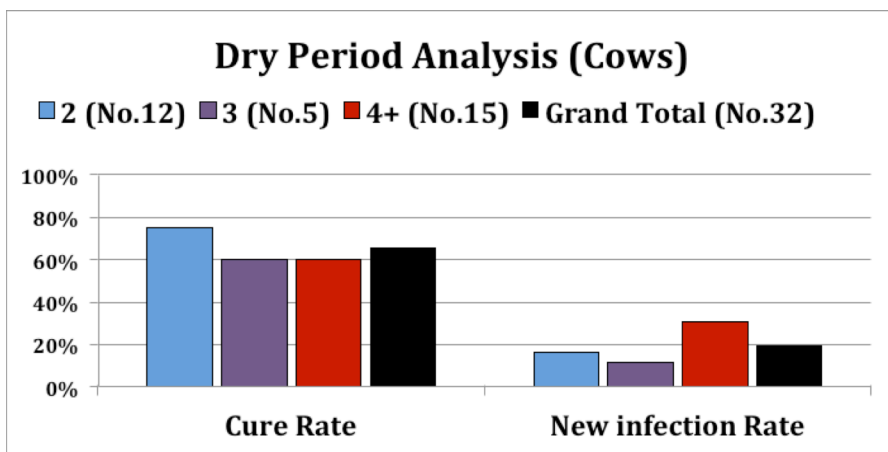


Bringing farmers evidence based knowledge on improving your herd health, welfare and production.

## What data does milkrecording provide?

Milkrecording is the milksampling of all individual cows and recording of *milkweight, milksolids* and SCC. Therefore first of all, milkrecording gives you information on which cows are **performing** well and which cows are not. It also will improve the reliability of the **EBI**. The Irish EBI is a profit-based index; a higher EBI cow will leave more profit per lactation. Breeding from cows with high EBI increases value of your replacement heifers. Secondly milkrecording is essential for monitoring **milk quality and mastitis control**. Each cow's individual SCC is recorded which helps you identifying high cellcount cows that don't show any symptoms of mastitis, subclinical infected cows. Early identification helps in preventing spread to other cows and enables early treatment improving the outcome.

In combination with HerdPlus each cow their share of the total bulkmilk SCC is indicated. This makes it possible to predict the effect on the tank SCC if you would keep a particular cow's milk out as each cow's SCC and milkweight is known. You will be alerted on recently infected cows and duration of high SCC cows, which helps you making decision in keeping or culling a cow. Very helpful is also that milk recording can analyse your **dry cow performance** based on the first milk recording of cows in milk less than 60 days compared to the last milk recording the previous year. This will show how effective your dry cow treatment was; the target of new infection is less than 5% and existing infection not cured less than 10%. An example of dry cow performance can be seen in the graph below:



### Spring issue 2014

- *What data does milk recording provide?*
- *Health Calendar April is available on Facebook*
- *Calf health and heifer rearing targets*

Burrenvets

Spanish Point

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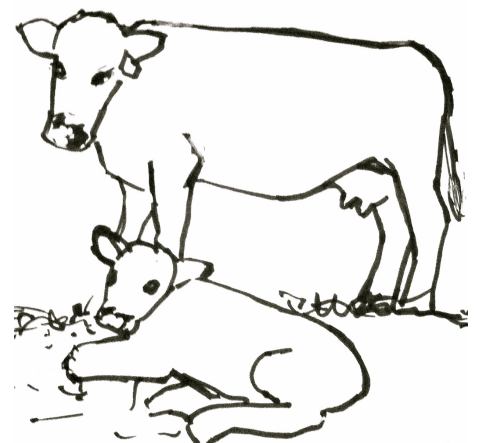
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[burrenvets@eircom.net](mailto:burrenvets@eircom.net)

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## cont. what data does milkrecording provide?

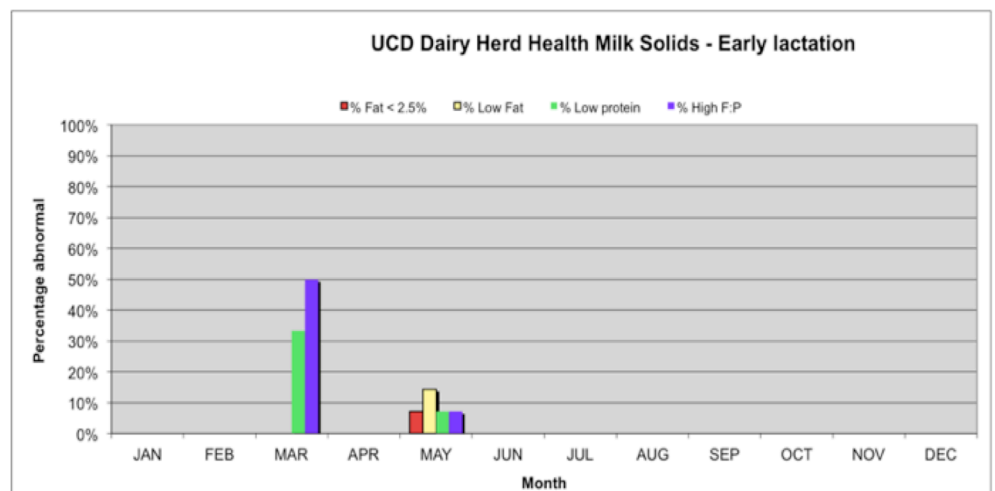
Thirdly milkrecording is a tool for monitoring the **herd nutrition status**.

High prevalence of cows with "low milk protein" and "high milk fat: protein ration" in early lactation are indicators of negative energy balance. The energy status of a cow depends on the quantity and quality of the feed intake and the output in energy for maintenance, pregnancy, milk production and growth. Negative energy balance in early lactation is possibly unavoidable but you should aim to minimize the level and duration; max 3 weeks post partum. NEB can result in metabolic diseases and is a main contributor of delay in resumption of cycling after calving. Bulk milk protein isn't that helpful as cows of different stages of lactation contribute to the tank and cows with low protein can

go unnoticed because of dilution. The target of prevalence of cows in early lactation with *low milk protein* is less than 15% and of cows with *high milkfat:protein ratio* is less than 10%. In the graph below, using individual milk recording, you can see in March about a third of the cows in early lactation were in negative energy balance.

In similar way monitoring *low milkfat* and *milk protein-fat ratio* in mid lactation cows, the time that cows are at their peak of Dry Matter intake, is a tool and warning system of SARA, sub acute rumen acidosis.

Milk recording can be done monthly or bi-monthly and organizations can be found at: [http://www.icbf.com/?page\\_id=289](http://www.icbf.com/?page_id=289)



A Monthly Health Calendar can be found at **Burrenvets**

## Calf health and heifer rearing targets

Calf health targets:

- <5% mortality
- <10% illness
- double birth weight by 8 weeks of age.
- 30% of mature bodyweight at 6 months.
- 55-60% of mature bodyweight at breeding
- 85-90% of mature bodyweight at calving

Did you know that the most efficient weight gain is in the calf's first month of life?

The heavier the heifer weights at mating start date the greater the quantity of milksolids she will produce and greater the BCS is maintained during the first 3 lactations.

What is your target daily growth? A calf born 40kg to 55% of Friesian average mature BW 600 kg at breeding

end of 14 months of age, should have an average daily growth of 0.7kg. A calf of a breed with mature BW of 680 kg, Charlois or Holstein, should grow 0.8kg on average/day.

To monitor the weight you can use a heart girth tape. There is a good relation between the tape and the true weight in calves over 3 months but be sure to read the directions and to use the device consistently, see "Calf Notes.com" note 120