

Dairy Comp 305 Newsletter

Fourth Quarter – 2009

Number 28

In last year's newsletter, bad times were predicted for the dairy industry and all aspects of the economy. This was not a statement that took great foresight; everyone could see that things were going badly for many aspects of life in the USA and the world. And now, we have all lived through the last 12 months. On the good side, it looks that finally milk prices are going up somewhat. At least the monthly losses many have had for this year will be less. No one knows if the bottom of this recession has been hit or if things are going to spiral down again after a brief and temporary glimmer of hope. We all realize that there is no clear crystal ball to predict the future. We are all hoping that 2010 will have milk prices high enough so dairies can begin to gain back equity and that a general stability will settle in the economy so we can somewhat accurately anticipate what will happen and when.

We have managed to maintain our level of employees despite some decrease in revenue. Also, the sale of part of the shares of VAS has gone through. Koepon Holding (owners of Alta Genetics) and we are working together to make this a better and stronger company. To this end we have hired more support people who will be starting to work with us this fall. We are also making in-roads to working with dairies in China, Russia and Germany, mostly through our expanded contacts made possible by our association with Alta.

All those in every section of the dairy business are watching technological changes that are occurring. Sexed semen has come to the market and many believe it is one of the major causes of lowered heifer prices. Genomics (DNA testing) is coming to the breeding industry and potentially could make big differences in the semen trade. All this coupled with increased government intervention into almost all aspects of the life of dairyman and those working in dairy allied industries, makes continuing in business "very interesting" if not to say scary.

We all seemed to be carried forward by the fact that people still want to eat. We hope they will be able to continue to consume the produce that modern agriculture that has been able to so aptly (and inexpensively) provide for the last 60 years. In 2007 we wrote about increased efficiencies in the dairy industry. At the end of WWII, there were 25.5 million milk cows in the USA; today there are around 9 million. Milk production per cow has increased about 4 times over the same time span. The amount of feed it took to produce one glass of milk in 1945 is now producing about $2\frac{2}{3}$ glasses of milk. Others have taken this further to calculate how much less carbon, methane, nitrogen and almost all other "offensive" environmental problems that are said to be associated with modern agriculture exist today. The problem is that while many of us know these facts, it is difficult to get this message out and heard by today's public.

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Windows 7

Based on our testing, Dairy Comp 305 and Scout are working properly with Windows 7. There may still be some minor display issues, mainly due to the expanded borders of Windows 7 forms. The pick lists and default form displays might need to be adjusted using SETUP to select different fonts, depending on your display settings. We will likely continue to make adjustments over the next few months, both internal, and possibly user defined adjustments via SETUP.

Depending on the User Access Control settings, some users may need to set the Compatibility Mode to allow DC305 to properly run a webupdate. These steps seem to fix the problem:

1. From Explorer, locate and then right click DCWin.exe
2. Select "Troubleshoot Compatibility"
3. Select "Try recommended settings"

By default most users would not need to make any registry setting adjustments. We do not recommend users update to Windows 7 just for the sake of updating, but we have no concerns for those users who choose to do so.

32bit versus 64bit Operating Systems

64bit operating systems are becoming more common for new computers. Be sure to ask your computer representative if the computer is a 64bit or 32bit system when upgrading. Valley Ag has worked hard to make sure that our software is 64bit compatible. We do still recommend staying with a 32bit platform due to the current lack of support for many common programs.

If you have any questions or are considering upgrading, please feel free to give us a call and we can discuss options with you.

BREDSUM

Conception Options

The various conception options under BREDSUM now display a column with the 95% Confidence Interval for each of the categories. An example (BREDSUM\B) is shown below.

Bred Number	95% CI	%Conc	#Preg	#Open	Other	Abort	Total	%Tot	SPC
=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
1	39-42	41	994	1459	167	97	2620	33	2.5
2	30-34	32	480	1025	73	55	1578	20	3.1
3	28-34	31	340	758	47	49	1145	14	3.2
4	26-33	29	233	559	43	25	835	10	3.4
5	26-34	30	170	401	24	19	595	7	3.4
6	24-33	28	107	269	31	11	407	5	3.5
7	22-33	27	64	171	33	10	268	3	3.7
8	21-34	27	42	114	16	4	172	2	3.7
OTHERS	14-22	18	63	293	53	13	409	5	5.7
TOTALS	32-34	33	2493	5049	487	283	8029	100	3.0

There is a new setting available under the Options button that will allow setting of the graph axis to 100%. Also, as with SUM, clicking on the vertical axis in a BREDSUM graph will allow setting of minimums and maximums.

Note also the availability of a Cutoff selection. This allows regrouping of lines with smaller percents or total numbers into OTHERS. This option is and be useful to remove some of the clutter. A number below 100 will place any individual line that is less than the percent specified into OTHERS. A number above 100 will place any individual line under the total number specified into OTHERS.

BREDSUM Options

☐ By Times Bred \B
☐ By Technician \T
☐ By Breeding Code \O
☐ By Calendar Month \C
☐ By Day of the Week \W
☐ By Conception week \R
☒ By Sire \S
☐ Stud Code \M
☐ By Breeding Cycle \N

