

Good fertility management



Good fertility management is a key component of successful dairy herd management. Improving herd fertility allows you to sell more milk per year and also reduces the number of cows being involuntarily culled for fertility problems.

The associated costs of poor fertility are highly significant and include:

- £3 per cow per day for every day over your target calving interval**
- £710 of every cow culled for poor fertility**

There are a huge number of factors that influence herd fertility ranging from herd nutrition, infectious disease control, lameness etc. However there are some 'fertility specific' areas we can also focus on to improve herd performance. These might include:

Formulating a planned approach to breeding, particularly looking at setting a defined voluntary waiting period and getting cows served earlier post-calving.

Starting a regular Routine Fertility Visit (weekly, fortnightly, monthly) where we carry out:

Ultrasound Pregnancy Scanning

Post-Calving checks to deal with cows with endometritis ('whites')

Non-Cycling cow checks

We also recommend setting aside some time on a quarterly basis to study fertility performance. These visits allow us to look at what changes we can make to improve fertility and also to quantify any improvements we have made since the previous review. Setting simple targets such as the 'Number of Cows In-Calf Per Month' can really help everyone in the farm team focus on improving herd fertility.