

Dairy Comp TIPS & TRICKS



Handy Advice for Dairy Advisors using Dairy Comp 305

1-800-549-4373

ISSUE 3

Send us your ideas and questions about Dairy Comp

The intent of this newsletter is to help you understand the program as it applies to your usage. As I mentioned in the first issue, it will contain helpful hints for improving reports or analysis features of your program, as well as some current herd management information. **Please provide comments or helpful hints of your own that we can reproduce in future newsletters. Send it to Bill Grexton at bgrexton@canwestdhi.com**

Herd Monitoring Tool in Dairy Comp 305

Jeremy Ten Hag, Dairy Comp Software Support

In every business it is important to monitor current performance and be able to evaluate how performance has changed over time. Dairy Comp offers a very effective way to evaluate a dairy enterprise through the MONITOR report.

The MONITOR report is a one-page table that provides information on herd performance in areas of production, reproduction, inventory, udder health and disease incidence. MONITOR contains up to 46 parameters in the aforementioned herd management areas and the parameters are calculated usually after each DHI test day when there is new information available. The MONITOR table reports the last eleven times the MONITOR parameters have been calculated, to give a producer or advisor with herd management measures for the last year.

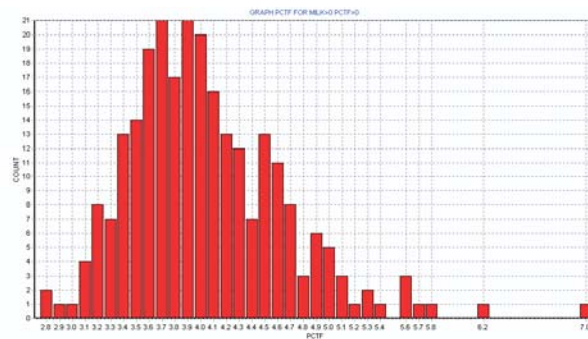
MONITOR is available to all producers that are enrolled on DHI test day services - whether they have Dairy Comp products on the farm or not. DHI field staff can print off the report from their computer on test day to be left with the producer. MONITOR is an excellent way to quickly evaluate several management areas in a herd; it is like a 'report card' of herd performance.

Command ?	MONITOR
# Parameter	3112 3101 2602 3103 3004 3105 3006 3107 3108 3009 3110 Goal
1 ___PRODUCTION___	
2 Cows In Milk	266 259 266 251 264 261 256 252 267 276 267 0
3 N Cows In Milk	86 87 88 89 88 86 86 88 87 87 86 85
4 Av Milk/Cow/Day	29 30 32 33 32 34 33 33 30 32 31 36
5 Av Milk-Lact 1	25 25 29 29 29 30 30 30 28 29 28 34
6 Av DIM-Test Day	172 167 170 166 180 184 196 194 178 169 170 150
7 Av N Fat	4.2 4.2 3.9 3.8 3.7 3.7 3.5 3.5 3.7 3.6 4.0 3.8
8 Av N Protein	3.4 3.4 3.2 3.2 3.1 3.2 3.0 3.0 3.0 3.1 3.3 3.4
9 30S Milk Proj.	9.8 9.8 9.9 9.9 9.9 10.1 10.2 10.3 10.0 10.1 9.8 11.0
10 Av BCA-Milk	223 222 224 225 221 225 227 228 221 226 223 230
11 Av kg Fat	1.2 1.2 1.2 1.3 1.2 1.3 1.2 1.2 1.1 1.1 1.2 1.4
12	
13 ___REPRODUCTION___	
14 #NotErd,Open-70	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 1 0 0 0 0
15 #NoPck, DIM-150	36 27 29 29 39 34 16 21 26 31 29 0
16 # Days Open-150	30 30 34 39 43 39 41 37 40 41 38 0
17 Av Days Open	123 121 125 132 136 122 120 120 122 127 123 110
18 Av #Times Bred	2.4 2.4 2.5 2.7 2.8 2.7 2.7 2.8 2.9 2.9 2.8 2.0
19 #HfrNotErd-14Mo	26 30 35 43 36 35 41 49 29 36 36 0
20 #NotPrg, Hfr-17M	0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0
21 #PrgDaysDm-65	16 32 14 12 16 16 12 11 17 17 16 0

MONITOR also allows for parameter goals to be added. A goal set by the producer or an industry benchmark value can be stored. At a glance, actual parameter values can be compared to goals the producer has set for the herd.

For advisors that use Dairy Comp, the MONITOR parameters are calculated automatically when they download new DHI information for the herds on their access list. This ensures the MONITOR report is always up to date, which will make it much more effective. Producers using Dairy Comp will need to manually update their MONITOR table after each test day download to keep it up to date. The MONITOR report is also flexible in that it allows the user to calculate the parameters at an interval that they choose.

The parameters in the MONITOR table can be altered or replaced so the herd management measures in MONITOR can be customized to the needs of the Dairy Comp user. However, calculations created for these new parameters start at the time of the change and there are no retroactive calculations.



Graphs can be created from the MONITOR table to describe a parameter measure. The graph above appears when the user clicks on the average butterfat % parameter. It shows the distribution of butterfat % of all cows on the last DHI test day. You can quickly see the number of the abnormally low fat cows and abnormally high fat cows in your herd. The graph that 'expands' the data is especially useful when looking at smaller herds where a few outliers can distort the average.