☐ Both AI and Bull \A
☒ Only AI breedings Default

Cutoff: 0

Minimum % of Total OR Absolute count

☐ Set axis to 100%

Enter Start Date: 8/25/09
Enter End Date: 8/31/09

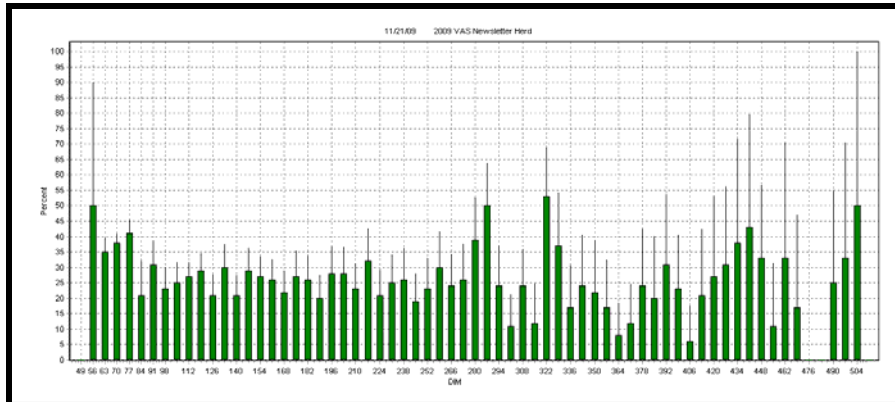
OK Cancel

Date entry OR Days ago

Sets vertical graph axis to 100%

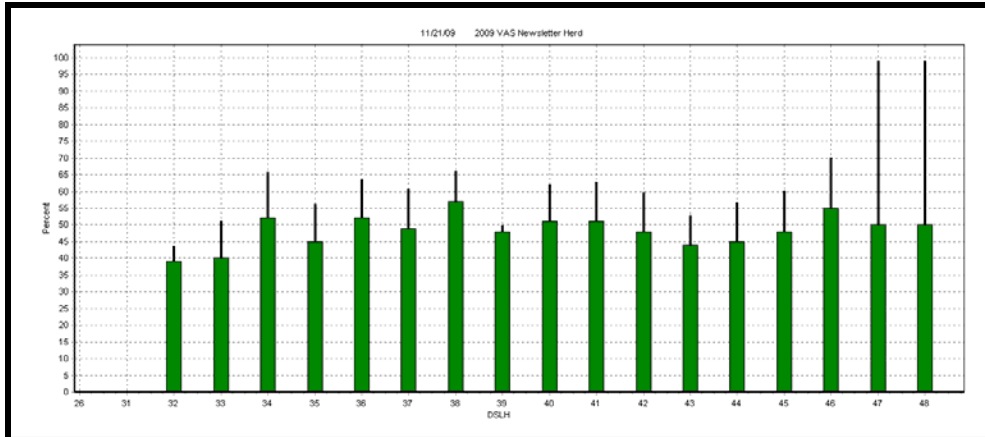
Weekly Conception by DIM

BREDSUM BY DIM
produces a graph of conception by DIM using 7day DIM intervals. An example is shown below.



Conception by DSLH

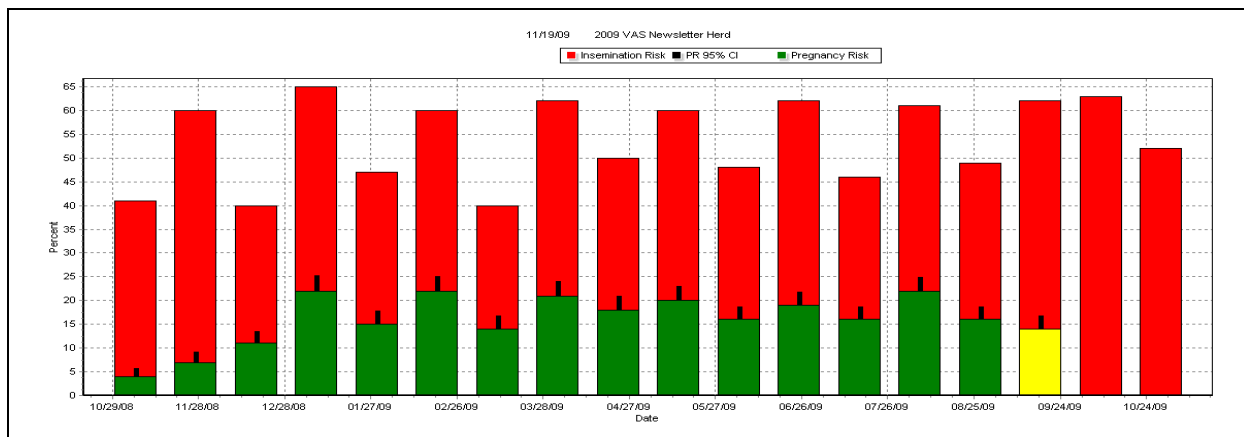
There is also now an option for determining conception by days since last heat. This option is still under development, so use cautiously.



Pregnancy Risk

The BREDSUM pregnancy Risk option (\E = E 21 day pregnancy risk) now flags intervals where the Pg Elig column is less than 90% of the Br Elig column, allowing more awareness of the existence of unknown outcomes for animals that received inseminations. On the Grid and Report views there is an asterisk (*) in any line where there are more than 10% unknown outcomes. On the Graph the preg risk bar is displayed in yellow. Examples are shown below.

BREDSUM\E							
Date	Br Elig	Bred	Pct	Pg Elig	Preg	Pct	Aborts
=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
:							
7/16/09	736	340	46	722	114	16	4
8/06/09	793	487	61	775	174	22	12
8/27/09	775	376	49	753	123	16	1
9/17/09	836	518	62	*	626	14	0
:							
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
Total	10948	5883	54	10578	1759	17	198



The BREDSUM Pregnancy Risk Options box has had some changes, shown below.

BREDSUM Options

☒ 21 day pregnancy risk \E
☐ By Breeding Cycle \ER

☐ Both AI and Bull \A
☒ Only AI breedings Default
☐ Only BullPens \U

Allows selection of specific lactation groups

☒ LACT = 1
☒ LACT = 2
☒ LACT > 2

Enter Voluntary Wait Period
Enter Start Date
Enter End Date

☐ Set axis to 100%

Sets vertical axis to 100%

OK Cancel

ALERTS

ALERTS is a new command that allows messages (“alerts”) to be sent to the DC305 user. Alerts can be generated in a variety of ways:

- Generated by the program:
 - Notify the user of an error
 - Downloaded by CONNECT
 - Downloaded by the web updater
 - Messages from Valley Ag Software about available updates or other information
- User-created as a reminder for a future event

The user-created alerts also have an optional setting for an "activation" date that will suppress the display of the alert until the desired date for display.

