

Two Years' Experience in Use of the Transition Cow Index® as a Tool to Improve Dairy Herd Management

Richard La Croix
AgSource Cooperative Services
20 June 2008



The Transition Cow Index® (TCI™)



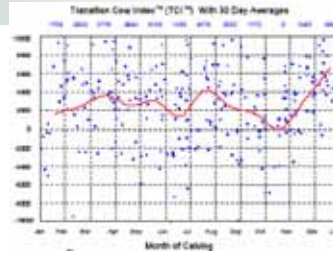
- Based on University of Wisconsin Research
- Introduced in January 2006
- An innovative measure of transition period performance in the dairy herd
- Utilizes extensive data from records database
- Our most successful new product introduction
- Research since then has further confirmed its value to producers

2008 © CRI



What is TCI?

- An objective measure of the effectiveness of transition period management in the dairy herd
- TCI takes a cow's ending 305 day production from the previous lactation
- Ending 305 is adjusted using TCI variables to predict "Expected Production" for next lactation



2008 © CRI



What is TCI?

- The cow freshens, the first test (5-40 DIM) is recorded and a "Projected Production" is calculated for that lactation
- Projected Production *minus* Expected Production *equals* her Transition Cow Index
- The cumulative value of all individual TCI's for cows calving within a defined period allows herd trends in transition cow management to be measured



2008 © CRI



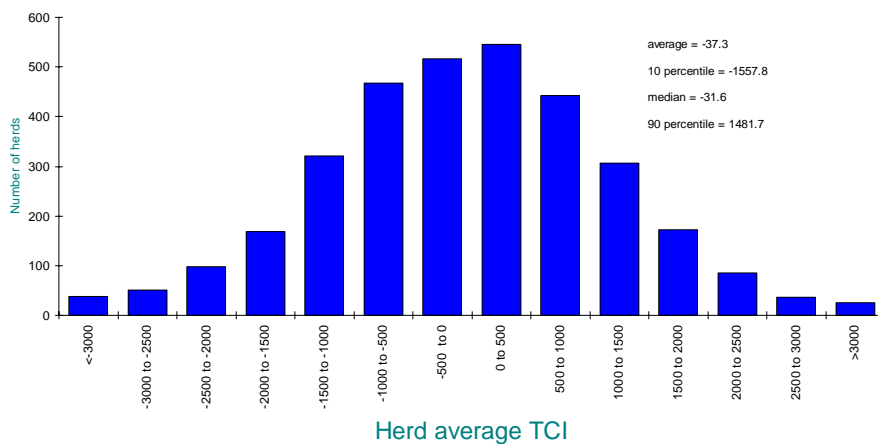
Factors used in final TCI equation

- Days in milk at first test
- Previous 305-day milk
- Days in milk in prior lactation
- Start of current lactation as calving or abortion
- Start of prior lactation as calving or abortion
- Month of calving
- SCC log score at last test of prior lactation
- Days dry
- Milking frequency current lactation
- Milking frequency prior lactation
- Parity number
- Breed
- rBST use at herd level

2008 © CRI



Distribution of Herd Average TCI



2008 © CRI



What we have learned since release of TCI...

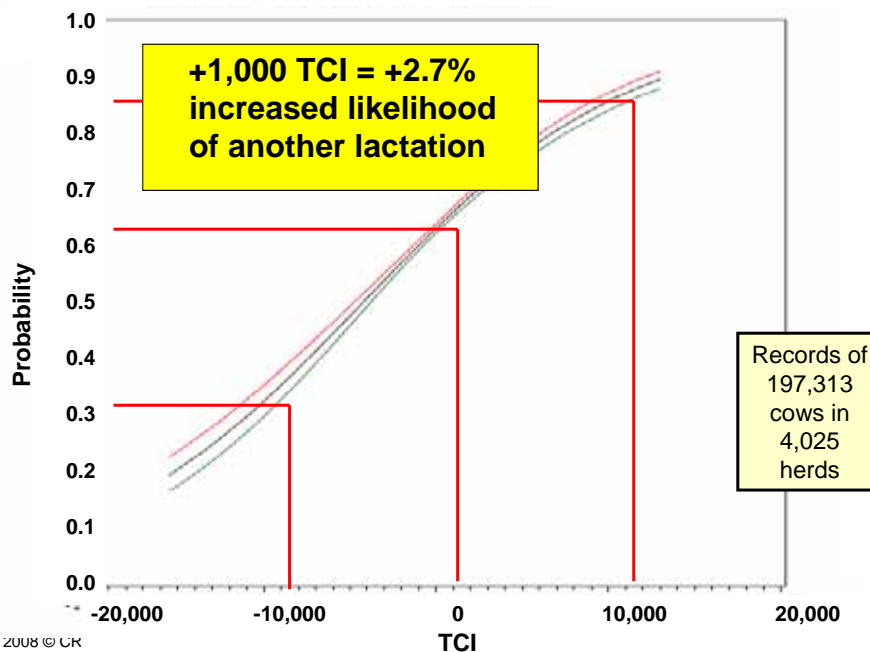
- The addition of previously excluded cows (e.g. culls, sick, etc.) has significantly improved precision of index.
- Positive correlation between TCI and survival to the next lactation...