Monitor can be an effective first step to highlight areas that need attention in the herd. This report also can be useful tool in monitoring the effectiveness of herd management changes. The monitor reports provide a basis for producers and advisors to discuss herd issues and resolve them.

No Dairy Comp 305 events are planned for this fall but a brochure will be available shortly outlining our winter herd management programs.

Downloads Much Easier with ILOOP

Advisors who have connections to the internet now have a much easier method to download herd files. After development by VAS and extensive testing by CanWest DHI, the ILOOP (internet Loop) is available to all Canadian users of Dairy Comp 305 products.

You can access ILOOP with any internet connection. Access (particularly Hi-speed), is much faster than the old bulletin board system that we have used for the past 10 years.

To use it you need to have a switch changed in your program. That can be done over the phone by calling CanWest DHI Dairy Comp support.

There is one caution however; once you start using ILOOP, you can not go back to using the dial up bulletin board system. The reality is that no one would want to.

Once your program is converted, downloading is as simple as clicking on your Auto Download button. You have the choice of entering a single herd code or clicking on "Start Download to update any herd on your access list with new test day info (Fig. A).

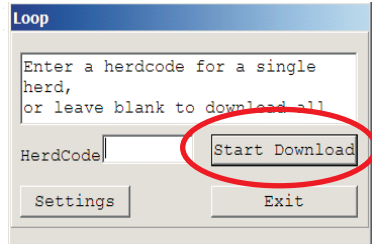


Fig. A

To change your settings, when you use the menu item "ILOOP Settings" (which would be added when you convert,) you will get the following screen. You can change the date range to get older files downloaded, or edit your Herd Access list.

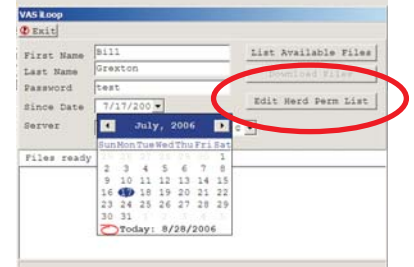


Fig. B

To do that, click on "Edit Herd Perm List" (Fig. B), which will show your herd list (Fig. C). You can delete a herd from your list by "ticking" the box to the right of the name. You can add a herd by adding the herd code and PIN number and clicking "Update" at the bottom of the window.

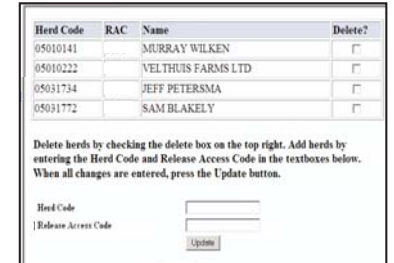


Fig. C

ILOOP makes it easier for you to be in control of what herds you download as well as alleviating some of the problems associated with dial-up access.

Solutions to the Incorrect "Disk Full" Message on USB Drive

The following is an excerpt from a computer magazine (PC Magazine, 2006-08-16), regarding an 'incorrect "full disk" message when using a USB drive'. I hope it helps some of you, as these USB drives are a real lifesaver.

"The issue is created by long filenames. The root directory of a floppy disk has precisely 224 slots to hold directory entries. Each long filename takes from two to twenty directory entries depending on its length. Some people have been getting "disk full" errors even when a floppy disk is half full.

Since USB drives are typically formatted using the same FAT16 file system that's used for floppy drives and the problem applies to them as well. The root directory has a fixed size, and once it has been filled you cannot add more files.

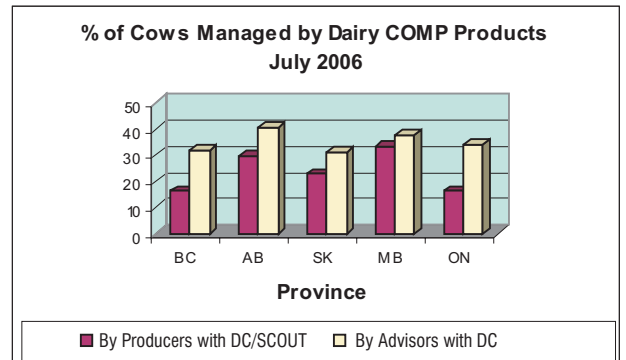
The simple solution is to store your files in subfolders. The number of directory entries subfolder is variable, increasing automatically as needed. Create a number of new folders on the USB drive and move your files into them. The key item is to stop saving everything in the root directory."

Who uses Dairy Comp 305?

Bill Grexton, Herd Management Services

More herds are using Dairy Comp products than ever before. Since our launch in Canada in 1997, we now have over 625 herds using Dairy Comp products every day as a management tool. In addition to that over 30% of herds are downloaded each month by farm advisors so that they can use the data to provide added value to their customers.

Below is a comparison of herds using Dairy Comp software with provincial averages. Clearly, larger and better managed herds use the software to make better decisions.



Province	Users of Dairy Comp products		Provincial Averages	
	Average # of Cows	BCAM	Average # Cows	BCAM
British Columbia Average	162	223	120	205
Alberta Average	141	216	113	191
Saskatchewan Average	172	210	116	186
Manitoba Average	192	204	105	175
Ontario Average	112	213	65	180