Usage

ALERTS\E will enable ALERTS

ALERTS allows alerts to be viewed, created, edited, deleted, etc.

Alerts are stored in the program folder in D\CALERTS.TXT.

The presence of alerts is displayed in the bottom status bar of DC305. Clicking on Alerts in the status bar will bring up the ALERTS dialog box (same as ALERTS on the command line).

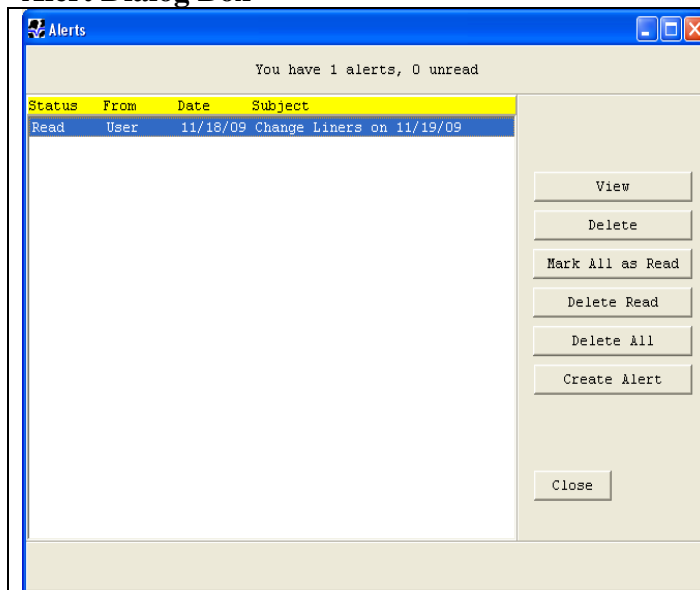
Yellow highlight means there are alerts that have not yet been read.

{TESTHERD\COWFILE1.DAT	Alerts
------------------------	--------

No highlight means there are alerts, but all have been read.

{TESTHERD\COWFILE1.DAT	Alerts
------------------------	--------

Alert Dialog Box



The above picture shows the ALERTS dialog box. Currently there is one alert shown:

Status	From	Date	Subject
Read	User	11/18/09	Change Liners on Thursday 11/19/09

- It has been read
- It is from the “User”
- The date is 11/18/09
- Subject is Change Liners on 11/19/09

View	Views the highlighted Alert
Delete	Deletes the highlighted Alert
Mark All as Read	Marks all Alerts as Read
Delete Read	Deletes all “Read” Alerts
Delete All	Deletes All Alerts
Create Alert	Allows creation of an alert
Close	Close the dialog box
Status Display	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read means the Alert has been Read (Viewed) • UnRead means the Alert has not yet been Read • Pending means the optional activation date has not yet been reached

Creating or Editing Alerts

The above dialog box appears if the Create Alert button is clicked.

A similar box appears if the View button is clicked, View also allows editing of an existing alert.

The above illustrates the final result after creating or editing an alert.

Buttons

- Save Saves changes
- Cancel Ignores any changes and exits
- Delete Deletes the alert

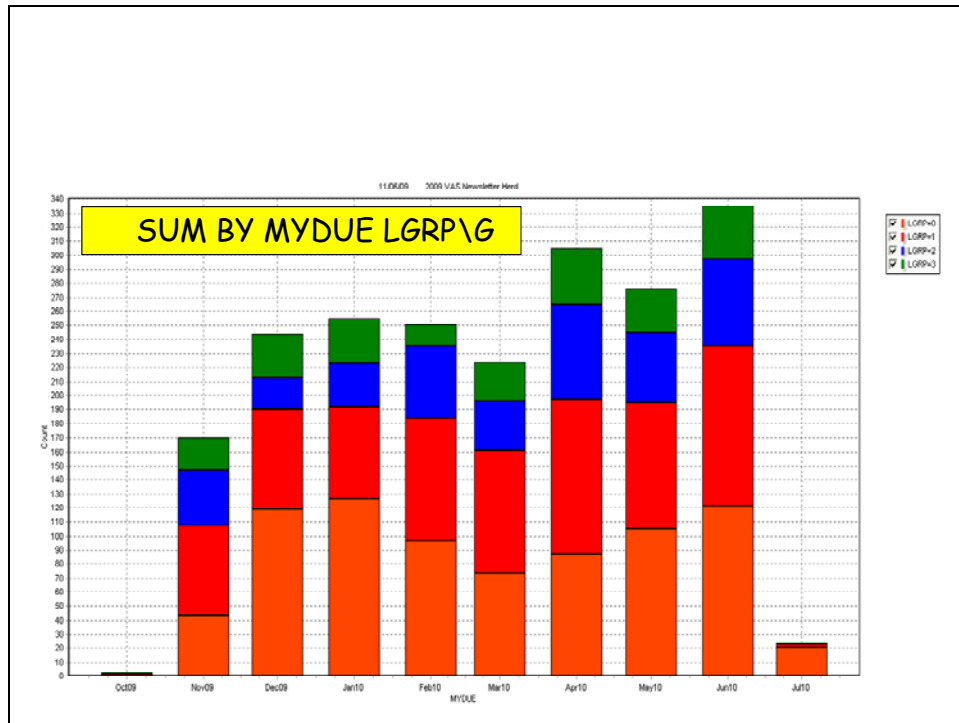
New or Enhanced SUM Options

SUM now can display item type 130s (month and year of a date). An example is show below.

