

USDA CONFIRMS DAIRY COMP 305 IS MOST POPULAR HERD MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE

A recent study "prepared from material received and analyzed by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), and Veterinary Services (VS)" confirms what we have suspected all along. Dairy Comp 305 is the most popular choice for on-farm software.

Here are a portion of the numbers reproduced from the Dairy 2002 study, Dairy Herd Information & Management Practices. The complete report can be found on line at: www.aphis.usda.gov/vs/ceah/cahm under Dairy Cattle.

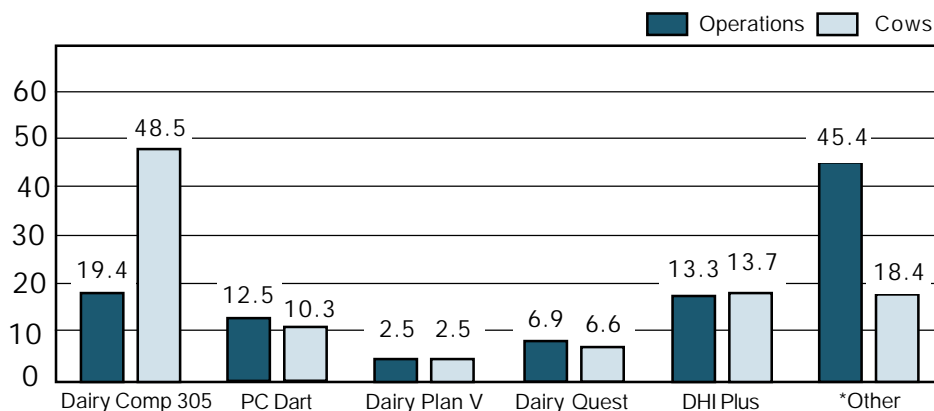
TABLE 1

Primary On-Farm Record System Used	Percent Operations	Standard Error	Percent Cows	Standard Error
Dairy Comp 305	19.4	(1.7)	48.5	(1.9)
PC Dart	12.5	(1.4)	10.3	(0.8)
Dairy Plan V	2.5	(0.6)	2.5	(0.5)
Dairy Quest	6.9	(1.2)	6.6	(0.9)
DHI Plus	13.3	(1.7)	13.7	(1.3)
*Other	45.4	(2.7)	18.4	(1.4)
Grand Total	100.0		100.0	

* other includes home-made spreadsheets, Westfalia, Boumatic and some other, smaller programs.

TABLE 1: For Operations Using On-Farm Computer Data Record Systems, Percentage of Operations, (and Percentage of Dairy Cows on These Operations) By Primary Computer System Used.

TABLE 2



* other includes home-made spreadsheets, Westfalia, Boumatic and some other, smaller programs.

The study showed the majority of cows in the United States are tracked and managed using Dairy Comp 305 software. The "percent of operations" using Dairy Comp software at 19.4% would indicate that many of those cows reside on larger dairy operations.

Dairy One Cooperative, Inc. sells and supports Dairy Comp 305 as well as related products, Scout for small to mid-size dairies and DCCON Analyzer for consultants. Please contact Dairy One for more information about any of these software products.

COW VALUE - DAIRY COW DECISION AID

The "Cow Value" module in Dairy Comp 305 estimates the value of each cow in a dairy herd relative to an average fresh heifer. A positive Cow Value means the animal is worth more than an average heifer in that herd. A negative Cow Value suggests the animal is worth less than an average heifer. In addition to estimating the value of the cow, the module also calculates the current value of a pregnancy for each adult, to help managers decide if an open animal should be inseminated.

Dairy Comp 305 includes a powerful tool that can help dairy herd managers decide to breed, treat, or

cull animals on a daily basis. This module is called Cow Value.

Concept

There are two important rules to remember when using the Cow Value estimates.

- 1) Keep your dairy at capacity.
- 2) Replace less profitable animals with more profitable animals.

Every decision made on an animal in a commercial dairy is based on improving the herd's profitability.

You keep an animal because she is more profitable to keep than to replace. You breed animals because they will be more profitable if they become pregnant. You treat animals because they will be more valuable after a treatment than they are before. Cow Value estimates can help the herd manager assign a value to animals more consistently.

What does Cow Value consider when it values an animal?

A commercial dairy cow's current value is the sum of her value for beef and the value of the milk she is likely to produce in the future.

The value of an animal's future production is based on

- The amount of milk she is likely to produce in the future.
- The price of milk in the future.
- The value of the money you must invest in the animal.

The amount of milk an animal is likely to produce in the future is based on:

- Age – The younger the animal, the longer she is likely to stay in the herd and produce milk.
- Stage of lactation – an animal that is 30 days in milk is likely to produce more milk in the future than an animal that is 200 days in milk.
- Reproductive status – an animal that is pregnant is likely to produce more future milk, than an animal that is open. An animal that was just inseminated, is more likely to be pregnant than an animal that has not been inseminated.
- Production level – a high producing animal is likely to produce more milk than a low producing animal.

Steps to using Cow Value

- A Start Cow Value by typing COWVAL on the command line in Dairy Comp.
 - Review the parameters.
 - Allow Dairy Comp to make the two new items, CWVAL and PGVAL.
 - Have Dairy Comp estimate the values.
- B Make lists of animals to get a feel for how it ranks and values your cows.
 - Change some of your assumptions and re-run the lists. Note how the values changed.
- C Put the CWVAL and PGVAL on your cow cards, and perhaps your vet list.
- D Set the scheduler to re-calculate CWVAL and PGVAL each night so the values will stay current.

Next month we will explore these steps in more detail and discuss some of the ways to use Cow Value to help make a difference on your dairy.

For more information on Dairy One services, visit our website at www.dairyone.com

Dairy One Cooperative Inc. is an information technology cooperative. It provides farm management information services throughout the Northeast and mid-Atlantic regions of the United States. Since its formation in 1997, Dairy One has succeeded in expanding and improving laboratory testing and information reporting services. In addition, it is better able to respond to the individual needs of the region's farmers.

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