2008 © CRI



Association of TCI with survival to next lactation



What we have learned since release of TCI...

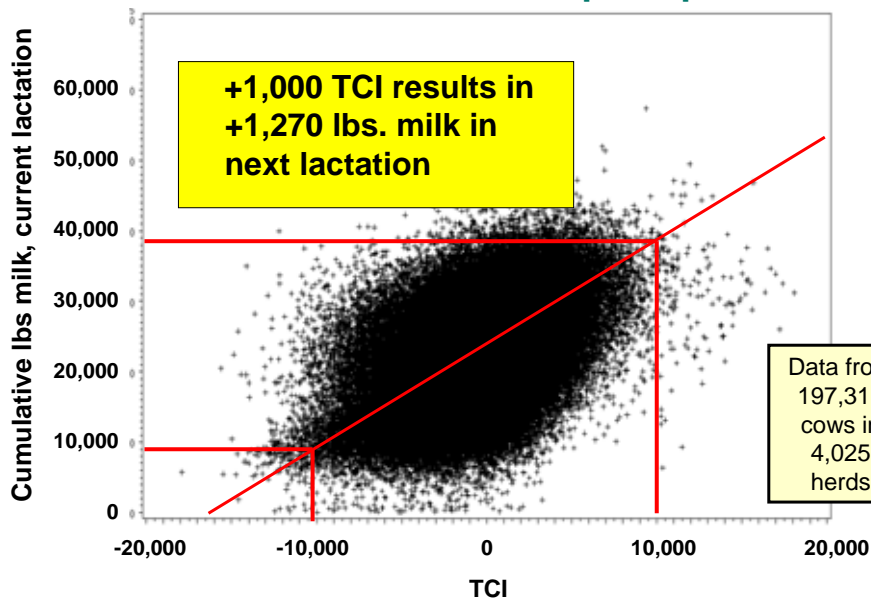


- Research using TCI is producing valuable information on optimum stall size and feed bunk space.
- Positive correlation between TCI and increased production in the next lactation...

2008 © CRI



Association of TCI with subsequent production



200

Take-home point...

+ 1,000 lbs. TCI
= US \$250 per cow

2008 © CRI



“We have a 28,000 RHA and thought we were doing things pretty well. Then, **AgSource's Fresh Cow Summary** pointed out some holes in our transition and fresh cow management. As a result, we are working on reducing our dry pen overcrowding and how often we move close-up and fresh cows into different groups. This report is helping take our profits to the next level without adding cows.”

– Chuck Ripp, AgSource Member

Contact AgSource today to take your Fresh Cow Management to the next level!



AgSource
Cooperative Services
A subsidiary of Cooperative Resources International
Phone 800/236-0097 • www.agsource.com

2008 © CRI

Distribution...

- TCI is used by herds with over 30 percent of AgSource recorded cows
 - 62 percent of herds with more than 300 cows
- Comprehensive education for DHI field staff, veterinarians, consultants, and dairy producers
- Serving as an effective management tool, AND an effective basis to measure impact of transition period management variables
- Available through AgSource or as sublicense

2008 © CRI



For More Information:

- www.agsource.com
- rlacroix@agsource.com

Thank you!

2008 © CRI