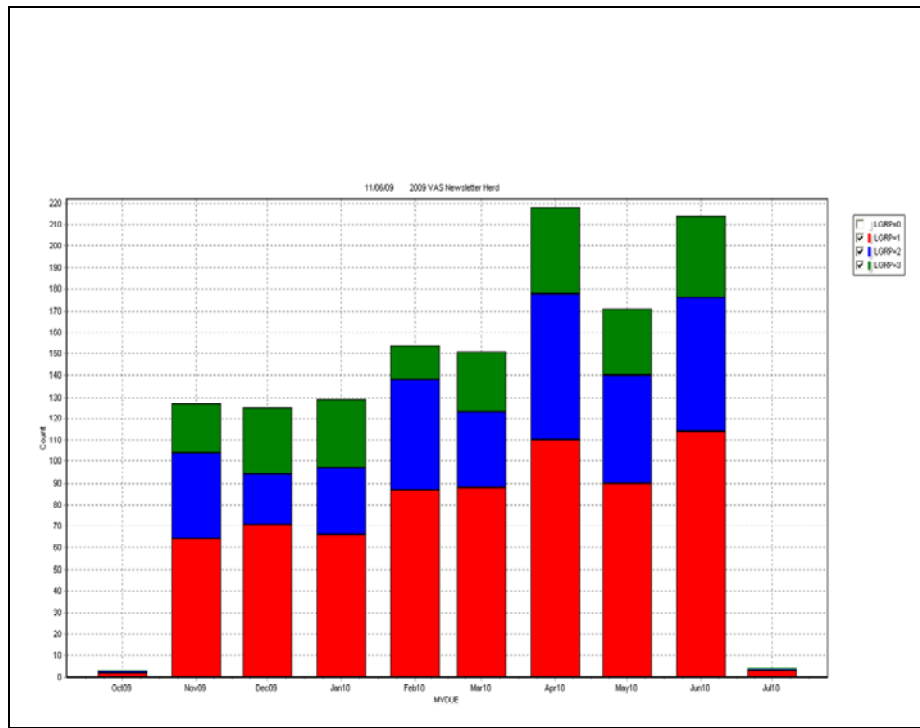
SUM BY MYDUE LGRP

By MYDUE	%COW	#COW	LGRP=0	LGRP=1	LGRP=2	LGRP=3
Oct09	0	3	0	2	1	0
Nov09	3	170	43	64	40	23
Dec09	5	244	119	71	23	31
Jan10	5	255	126	66	31	32
Feb10	5	251	97	87	51	16
Mar10	4	224	73	88	35	28
Apr10	6	305	87	110	68	40
May10	6	276	105	90	50	31
Jun10	7	335	121	114	62	38
Jul10	0	24	20	3	1	0
Total	100	4994	2352	1151	938	553

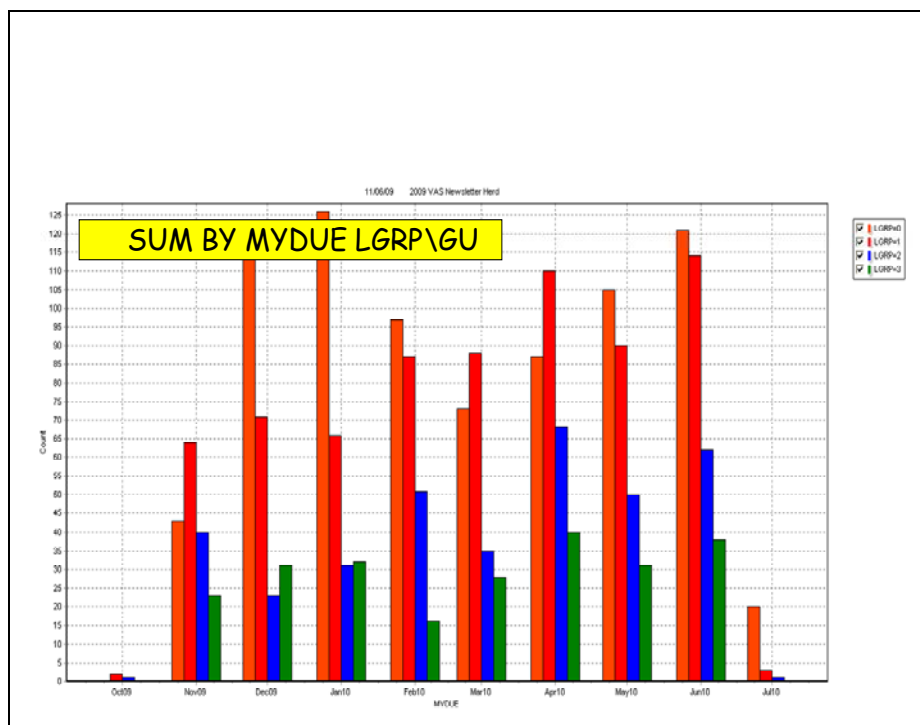
Graph options in SUM have been enhanced. The \G allows immediate display of the Graph tab in SUM. The graph can also be accessed via clicking on the Graph tab or pressing the letter G.



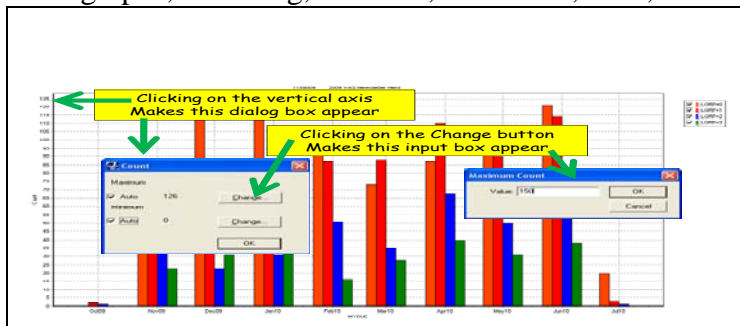
If multiple series exist, a legend box appears. Clicking on a series legend will control the display of the selected series.



If multiple series exist, the bars can be either stacked or unstacked. The \GU switch will create an unstacked display.




The minimum and maximum for the vertical axis can be controlled via options available by using the mouse to click on the axis. Details are shown below. Similar functionality exists for all commands that create graphs, including, GRAPH, EGRAPH, PCT, BREDSUM, etc.



