

# Using Your DHI Data to Evaluate Your Feeding Program – Interpreting Standardized 150-Day Milk

By: Donna M. Amaral-Phillips, Ph.D.

This article is one in a series of articles describing (or reviewing) how to use data from your DHI reports to help you better manage your herd. Each article covers one or two numbers found on these reports. The goal of these articles is to explain how the numbers are calculated but, more importantly, how you can use them to better manage your dairy operation. This article reviews how to use Standardized 150-day Milk found on the second page of your Herd Summary sheet (DHI- 202) to better manage your dairy herd.

## What is Standardized 150-day Milk?

Standardized 150-day Milk allows one to compare the average milk production of a dairy herd from one month to the next. It removes the effects of days in milk, breed, and number of lactations which will vary from test to test. For each cow in the herd under 330 days in milk, the computer calculates what she would have given if she was exactly 150 days after calving. The computer then averages all cows in the herd and reports this average on the second page of the Herd Summary (DHI-202).

PERIOD	DATE TESTED	TEST	STAGE
55-99-9999	12-27-11	NO	NO

  

STAGE OF LACTATION PROFILE										
NUMBER	1ST LACT	2ND LACT	3RD LACT	4TH LACT	5TH LACT	6TH LACT	7TH LACT	8TH LACT	9TH LACT	10TH LACT
AVG	57	68	64	42	35	55				
STDEV	84	70	71	40	43	65				
MIN	15	20	40	18	17	33				
MAX	163	102	102	102	102	102				

  

IDENTIFICATION AND GENETIC SUMMARY										
NUMBER	AVG AGE	DATE IDENTIFIED	DATE IDENTIFIED BY							
80	0-07	80	58							
85	1-09	85	70							
163	+02	163	128							
68	2-01	68	43							
48	3-05	48	11							
43	4-09	43	15							
160	3-02	160	77							

  

PRODUCTION BY LACTATION SUMMARY									
NUMBER	AVG AGE	DATE IDENTIFIED	DATE IDENTIFIED BY						
88	25	84	60	20535	727	629	+2433	+29	+63
49	41	81	78	20390	1368	638	+1616	+47	+53
43	57	79	78	19235	753	613	+359	+99	+90
160	38	73	70	20151	747	628	+1623	+37	+51

  

YEARLY SUMMARY OF COWS ENTERED AND LEFT THE HERD									
DATE OF TEST	NUMBER OF COWS ENTERED	NUMBER OF COWS LEFT	NUMBER OF COWS ENTERED AND LEFT						
1-27-11	29	150	149	57.2	62.1	10	81	46.2	4.1
2-23-11	27	181	147	55.7	59.5	11	94	53.5	4.4
3-29-11	34	159	156	61.0	61.7	11	98	59.8	3.7
4-29-11	31	163	178	60.2	62.7	10	98	58.8	3.5
5-31-11	32	166	189	53.9	58.3	11	93	50.4	3.2
6-28-11	28	168	158	49.3	54.8	11	87	42.0	3.4
7-27-11									
8-24-11									
9-29-11									
10-28-11									
11-23-11	29	158	167	51.6	56.5	11	80	41.2	4.3
12-27-11	34	160	156	60.2	64.2	11	75	44.9	3.9
AVERAGES	30	162	172	53.7	58.4	100	89	47.4	3.8

  

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5-31-11	32	166	189	53.9	58.3	11	93	50.4	3.2
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7-27-11									
8-24-11									
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AVERAGES	30	162	172	53.7	58.4	100	89	47.4	3.8

Standardized 150- Day Milk

### How to use this information to evaluate your dairy feeding and management program

**Example #1:** In example #1, Standardized 150-day Milk dropped in the summer months. Three possible scenarios to explain this drop which can include, but are not limited to:

1) Cows are subjected to heat stress and do not have adequate cooling in place to maintain milk production or minimize decreases in milk production.

Areas to evaluate:

- Are fans and sprinklers or shade provided near the feed bunk and loafing areas?
- Are fans and sprinklers used in the holding pen?
- Are dry cows provided adequate shade and cool, clean water?

Example #1:	
Date of test	Standardized 150-day Milk
Month dropped	65.5
2-11-xx	64.8
3-15-xx	67.7
4-18-xx	63.5
5-14-xx	67.4
6-22-xx	63.0
7-21-xx	56.2
8-25-xx	57.8
9-18-xx	58.7
10-11-xx	62.6
11-16-xx	65.8
12-19-xx	71.1
1-15-xx	69.4

2) Forages and/or ration fed during the summer does not provide adequate energy or other nutrients to maintain milk production

Areas to evaluate: Contact your nutritionist and retest forages and rebalance rations to reflect forages and other feeds currently being fed.

3) Disease issues in the herd such as an increase in the incidence of mastitis or fresh cow problems

Areas to evaluate: Review milking practices and cleanliness of cows if somatic cell count has increased. Did you have a higher incidence of fresh cow problems within the first 60 days after calving?

4) Are there other possibilities to explain the drop in production?

**Example #2:** In example #2, decreases are seen in Standardized 150-day Milk in the fall. Milk production improves later in the fall but never recovers to that seen in previous years. Cows are housed in the same facilities as previous years and no changes are seen in disease status. However, forage quality may have changed from the previous year or more variability in the nutrient content or composition of the TMR fed may be occurring.

Areas to investigate include – but not limited to:

1) Decrease in energy available to support high milk production.

Example #2:	
Date of test	Standardized 150 day Milk
Month dropped	65.5
2-11-xx	64.8
3-15-xx	67.7
4-18-xx	63.5
5-14-xx	67.4
6-22-xx	63.0
7-21-xx	66.2
8-25-xx	67.8
9-18-xx	63.7
10-11-xx	52.6
11-16-xx	57.8
12-19-xx	62.1
1-15-xx	61.4

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Areas to evaluate: Retest forages, request a silage fermentation analysis, and/or evaluate digestibility of NDF to look for places that have decreased the amount of nutrients available to support milk production. You will more than likely need to add additional nutrients from purchased feeds in order to improve milk production and income over feed cost. Again, you will need to work closely with your nutritionist to correct the problems.

### 2) Feed bunk management and maintenance of TMR mixer

Areas to evaluate:

- Are the groups of cows overcrowded for resting space or feed bunk space?
- Is a consistent mixture of feed being supplied to the cows?
- Are the cows getting the amounts of each feed (accounting for varying dry matter) noted on the balanced ration?
- Are cows sorting their feed?
- Is the mixer weighing added feeds accurately?
- Is the TMR mixture mixed for the correct amount of time?
- Is the feedbunk being managed so cows always have feed available?