

ASSUREWEL DAIRY RECORDS

Recording and monitoring health and welfare outcomes can identify when targeted interventions can maximise production efficiency.

To help you monitor the welfare of your herd we recommend your records should include the details below to review as part of your annual inspection. Many of these records are already part of the Veterinary Health plan requirements for farms that are Red Tractor Dairy Assured (see asterixes*).

- **Mobility**

Record: The number of cases of lameness per 100 cows for the previous 12 months*

Regular mobility scoring is seen as one of the first steps to resolving lameness. Inspectors will want to discuss training received and the frequency and scope of mobility assessment carried out on your farm. Treatment of lame cows is essential to limit pain, aid recovery and minimise complications.

- **Mastitis**

Record: The number of cases of mastitis per 100 cows for the previous 12 months.

You already have this information for your annual questionnaire completed prior to the annual inspection. Monitoring mastitis cases can help identify trends and target management accordingly. Mastitis is not just a common painful disease but can also have significant production implications through costs of treatments, milk withdrawal, reduction in milk yields, increased labour and reduced fertility.

- **Calf / Heifer survivability:**

Record: The number of losses per 100 cows calved (for the previous 12 months) for:

- 0 - 24hrs - all calves (including stillborn)*
- 24 hrs - 42 days - all calves*
- 42 days - 1st calving - dairy heifers
- 1st calving - 2nd calving - dairy heifers

Currently in the UK, 8% of calves are stillborn, 15% of live heifers never reach first lactation and a further 20% do not reach second lactation. Recording and monitoring the stage(s) and reasons for losses can target husbandry improvements where necessary to help increase survival rates.

- **Cull and Casualty Cows:**

Record: The number of animals in the last 12 months per 100 cows that were:

- Planned culls*
(Include cows that are removed from the herd through an informed planned decision)
- Unplanned culls or casualty cows*
(Include cows that have either died or been slaughtered on-farm e.g. 'down' cows, those with injuries/lameness. The reasons should also be recorded)
- Enforced culls, e.g. TB.

Culling is practiced to maintain a healthy herd of cows; however a high culling rate can indicate underlying problems for herd health, welfare and longevity.