The display of tables that use two cutoffs for the same item has been improved. For example, suppose a report was needed for the percent of animals milking below 50 pounds, milking 50-89 pounds, and above 90 pounds. An example command and its result is shown below.

SUM MILK=50 MILK=90 BY LGRP FOR MILK>0

MILK	<50	50-89	>=90
=====	=====	=====	=====
LGRP=1	3%	54%	42%
	34	542	423
LGRP=2	4%	31%	64%
	37	271	554
LGRP=3	6%	34%	60%
	32	170	297
Total	4%	42%	54%
	103	983	1274

Clicking on  will allow changing of the cutoffs.

Use of the Colon within SUM

Within the SUM command, numeric items can be summarized by the minimum, maximum or total as well as the default average via use of a colon followed by 98, 99, or 100. Minimums are displayed with *item:98*, maximums with *item:99*, and totals with *item:100*. An example using MILK is shown below.

SUM MILK MILK:98 MILK:99 MILK:100 BY PEN

By PEN	%COW	#COW	Av MILK	Mn MILK	Mx MILK	Tt MILK
-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----
1	24	546	55	10	106	30022
2	27	603	56	2	108	33511
3	24	538	60	11	127	32323
4	25	570	64	4	136	36393
=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
Total	100	2257	59	2	136	132249

Dry Cow Milk Withhold Date

We have modified the method of tracking the milk withholding dates for dry cow antibiotic treatments to better reflect the product label warnings. The milk withhold date now reflects the number of days after calving to discard milk as indicated on the labels.

Currently we supply some default withholding dates for some of the more common dry cow tubes in the file PROTOCOL.LST. Valley Ag Software provides this information only as a convenience for its customers. Valley Ag does not assume any liability for the accuracy of the information contained nor any responsibility for any potential residues that may result.

Here is the current PROTOCOL.LST table for dry cow tubes

##	Protocol	Event	REMark	Prompt	Pen	Milk	Meat	Days
00	TOMRW_DRY.IMM	DRY	TOMRW	TRUE	0	3	42	1
00	QTRMR_DRY.IMM	DRY	QTRMR	TRUE	0	4	60	1
00	SPECTRA-DC.IMM	DRY	SPCDC	TRUE	0	0	16	1
00	DRYLCOX.IMM	DRY	DRYCLX	TRUE	0	0	30	1
00	ORBEN_DRY.IMM	DRY	ORBEN	TRUE	0	0	28	1
00	BIODRY.IMM	DRY	BIODRY	TRUE	0	0	30	1
00	ALBAPLUS.IMM	DRY	ALBA	TRUE	0	3	30	1

Some additional warnings are also available within DC305:

1. Some tubes have a minimum days-dry before milk can be used for food. A warning for cows that freshen early can be enabled with an optional **SETUP** parameter called **WARN nn** where the **nn** is the minimum days dry.
2. It is also possible to set an additional milk date based on days since administration by adding **MKDAT=DDAT+xxx** to the **DRY** command, where **xxx** is the days to hold milk. At freshening, the later of the two dates will be used.

Dry Cow Antibiotic Tubes – Label Warnings

Included below are some excerpts from product labels. The products are in alphabetical order and no endorsement is implied.

Valley Ag Software provides this information only as a convenience for its customers. Valley Ag does not assume any liability for the accuracy of the information contained nor any responsibility for any potential residues that may result.

ALBADRY PLUS® (Penicillin G procaine and novobiocin sodium)

MEAT 30 DAYS MILK 72 HOURS AFTER CALVING

- Do not use less than 30 days prior to calving.
- Milk from treated cows must not be used for food during the first 72 hours after calving.
- Treated animals must not be slaughtered for food for 30 days following udder infusion.

BIODRY® (Novobiocin)

MEAT 30 DAYS MILK 0 HOURS AFTER CALVING

- Do not use less than 30 days prior to calving.
- Treated animals must not be slaughtered for human consumption for 30 days following udder infusion.

DRY-CLOX® (Cloxacillin Benzathine)

MEAT 30 DAYS MILK 0 HOURS AFTER CALVING

- For use in dry cows only.
- Not to be used within 30 days of calving.
- Any animal infused with this product must not be slaughtered for food until 30 days after the latest infusion.

ORBENIN-DC® (Benzathine Cloxacillin)

MEAT 28 DAYS MILK 0 HOURS AFTER CALVING

- For use in dry cows only.
- Do not use within 4 weeks (28 days) of calving.
- Treated animals must not be slaughtered for food purposes within 4 weeks (28 days) of treatment

QUARTERMASTER® (Penicillin-dihydrostreptomycin in oil)

MEAT 60 DAYS MILK 96 HOURS AFTER CALVING

- For udder instillation upon drying off only.
- Not to be used within six (6) weeks of freshening.
- Not for use in lactating cows.
- Milk taken from animals within 96 hours (8 milkings) after calving must not be used for food.
- Animals infused with this product must not be slaughtered for food within 60 days from time of infusion nor within 96 hours after calving.

SPECTRAMAST® DC (Ceftiofur Hydrochloride Sterile Suspension)

MEAT 16 DAYS MILK 0 HOURS AFTER CALVING

- Milk taken from cows completing a 30-day dry cow period may be used for food with no milk discard due to ceftiofur residues.
- Following label use, no pre-slaughter withdrawal period is required for neonatal calves born from treated cows regardless of colostrum consumption.
- Following intramammary infusion, a 16-day pre-slaughter withdrawal period is required for treated cows.
- Use of this product in a manner other than indicated under DOSAGE might result in violative residues.

