



Strategic udder health monitoring and benchmarking based on national SCC data in Germany

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Udder health still is one of the most problematic areas in dairying, although a lot of efforts have been spent over the last fifty years to improve the situation. As udder health management is a complex task, depending on a multitude of influencing factors, a strategic approach is needed to effectively control the situation, both on single farm level and on a population or national level. In any case reliable, standardized and globally available data are needed to facilitate strategic approaches, whatever the relevant management level may be.

In Germany a new udder health monitoring report, based on SCC data from the national DHI system, has been introduced in 2015. For this report six new key figures are being computed and summarized to help the farmer keeping an objective eye on important risk factors in the life of his dairy cows. These key figures show the proportion of cows with healthy udders in the herd, the new infection rate during lactation, chronically ill cows with poor prognosis, the new infection rate and the cure rate during dry period as well as the rate of heifer mastitis in the herd.

These key figures are presented for the herd level, for the regional and the national level to facilitate benchmarking as a management tool. Fact sheets and checklists, developed in the same frame of *milchQplus* (www.milchqplus.de), a national project funded by the Federal Ministry for Food and Agriculture and DLQ e.V., the national umbrella association of all regional DHI organizations, support the dairy farmers and advisors in identifying the relevant influencing factors and selecting the right measures and actions to be taken.

Keywords: Udder health, strategic management, monitoring, benchmarking, SCC data, key figures, milchQplus, DLQ.

Summary

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