Dairy farmers' compliance with culling recommendation in paratuberculosis programme

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Publication date: 2016

Document Version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Link back to DTU Orbit

Citation (APA):
Dairy farmers’ compliance with culling recommendation in paratuberculosis programme

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Background

Danish ParaTB Programme
- Started in 2006
- Incl. 30-40% of dairy cattle
- To improve animal health & farming profitability
- 4 annual ELISA screenings required
- Culling specific cows has proven effective

Recommendations to farmers
- Identify high risk animals (“Red” and “Yellow”)
- Avoid use of milk and colostrum from high risk cows
- Segregate high and low risk cows at calving
- Clean calving area after high risk animals
- Swift removal of calves born to high risk dams
- Cull “Red” cows quickly – before next calving

Results

11,789/1,366,015 (0.9%) records were Red cows that were recommended culled & could possibly calve

Study population: 30,848 possible calvings by Red cows

29% calved after being Red (3,364/11,789)

71% did NOT calve after becoming Red (8,425/11,789)

Cow categorisation
- Red: repeated test-positive
- Yellow: fluctuating test-responses
- Green: repeated test-negative

Stayed in herd
Median: 1.4 years
Max: 6.9 years

Stayed in herd
Median: 0.3 years
Max: 4.7 years

Conclusion

71% of farmers culled their cows as recommended

Still, some red cows stayed in the herd for long and can thus infect their offspring and herd-mates

Testing
- Indirect Milk ELISA (ID-Screen®)
- Positive if S/P ratio >0.33

Herd and animals
- Enrolled herds in 2008-15
- All lactating animals tested in programme

Materials & Methods

Compliance?
Do farmers follow recommendations on culling of Red cows?

Objective

Characterise compliance with the culling recommendation

Prevalence of Red cows (not culled)?

• Did Red cows calve again?
• How long did Red cows stay in the herd?