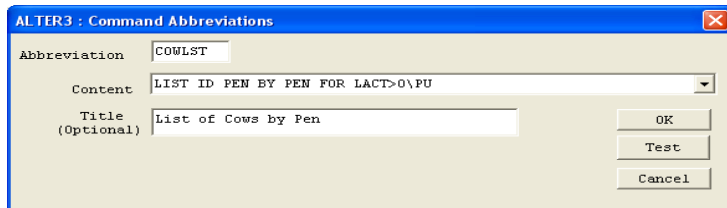
ToMORROW® (Cephapirin benzathine)

MEAT 42 DAYS MILK 72 HOURS AFTER CALVING

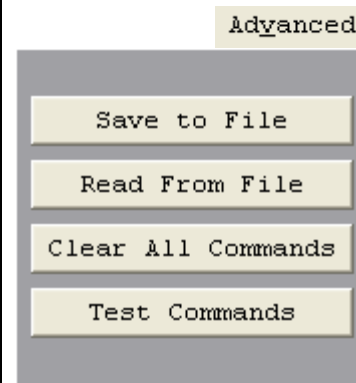
- For use in dry cows only.
- Not to be used within 30 days of calving.
- Milk from treated cows must not be used for food during the first 72 hours after calving.
- Any animal infused with this product must not be slaughtered for food until 42 days after the latest infusion

Alter | 3 Commands Enhancements

In Alter | 3 Commands there is now an option to allow testing of a newly created or edited command to ensure no typo has been made and that the syntax is correct. See the example below with the Test button.



There is also an option in Alter | 3 Commands under the Advanced tab to allow testing of all commands. See example below with Test Commands button.



Overriding Defined Event Gaps in EVENTS and EGRAPH

Many people have set “gaps” using ALTER | 9 Events. The setting of a gap in an event permits flexibility in the count of events for a given animal. For example, a cow that is marked for two different mastitis treatment protocols in the same week in reality probably had only one “case” of mastitis.

However, there may be situations where the predefined gap is not appropriate. The predefined gap can be temporarily overridden in the EVENTS and EGRAPH commands through the use of a colon with the desired gap day after an event name.

Examples would be:

```
EVENTS MAST:1 \50 Sets gap to 1 day
EVENTS MAST:8 \50 Sets gap to 8 days
EVENTS MAST:14 \50 Sets gap to 14 days
```

Perhaps this example could be used (imperfectly) in this way:

- MAST:1 might indicate how many new protocols were being initiated each day
- MAST:8 might indicate how many trips to the hospital were being recorded each day
- MAST:14 might indicate how new cases of mastitis were being recorded each day

The use of the colon should be viewed as experimental, but it should allow more flexibility in creating EVENTS and EGRAPH reports:

- Owners can set the gap in ALTER to suit their management needs
- Owners and consultants can temporarily reset the gap to answer different questions

Date and Time Items

Some new item types related to dates and times have been added. Also, some additional options for the display of date and time items have been added or enhanced.

Type	New?	Description	Stored/Calculate	Example
23		Time of Day (3 sec int.)	Stored	SCTIM (Scan Time)
41	Yes	Date_Time (3 sec int.)	Stored	Probably will be rarely used
52	Yes	Date_Time (3 sec int.)	Calculated Op1 is date item Op2 is time item	SCDT (Scan Date_Time) Op1 is SCDAT Op2 is SCTIM

Update/Review of Date/Time Item Displays Using Colons

The display of date and time items can be controlled by use of colons. Examples:

Date item displays (All Date Types)

```
LIST ID SCDAT:2 SCDAT:3 SCDAT:4 SCDAT:5 SCDAT:6 SCDAT:7 SCDAT:8
      ID SC SCD SCDA SCDAT SCDAT SCDAT SCDAT
=====
      209 3 Nov 11 3 11/ 3 110309 3Nov09 11/ 3/09
```

Number	Date Display
:2	Day of the month
:3	Three letter month abbreviation
:4	Month and day in MMDD format
:5	Month and day in MM/DD format
:6	Month, day, and year in MMDDYY format
:7	Month, day, and year in DDMMYY format
:8	Month, day, and year in DD/MM/YY format

Time item displays (Type 23)

```
LIST ID SCTIM:4 SCTIM:5 SCTIM:8
      ID SCTI SCTIM SCTIM
=====
      209 1027 10:27 10:27:39
```

Number	Time Display
:4	Hour and minutes in HHMM format
:5	Hour and minutes in HH:MM format
:8	Hour, minute, and seconds in HH:MM:SS format

Date Time item displays (Types 41 and 52)

```
LIST ID SCDTM SCDTM:17
      ID SCDTM SCDTM
=====
      209 11/03/09_10:27 11/03/09_10:27:39
```

Number	Date Display
:17	Date_Time in MM/DD/YY_HH:MM:SS format

Automatic Insertion of a BORN Event in EVENTS and EGRAPH

A BORN event for heifers can be automatically inserted into EVENTS and EGRAPH.

