



A Problem Shared...

A collaborative approach to lameness

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Overview

- Tackling lameness is hard
- Many different...
 - Causes
 - Solutions
 - Opinions!
 - Barriers to change
- It takes time
- There is no single right way to approach it... or to talk about it



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Let's talk... but how?

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Different Methods of Knowledge Exchange

- Individual
- One to one: Adviser to producer
- One to all: Adviser to the whole farm team
- Peer to peer learning

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European Innovation Programme Project



- Explore how different methods of knowledge exchange influenced:
 - Perception
 - Knowledge
 - Behaviour
 and how this was related to changes in prevalence
- Pilot two new methods of knowledge exchange:
 - Healthy Feet Programme
 - Farmer Led Action Groups



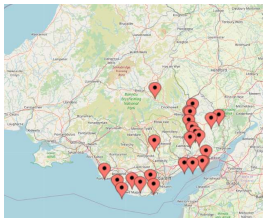
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Farm Overview



- 24 farms
- 5,422 cows
- Varied systems
 - Breeds
 - Calving pattern
 - Milking frequency
- Average 9,104 litres/cow/year
 - Range: 3,500-11,500 litres
- Total milk sold per year: 54.8million litres




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Impact on the Farmer: Start



Target for lameness:
0-5%

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Ways of team working



- Within the farm team
- Peer to peer learning/support

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The Farm Team

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The Foot Health Team

- Who's at the table?
- Are you all on the same page?
- Is everyone clear of their role?
- How often do you meet?
- How do you communicate?
- What's the goal?



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Team Work: Making it work

1. Establishing communication
2. Data analysis to drive decisions
3. Action planning

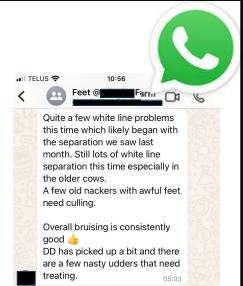


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1. Communication

- Needs to enable quick, easy and convenient sharing of information
- Everyone 'in the loop'
- Maintains momentum between hoof trimmer visits
- Feedback



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2. Data driven decisions

- Hoof trimmer data is invaluable
 - Identifies main challenge on farm
 - Gives economic insight
 - Monitors response to change or challenge

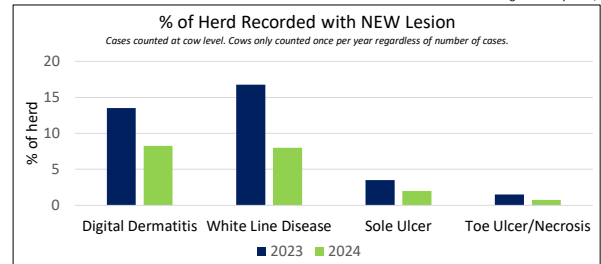


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Monitoring Progress

400 Holstein Cows
Autumn block calving herd
Grazing 8 months of year
Average annual yield 9,500L

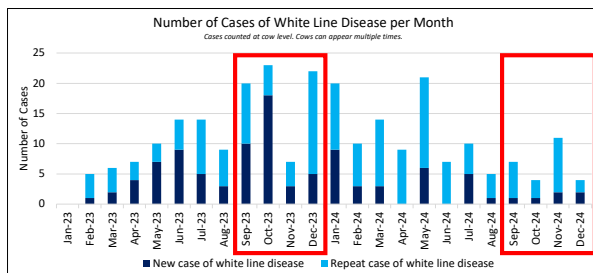


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Identifying Challenge Periods

400 Holstein Cows
Autumn block calving herd
Grazing 8 months of year
Average annual yield 9,500L

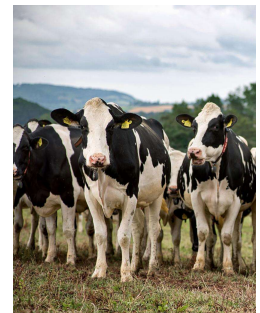


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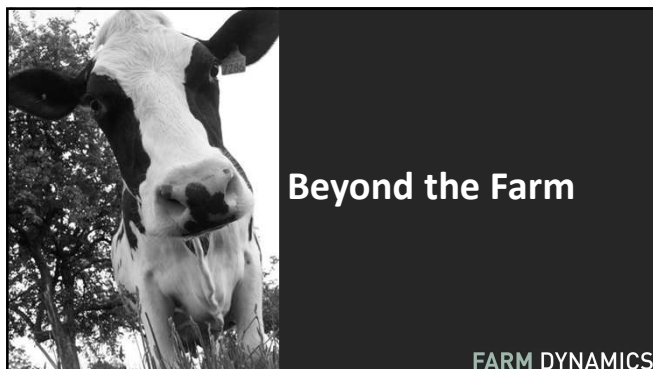
3. Action Planning

- Need a plan with whole team buy in
- Facilitate it with the team
 - What's working well
 - What's not going well
 - What can we do?



