



Summer 2003

Dairy cattle research focuses on dry period length

Q: *What are the effects of Posilac[®] (bST) and varying dry period length on milk yield?*

A: Three dairies participated in the study. Treatments included: 1) control, 60-day dry period, bST per label (bST started at 57-70 DIM to the end of lactation); 2) 30-day dry period, bST per label; 3) 0-day dry period, bST per label; 4) 0-day dry period, continuous bST. The average milk yield was reduced in first lactation (primiparous) cows during the first 120 days postpartum for treatments 2, 3, and 4 compared with treatment 1 (88.2, 70.8, 76.1, vs. 94.8 lb/d, N=57). Milk production in cows with greater than one lactation (multiparous) was not affected by treatment (100.3, 92.4, 100.1 vs. 104 lb/d, N=38) for treatments 2, 3, and 4 compared with treatment 1, respectively. (Annen *et al.*, 2003. *University of Arizona; University of Idaho; Monsanto Co.*)

Q: *What are the effects of varying dry period length on milk yield (without Posilac[®])?*

A: Sixty-five Holstein cows began the experiment 90 days prior to expected calving date, and were fed a common diet for 34 days prior to assignment to one of three treatments: 56-day dry period (cows fed a low energy diet from -56 to -28 days and a moderate energy diet from -28 days to calving); 28-day dry period (cows continuously fed a high energy diet); and 0-day dry period (cows continuously fed a high energy diet). There was no difference in postpartum 4.0% fat-corrected milk yield during the first 70 days postpartum in cows on the 56-day dry period treatment vs. the 28-day dry period treatment (93.3 vs. 91.3 lb/d). There was a tendency towards lower postpartum 4.0% fat-corrected milk yield in cows on the 0-day dry period treatment vs. the 28-day dry period treatment (79.4 vs. 91.3 lb/d). There was no parity by treatment interaction as seen in the previously mentioned study. (Rastani *et al.*, 2003. *University of Wisconsin, Madison*)

Take home message

- ➔ A shortened or omitted dry period —
 - reduced milk yield in primiparous animals treated with bST.
 - appears to have no effect on milk yield in multiparous cows treated with bST.
- ➔ A shortened dry period (from 56 to 28 days) had no effect on milk production as measured by 4.0% fat-corrected milk yield.
- ➔ Shortening the dry period length (from 28 to 0 days) decreased 4.0% fat-corrected milk yield.

Further research with larger sample sizes will be required to fully understand the effects of 1) shortened dry periods, and 2) omitted dry periods (continuous milking) on udder health, milk production, and profitability.

Results!
"Clase del Ordeño"
(Milking School)

A 30-question test covering various aspects of milking management was given at the beginning and conclusion of the program. The overall mean test score for the pre-test was 53.9%, while the mean score for the post-test was 77.9%, **an increase of 24%!**

In addition, participants ranked the following topics for future Spanish-language educational opportunities as follows:

1. Herd health
2. Reproduction and AI
3. Nutrition
4. Calving management
5. Heifer management

Additional Spanish language educational opportunities are currently planned due to the high level of interest among dairy producers and their employees.

Dairy beef:
maximizing quality and profits

Dairy market cattle represent up to 15% of a dairy's income. In western states alone, over 800,000 dairy cows, worth about \$500 million, are marketed to slaughter every year. Demands on meat packers as a result of Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point plan implementation have focused their attention on the quality of incoming cattle.

In response to this, a 7-western state collaborative project (including the University of Idaho) was developed to create a distance learning program for dairy producers, cooperative extension advisors, and dairy veterinarians to provide a consistent message about dairy beef food safety and quality.

Learn more about maximizing quality and profits from dairy beef at <http://dairybeef.ucdavis.edu>.

CWT: Cooperatives Working Together

CWT, developed by National Milk Producers Federation, will use the proceeds from a 5¢/cwt assessment of participating dairy producers to implement a program to reduce milk supplies. The money raised by the program will fund three supply reduction programs including a dairy product export assistance program, a herd retirement program, and a milk production reduction program. For more information contact The Idaho Dairymen's Association, Milk Producers of Idaho, or www.cwt.coop, or www.nmpf.org.

Recent presentations

- ◆ "Meeting the demand for dairy replacements," Invited speaker (panel moderator), 6th Western Dairy Management Conference, Reno, NV 2003.
- ◆ "AI technician performance" and "Why AI and not natural service?" Invited speaker to the ABS Global Technical Services Western Dairy Management Conference Pre-Conference Session, Reno, NV 2003.

If you would like a copy of a presentation, please contact Joe Dalton at 459-6365 or jdalton@uidaho.edu.

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Extension Dairy Specialist

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