

IMPROVING FERTILITY IN CATTLE — MANAGEMENT ASPECTS

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Beef herds in Britain recorded by the Meat and Livestock Commission (MLC) produce less than 90 live calves per 100 cows mated. Reproductive efficiency is of paramount importance to the economic performance of beef suckler herds. Herds with sub-optimal reproductive efficiency will almost invariably have an extended calving period. With a compact calving, a high proportion of cows calve early in the period. These cows have the highest conception rates at the next mating because they are cycling for a longer period while the bulls are present. A compact calving can only be achieved by severely culling the late calving cows and replacing them by first calving heifers, there is no improvement of feeding management alone which will correct an extended calving period.

It has been possible to propose target body condition scores for cows at different stages of the production cycle. Herd management and feeding to achieve target score will achieve optimum reproductive performance. Cows which are not on course to achieve target scores can be segregated for specific additional feeding. Autumn calvers are sometimes allowed to become fat before calving on the grounds that this produces body reserves which can be used to economise on winter feeding. But this has a significant effect on increasing the number of difficult and assisted calvings. Recent MLC evidence also demonstrates that the specialised Blue Grey beef cow has superior calving characteristics to the dairy bred *Hereford* × *Friesian*.

COMPARATIVE STUDY ON MATERNAL PERFORMANCE OF DIFFERENT SUCKLER COW GENOTYPES

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This paper gives an account of the first comparative data on the maternal traits of different genotypes of suckler cows in Hungary. 29 *Hungarian Simmental* (HS), 30 *Hereford* (HE), 29 *Hungarian Simmental* × *Hereford* (HS × HE) and 30 *Danish Jersey* × *Hungarian Simmental* × *Hereford* (JHS × HE) cows were kept all the year on pasture and were mated to *Hereford*, *Charolais* and *Limousin* sires.

According to the poor feeding and management conditions the live weight and the maternal performance of the four genotypes was lower than the national average but the differences between the groups appeared to be genetic in most traits.

Crossbreds showed more beneficial results in cow losses, in the ease of calving and other traits connected with reproduction. Thus the number of calves weaned was in the crossbred groups by 13-52 p. 100 higher during the period of four-five calvings. The best average weaning weight and 205-days weight was performed by the *Simmental* group (193 and 202 kg, resp.), but in the total weaning weight and corrected 205-days weight the *Jersey* × *Hungarian Simmental* × *Hereford* crossbreds have exceeded the *Simmentals* by 43-44 p. 100 and the *Herefords* by 54-61 p. 100.

EINFLUSS VON HERDENUMWELT UND MILCHLEISTUNG AUF VERSCHIEDENE FRUCHTBARKEITSPARAMETER BEIM SCHWEIZERISCHEN BRAUNVIEH

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Die Beziehung zwischen Milchleistung und verschiedenen Fruchtbarkeitsparametern wurde an 79783 Kühen des *Schweizerischen Braunviehs* untersucht. Einerseits wurden Unterschiede zwischen Betriebsniveaunklassen Milch geschätzt. Somit konnte eine Verkürzung der Rastzeit und des Intervalls EB-r.NB bei steigendem Betriebsniveau Milch beobachtet werden; für die