

Breeding Records

For herd records to be effective there must be a system in place for recording data in an efficient and routine manner. Whether the records are written in a binder or stored in a computer, the system must be easy to manage and records must be kept up to date.

A thorough herd history should include reproductive and health records for the herd and individuals. This will improve management efficiency as you will have all the necessary information when it comes time to make decisions about nutrition, housing, milking practices and culling.

A complete set of records should include the following:

- dry dates, including any treatments that were given;
- calving dates also indicating ease of birth;
- insemination records for culling decisions when dealing with repeat breedings;
- semen straw information: name of bull, freezing date, registration numbers;
- disorders and treatments;
- daily milk yields;
- herd health check lists to keep an eye on problem cows or heifers, and;
- a record of changes: new arrivals (where from and when), housing or nutrition.

Breeding wheels and calendars are good tools for displaying insemination activity in the herd. If kept in an area of high traffic they will be a constant reminder as to which animals are to be bred, those that are open and any repeat breeders.

Easily accessible, complete information can also be supplied by Dairy Herd improvement (DHI) and specialized computer software such as VAMPP and DairyComp305.