

Reproductive Progress

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The scorecard for Ontario is out. CanWest DHI has released their 2018 Reproduction Benchmarks.

Pregnancy rate for the 50th, 75th and 90th percentile for Ontario remain unchanged from 2017. The results are 15, 19 and 22 for the 50th, 75 and 90th percentiles. So not bad news, but we did not gain this year. How do you rank? How do you rank by herd size?

If CanWest herds in Ontario and all provinces west are pooled together and then stratified by size, a trend is obvious. The larger herds are doing better. The 75th percentile for pregnancy risk for herds between 51-100 cows, 101-150 cows, 151-300 cows and 301 and greater cows are 18, 20, 21, 23 respectively. Interestingly the conception rate for these herds are 45, 46, 45, 42 at the 75th percentile while their insemination rates are 49, 51, 54, 60 at the 75 percentile. Conception rates are steady but insemination rates increase a lot with increasing herd size!!!

So which benchmark do you wish to use to measure against:

- The province
- The herds of your similar size
- Against yourself from previous years
- Herds from your advisor.

So which level of benchmark do you wish to measure against:

- Province median
- 75th or 90th percentile.

With your advisors you can pick the appropriate metric to match your farm goals.

If you are not attaining these goals where do we go? How do I find the bottleneck? A good pregnancy risk is the result of good insemination rates and good conception rates. Both sides of the equation need to be checked but today we will focus on insemination rates.

At the 2nd Michigan Dairy Health Symposium held at Michigan State University on March 6th 2019, a few simple rules to ensure a good insemination rate were presented.

First, ensure all cows receive their first insemination no later than 90 days in milk. To accomplish this you may wish to use a timed artificial insemination (TAI) to make sure we achieve this goal.

Second, all cows should be checked in a timely manner, ideally no later than 35 days after breeding. This may be difficult to do depending on the frequency of your herd visits. A common version of this second point is, as you are more likely to find more open cows we should consider checking more often, if the likelihood of finding open cows are low then the need to check more often or at 35 days or lower is lessened.

Third, all cows diagnosed open at pregnancy check need to be rebred in a timely manner, no more than 21 days after preg check. If you check after 35 days then the time to rebreed should be less to keep the insemination rate acceptable.

Fourth, when pregnancy checking as suggested we need to recheck these cows for pregnancy roughly one month later.

These four simple rules will ensure we have a good insemination rate.

Dairy advisors can help you double check your farm results to make sure we are achieving your farm goals. The four simple rules will help guide you and your advisors to a good insemination rate.