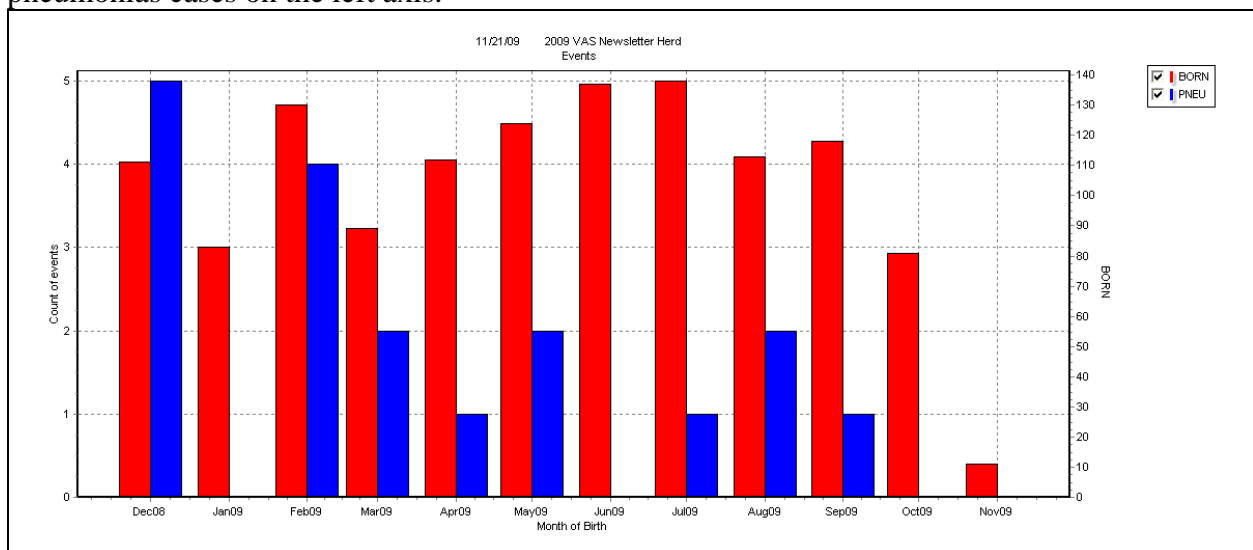
Examples

EVENTS EC=1 \50\Y

EVENTS EC=1 \50\Y															
#	Event	Total	Nov08	Dec08	Jan09	Feb09	Mar09	Apr09	May09	Jun09	Jul09	Aug09	Sep09	Oct09	Nov09
=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====	=====
1	BORN	3900	80	327	275	367	283	351	365	415	425	352	347	276	37

EGRAPH EC=1 PNEU \F \Y \N1

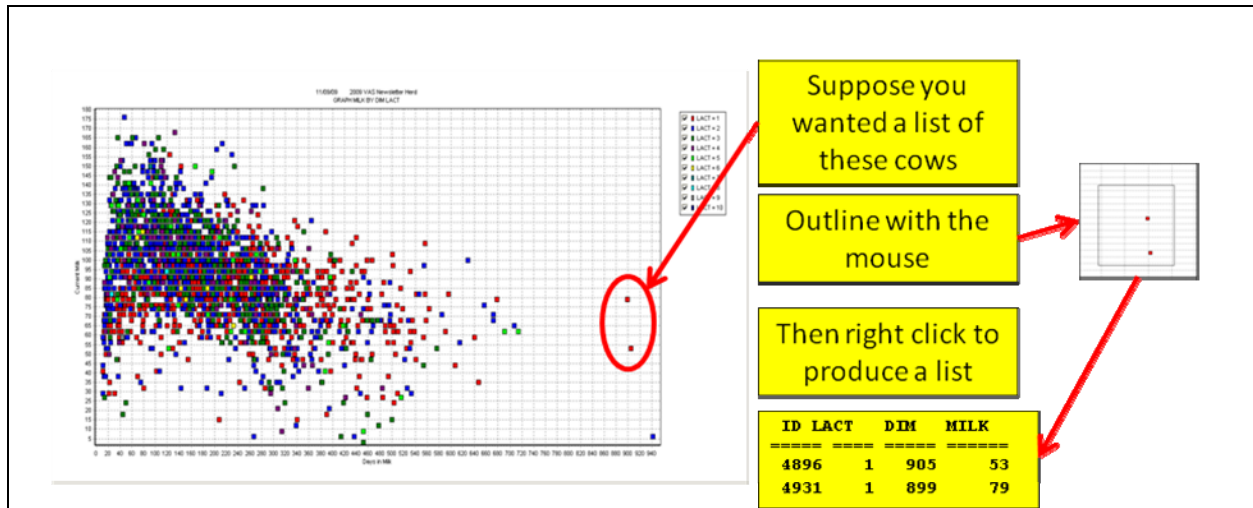
Will display the count of animals born each month and the number of first pneumonia cases by the month of birth. Note the number born is displayed on the right axis and the number of first pneumonias cases on the left axis.



Making a List from a Section of a ScatterGraph

There is a new option available in scattergraphs to allow the making of lists from a portion of the graph. This option can be accessed by zooming in on the desired portion of the graph and right clicking to produce the list.

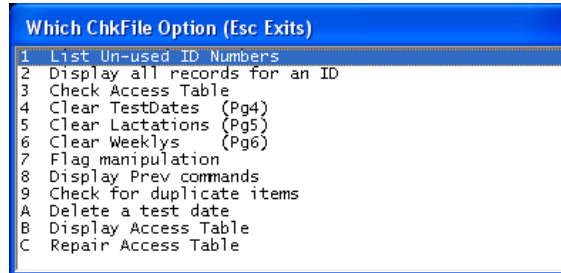
The command for the below graph was GRAPH MILK BY DIM LACT. Note the list that was created had the items (ID, MILK, DIM, LACT) that were contained in the original GRAPH command.



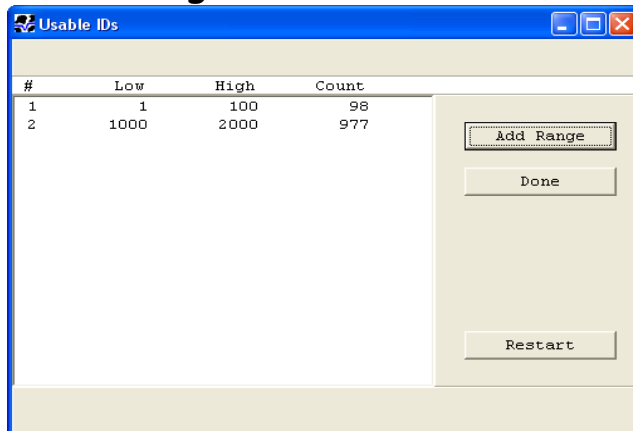
CHKFILE Enhancement – 1 List of Un-used ID numbers

Some enhancements have been added to ease the ordering of tags using CHKFILE:

- New dialog box
- Selection of multiple ranges
- List of unused tags
- Summary of unused tags
- Uploading of files for tag orders



