

Abstract by Steven Sievert - Using farm-based software for routine monitoring of milking system performance and validation of the data acceptability for use in herd recording programs

Herd recording programs have traditionally relied on the use of third-party owned weighing devices for collection of milk weights and samples. As dairies continue to invest in technology, including milking systems with on-farm meters and samplers, herd recording organizations have moved towards using farmer-owned devices for data collection. While periodic meter water test calibration is one option for verifying meter accuracy, it may be both cost- and time-prohibitive and does not provide on-going monitoring of the milking system. The use of computerized software solutions can provide the recording organization with an assurance of accuracy of data collected, and provide the dairy with tools for monitoring system performance on a routine (i.e. daily, weekly, etc.) basis. There are limitations to the farm-based software programs; however the benefits to both the dairy and the herd recording organization outweigh these limitations. These benefits include a higher level of confidence in data validity, increased value of recording programs and services to the dairy, and the integration of farmer-owned equipment and software into a modern data collection system.