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Beyond the farm: A different level of collaboration

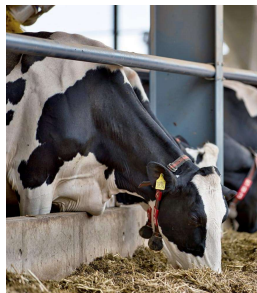
- It's often not the 'what' but the 'how'
 - Producer collaboration especially valuable
- Ways of working:
 - Sharing/benchmarking of data
 - Face to face action groups
 - Combination of these



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1. Benchmarking Data

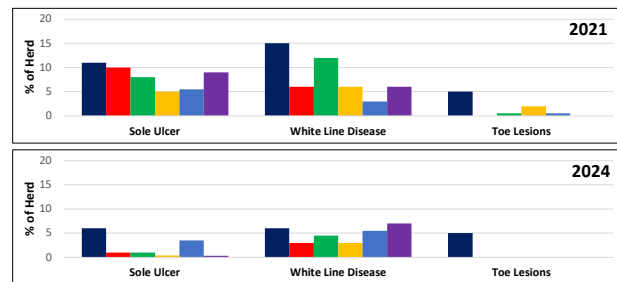
- Motivating
- Drives engagement
- Validates actions
- Provides reassurance
- Identifies common challenges



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1. Benchmarking Data



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2. Farmer Led Action Groups

- Based on the Danish Stable School approach
 - Common learning
- Focused purely on foot health
- 6-8 farmers in each group
- No advisory input, no 'expert' during meetings
- So successful continued and expanded as part of Agrisgôp action learning groups



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2. Farmer Led Action Groups

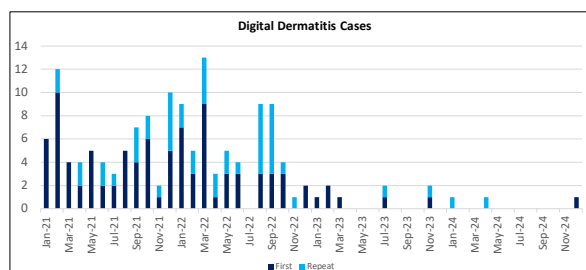
- Two hour meetings (11am-1pm)
- Every 6-8 weeks
- Each farm hosted during an annual cycle
- Focus on peer-to-peer learning
- Identify successes and challenges as focal points for discussion
- Farm walk followed by facilitated discussion around a table – action plan



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2. Farmer Led Action Groups



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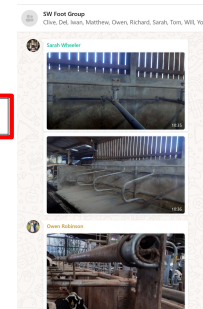
2. Ongoing Interaction

Agrisgôp Group 3 Meeting 5

Raise neck rail height using rail lifters so it is 122cm from the cubicle bed and 178cm horizontally from the kerb

22nd February 2024

Aim	Action
Improve consistency of digital dermatitis control	Install automatic hoofcount Excel footbath at bottom of race; soak quite
Reduce pooling of water	Create narrow drainage channel to enable flow of water into slats (potentially tie in with grooming)
Improve tracks	Try concrete sleepers on bottom section. Use sand underneath to stabilise and asphalt on top.
Improve cubicle comfort	Ensure it is as shallow as possible.
Improve grip at back of parlour	Raise neck rail height using rail lifters so it is 122cm from the cubicle bed and 178cm horizontally from the kerb
Stop dry cows going through cubicles	Check height of cantilever loop
	Groom area with Acroprep
	Place ratchet strap at front of dry cow cubicles to stop cows walking through. Place at eye level of lying cow.



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2. Ongoing Interaction

Agrislop Group 2: Meeting 5



ACTION PLAN

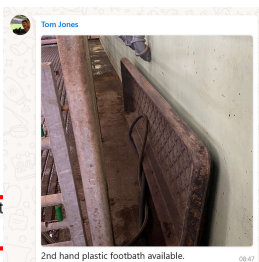
Tom @ Hackett Farm

22nd February 2024

Aim	Action
Improve consistency of digital dermatitis control	Install automatic Hoofcount Excel footbath at bottom of race; seek quote
Reduce pooling of	Create narrow drainage channel to enable flow of water into slats

Install automatic Hoofcount Excel footbath at seek quote

comfort	cubicle bed and 175cm horizontally from the kerb
	Check height of lameness strip
	Groove area with Accugroove
Improve grip at back of parlour	
Stop dry cows going through cubicles	Place ratchet strip at front of dry cow cubicles to stop cows walking through. Place at eye level of lying cow.



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Taking it one step further... school trip!



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Conclusions

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Conclusions

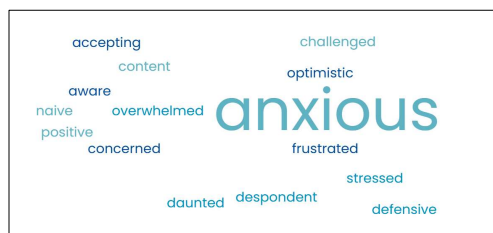
- No one size fits all
 - Solving lameness
 - Talking about lameness
- Collaboration is key
 - Within farm or between farms



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Impact on the Farmer: Start

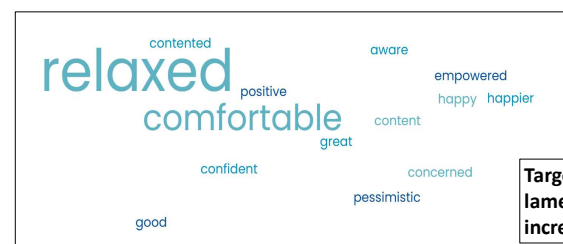


Target for lameness: 0-5%

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Impact on the Farmer: End



Target for lameness increased!

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Thank you!

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