

Choose the Best Reproductive Program for Your Dairy Herd

- Milk sales, number of culled cows, number of replacement heifers, the cost of reproductive programs, feed cost, labor cost, dry period length, and number of services to conceive that depend on reproductive performance have direct and important economic connotations.
 - However, assessing the economic impact of different reproductive management strategies under the commercial conditions imposed on a farm represents a major challenge because of the complex interplay of all the factors involved.
 - Therefore, decision support systems are valuable tools to select reproductive programs that better enhance profitability according to particular dairy farm characteristics.
- The study developed a robust yet user-friendly decision-making support system to estimate profitability changes when applying different reproductive management strategies on a specific farm.
 - 1) The UW-DairyRepro\$ is available at: DairyMGT.info → Tools → Reproduction
 - 2) The use of timed programs were economically superior to programs relying only on heat detection.
 - 3) Combination of heat detection and synchronization could be positive depending on the expected heat detection and conception rates.
 - The decision support system was used to study a large Wisconsin commercial dairy farm under different reproductive management strategies.

Excerpt from: Giordano, J. O., P. M. Fricke, M. C. Wiltbank, and V. E. Cabrera. 2011. An economic decision-making decision support system for selection of reproductive management programs on dairy farms. *Journal of Dairy Science* 94:6216-6232.

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