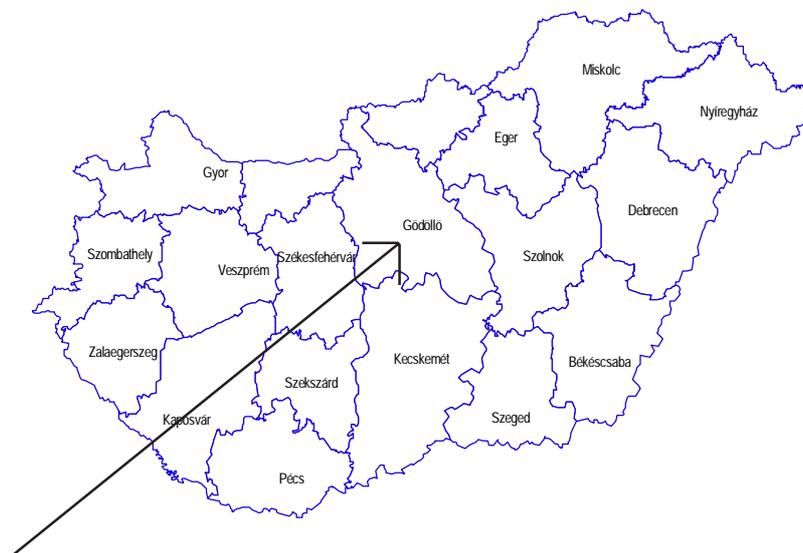
The services provided by regular milk recording are developed mainly for genetic improvement, but increasingly herds as contracted partners of the Livestock Performance Testing Ltd., join in the quality milk production oriented programme and benefit from regular somatic cell count tests and other management information (e.g. urea test and monitoring of herd feeding regimes; reproductive status of herds and cows; advisory information for herds to manage breeding and milk production economically). There is on-going development in the milk-sample-test central laboratory to measure keton-body which will help the extension of information services and advisory activity.

The activities and services have been introduced to show the status and situation achieved mainly in large herds controlled by method “A”.

In order to extend milk recording to the herds of small-holders by the first quarter of this year, we began to introduce method “B” in most of the nineteen counties of Hungary.

The potential benefits of this activity in the long-term, will be the improved and regular information service for about 55 000 breeders and the active population can be enlarged by about 130 000 milk-recorded cows.

*Figure 1. Regional Centres of our company.*



*Gödöllő, July 1998.*

Figure 2. Dairy herd recording in the structure of the Hungarian cattle breeding organisation.