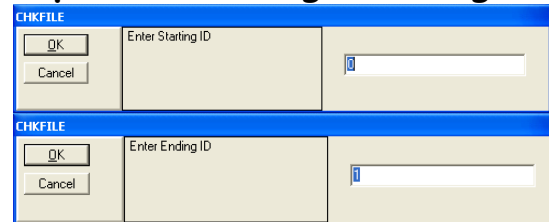
New Dialog Box



Selection of Add Range Button

Add Range

Input of starting & ending IDs

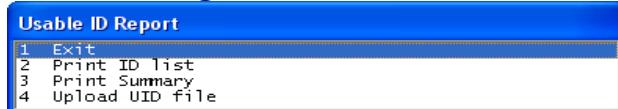


Can repeat for multiple ranges

Selection of Done Button

Done

Done Dialog Box



Print ID List Example

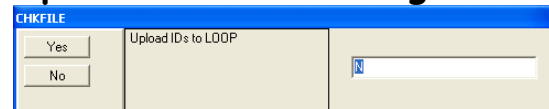
Usable ID Report											
1	46	91	1034	1078	1122						
3	47	92	1035	1079	1123						
4	48	93	1036	1080	1124						
5	49	94	1037	1081	1125						
6	51	95	1038	1082	1126						

Print Summary Example

Usable ID Summary
Usable ID Summary
Herd 00000001 Dairy 2009 VAS Newsletter Herd
Created 11/23/2009 14:59:34
Summary Usable ID Report

#	Start ID	End ID	Count
=====			
1	1	100	98
2	1000	2000	977

Upload UID File Dialog Box



FILEIN

A number of issues have arisen from the use of FILEIN. Although this has been an extremely powerful tool over the years, we are encountering an increasing number of situations where internal data are being damaged. Because of the widespread adoption of treatment protocols and automated calculation of meat and milk withhold dates; we have been forced to remove this function. As a general rule, there are alternative methods for importing much of these data. And in our beta testing, most of the uses of FILEIN have been surpassed by existing routines, such as importing mating sires (See below), or importing EIDs (Use ALTER, EID manager).

Importing Suggested Matings

Some farms have their cows evaluated and someone selects suggested sires. These suggestions can often be provided electronically. Many of the studs can post these data on the LOOP, and they are then automatically downloaded and imported into the proper cows and SIR1 and SIR2. This saves an email, or a trip to the farm to import these data. If you routinely use these types of data, please contact your evaluator about automatic access to these data.

If you ever need to manually import these data, the SIRES command can easily do this. Run SIRES, select “Import Mating Suggestions”. SIRES\M is a shortcut if you wish to put this on a menu, but remember, automated transfer via the LOOP is far preferable.

Heifer Performance

The use of BREDSUM to estimate pregnancy risk has become a standard measure of reproductive performance in lactating cows. This works because the industry has agreed upon 50 DIM as a standard time that a cow is eligible to be bred, due in a large part to biology.

However, heifers have no such standard date, but typically breeding starts when the heifers reach a certain size. This implies there are multiple questions:

1. How soon are heifers reaching breeding size?
 - a. Are they growing appropriately? (They need to be measured periodically)
 - b. Has the speed changed?
2. Once they are eligible, how quickly do they become pregnant?
 - a. How quickly are they inseminated?
 - b. What is the conception?

An effective tool to use is to create an item such as AIDAT that records the date when heifers are first moved to the AI pen. Use ALTER, Items, and create a date item (type 18) with a description such as “First date AI eligible”. Then, run ALTER, Pens, Advanced, and record this item. From then forward, the AIDAT item will be automatically set when the heifer is first moved to an AI pen, assuming those pens are properly defined in ALTER, Pens.

Monitoring Age at AIDAT can detect changes and variation, but this is too late – the problems occurred earlier due to feeding. From then forward, BREDSUM will use an individual’s AIDAT as the start of her eligibility, instead of using a constant age. This allows separation of growth and reproductive performance in heifers.

Pocket CowCard

Pocket CowCard has undergone more refinement through the year. Many of these changes have focused on making the program more “user friendly”. Enhancements include cataloging command lists that have been used but not posted before refreshing herd data and displaying the dairy name if multiple herds are loaded in one program. PCC can now also store multiple server addresses for refreshing to more than one Dairy Comp program if this is needed.

For those that might not have noticed, there is a Pocket CowCard manual available from the “Help” pull down menu in DairyComp.

One modification that might be more noticeable when updating is in how we store and read data. Now, no matter where the program is installed, both the program and the data are stored on the PCC removable SD card. This allows the user to easily move the data and application to another device. Prior to this change, if the program were installed on the device, which is the default installation location for Windows Mobile, the data was backed up to the SD card but the program was not. This meant that the program had to be installed on a new device before it could be run and the data had to be moved from the SD card backup to the corresponding location of the newly installed program. Now the program only reads data from the SD card, regardless of the program location and at the same time will back up the program to the SD card. This makes moving Pocket CowCard and data to a new device, with all user defined program settings, as simple as moving the SD card.

One side effect of this change is that Pocket CowCard will no longer read data stored on the device regardless of where it is installed. At the time the software is updated, if there is a data folder on the device, Pocket CowCard will display a warning when opened. This warning is to let the user know that this folder exists and that the program will no longer read anything in it. If there is data on the device that needs to be saved, it can be moved to the SD card and delivered. Once the folder “My Documents\CowCard” has been removed from the handheld, this warning will no longer appear. If you have any concerns or questions when you update, please call us.

Of course software is not the only thing that evolves over time. Hardware continues to change as well. Please contact us prior to investing in Pocket CowCard hardware. Valley Ag Software tries to evaluate hardware in order to ensure that we offer the best available solutions to our customers.

PCC, in conjunction with RFID, is one of the best ways available to significantly increase speed and accuracy when working with daily lists or recording information “cowside”. If you do not yet use PCC but are considering it, please see our video and give us a call.