FLATTENING THE PRODUCTION Curve
As our Dairy Industry is met with a new challenge in the midst of COVID-19 it has become an unfortunate situation that milk produced has to be limited.

The significant change in production demand from restaurants and specialty products along with packaging and supply logistics has forced our industry to reduce production.

These are all unfortunate situations that we all hope will rectify themselves over the next several months.

At STgenetics we are here for you. We understand that these are difficult times to make decision of how to limit production, but our staff is here to assist you along with any of your trusted consulting team members.
GOALS

• Reduce production enough as to not incur over production penalties
• Maintain cow factors that will simplify returns to normal production
• Maintain herd health and reproductive efficiency for the future of the herd
CULLING

MANY HERDS HAVE A PERCENTAGE OF DNBS
- These cows usually have a breakeven point where they are Negative IOFC.
- The production threshold for culling can be raised. Many herds will want to cull DNBS below 70 lbs/day
- Example - ($0.13/pound DM x 55 lbs = $7.15 feed + $2.00 variable costs = $9.15. @ $13/cwt 70 lbs/day = $9.10 income

HIGH SCC
- Cull cows that are SCC issues and shift feeding more saleable milk to calves

CONFIRM AUCTION MARKETS AND PROCESSING PLANTS ARE OPERATIONAL
- Buyers will prefer single sourced loads and preplanning

A PLAN TO ACHIEVE 4-6% PRODUCTION REDUCTION THROUGH THIS STRATEGY IS ACHIEVABLE
LOW COST RATIONS

DECIDE IF THIS SHOULD BE FOR ALL OR A PORTION OF THE HERD
• When changing diets to transition cows and high producing cows make sure you have a plan to turn diets back on.
• Planning for groups of pregnant and/or lower producing groups may be enough depending on the situation

INCREASED FORAGES AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE DIET
• Forage quality will be key

REDUCING STARCH AND SUGAR WILL REDUCE PRODUCTION
• Work with your Nutritionist as a Key Advisor on any Diet changes

A PLAN TO ACHIEVE 3-5% PRODUCTION REDUCTION THROUGH THIS STRATEGY IS ACHIEVABLE YET CAN BE VARIABLE DEPENDING ON FORAGES AND AVAILABLE INGREDIENTS
REDUCING MILKING FREQUENCY

CHANGING ALL COWS OR A PORTION OF THE HERD FROM 3X TO 2X
• Less need to reduce cow numbers
• Strategy can reduce parlor pressure and in some cases labor
• Relatively easy to return to 3x
• If you milk fresh cows 4x or greater as part of your management plan reducing frequency will also reduce production pressure

HIGH PRODUCING COWS
• Negative impact on peaks and possibly SCC in higher producing groups

LOW COW GROUPS
• A herd can reduce milking on a portion of the herd 2x by changing milking rotations within the 3x schedule (first and last)

A PLAN TO ACHIEVE 6-10% PRODUCTION REDUCTION THROUGH THIS STRATEGY IS ACHIEVABLE
EARLY DRY OFFS

INCREASING DRY PERIODS FROM 60 TO 65-70
- Easy strategy to program into dairy software
- Overcrowding could be a limitation
- If Pasture is available and accessible this could be an alternative

NEGATIVE INCOME
- Feeding extra dry cows in many cases will be more costly than other strategies to reduce production within the existing milking herd

AVOID DRY PERIODS >70 DAYS
- Cows with long dry periods will gain weight and increase the risk of metabolic disorders

A PLAN TO ACHIEVE 1-3% PRODUCTION REDUCTION THROUGH THIS STRATEGY IS ACHIEVABLE
STRATEGIES TO UTILIZE MORE MILK PRODUCED ON THE FARM

ADD MILK TO COW RATIONS
• Dairies use water to reduce ration dry matter and effectively reduce sorting
• Milk can be used in the same way at a rate of 8-16 pounds/cow/day to add 1 to 2 pounds of DM to diets. This can reduce diet costs by as much as $.20/cow/day. Work with your Nutritionist

FEED SALEABLE MILK TO CALVES
• Pasteurization is preferred, but we know many dairies will be feeding fresh unpasteurized milk to calves. Be aware of concerns with Johnes disease, BLV, Staph aureus and Mycplasma transmission. Milk will need to be fed quickly after harvest to reduce bacteria growth if not pasteurized
STRATEGIES TO UTILIZE MORE MILK PRODUCED ON THE FARM

INCREASE MILK FEEDING TO CALVES
• Increase feeding volume to up to 12 quarts/calf/day. Increase slowly over a 1-2 week period
• Delay weaning from 8 weeks to 12 weeks

FEED MILK TO BEEF CROSS CALVES AND RAISE TO 400 POUND OR BEYOND.
• Herds may be increasing already existing beef semen usage.
• Work with them to find existing on-farm housing to use excess milk to raise BxD calves to increase profit margins/calf
SUPPLY MANAGEMENT:
PRODUCTION REDUCTION CONCEPTS

Thank You Dairy Farmers!
The best way for a dairy operation to predict its own financial and efficiency-based future is to Create it.

WE ARE HERE TO PROVIDE SOLUTIONS THROUGH DIFFICULT TIMES!