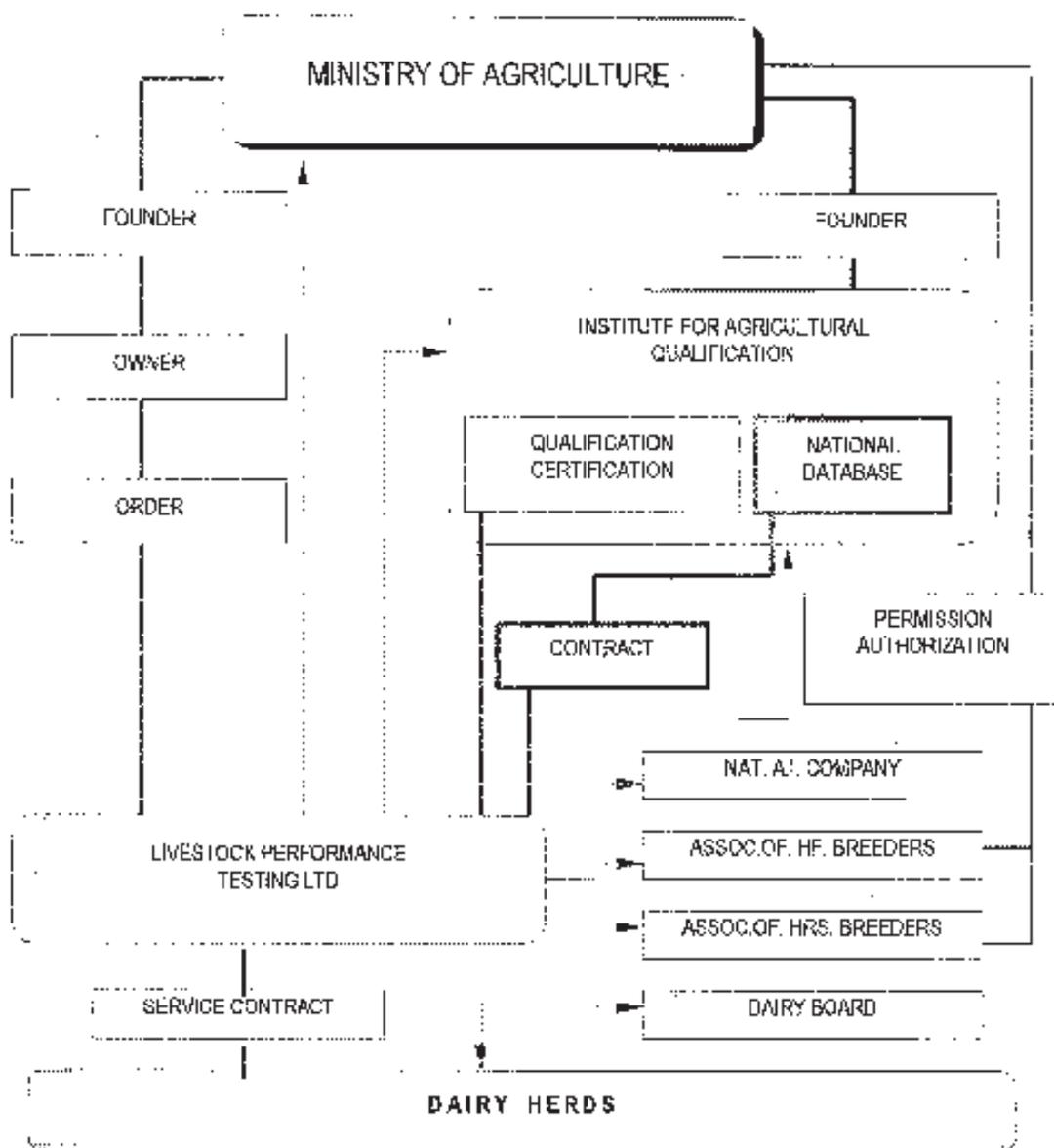


Figure 3. Service activities of AT KFT (Livestock Performance Testing Ltd.) in the data and information flow provided for the recorded dairy herds.

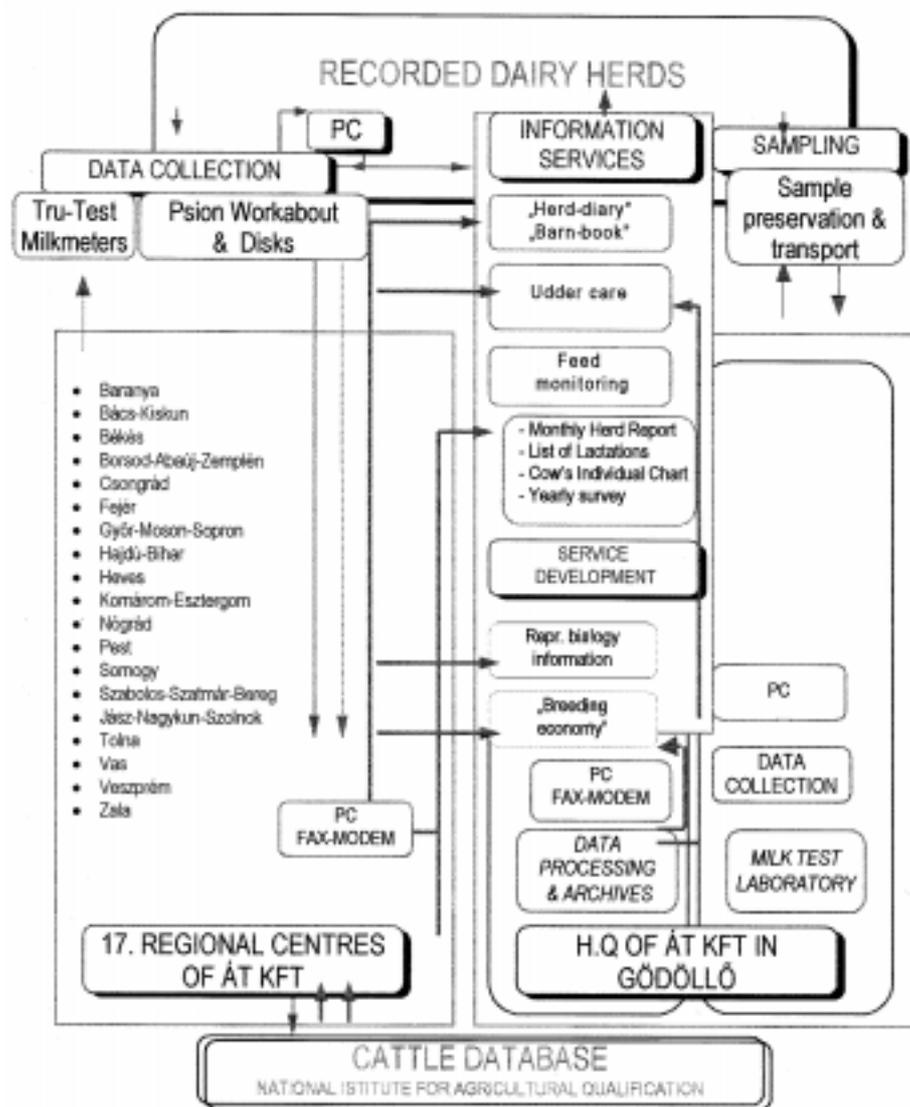


Figure 4. Flow-chart of data capture and process in dairy herd recording.

