

**DAIRY EXPRESS**



**Herd Recording Service**

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Statistics for 2010 - 2011

Volume 75

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The 2010-11 year was another year of extremes with the prolonged drought being broken by extreme rainfall events which affected all of the dairying areas significantly causing major flooding .

The last 12 months has seen even more farmers using the Dairy Express MISDI web site which gives on-line access to test day information often within 36 hrs of the samples leaving the farm and the ability to produce cow lists and sort the data in a number of different ways as well as the ability to benchmark your herds performance against other herds in the Dairy Express areas.

Dairy Express in an effort to help farmers maximize their herd's potential now has scatter graphs available on the MISDI site that have 4 different graphs that allow cows to be tracked back. The first graph looks at scc against days in milk, the second graph shows possible ketotic and acidotic cows in 3 colour streams. In this graph the green dots represent cows up to 100 days into lactation which are the group most likely to be ketotic. In all the other graphs the green dots represent 1<sup>st</sup> lactation animals. The third graph shows liters against days in milk which shows animals that are underperforming against herd mates that calved in the same time frame that can be overlooked when going through lists. The last graph looks at previous versus current cell count and highlights cows that are not responding to treatment as well as those that have moved either way between tests.

Over 90% of farms now receive their high cell count cows both actual and weighted by SMS which enables timely decisions to be made that can avoid factory penalties and maximize bonuses

The ketosis report looks at the fat to protein percent ratio of cows in the first 100 days. Cows that are ketotic are not performing to their potential and are not fully utilizing costly feed inputs. Every liter increase at peak yield is worth around 200 liter to the full lactation yield and so by targeting this group there is the potential to increase yield significantly. Ketosis if not treated leaves cows mobilizing body fat with a resulting drop in BCS that then can lead to poor conception rates.

The Acidosis report simply looks at the whole herd on test day and produces a list of cows where the butterfat % is less than protein %. This can often be the first sign of a rumen not being healthy and as a result cows may not be performing to their potential irrespective of stage of lactation.

Most of the factories have lowered the level of SCC as to when penalties apply and increased the penalties making the timely use of herd recording results even more valuable to the business. By receiving notification of high cell count cows by SMS and taking advantage of the MISDI site either for downloading files to on farm systems or using the scatter graphs and animal enquiry more timely management decisions can be made to maximize profitability.

**Geoff Potts**

Operations Manager

Dairy Express

## **RULES FOR COWS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE STATISTICS**

All cows are eligible for inclusion in the Annual Statistics tables, **IF THEY MEET OUR STANDARD RULES**. Cows whose results appear in Tables 8-13, Official Cows, are subject to the same set of rules as cows whose results are used to calculate Tables 1-7.

In addition Official Cows must have calved at a time when the herd was registered for the Official Service, been accepted as registered with a Breed Society, have her herd book number stored on the Dairy Express database at the time of calving. Cows already milking in herds that transfer from another service to Official only become eligible for Official status when they recalve. Similarly, cows that transfer from Official to another service level are not eligible for Official status.

The standard rules are:

- ◆ The lactation must have terminated or reached 305 days between July 2010 and the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2011
- ◆ The lactation must have no more than 100 days between milk samples
- ◆ The lactation must have no more than 100 days between calving and first milk sample
- ◆ The lactation must have no more than 100 days between last milk sample and termination date
- ◆ The lactation must have at least 4 milk samples taken
- ◆ All cows that reached 305 days, or terminated earlier than that, are included regardless of whether the cow is still on the farm or has died or been sold

This set of rules is not the same as those used for the Annual Herd Summary that is routinely mailed to herd managers. The Annual Herd Summary is intended for farm management and only includes the cows that are still available for the manager; it does not include dead or sold cows.

On the other hand this Statistics Book is intended as a reference for all farmers so we include all cows, regardless of whether they are still on the farm or not. This gives prospective buyers a comprehensive picture of a herd's performance over the year.

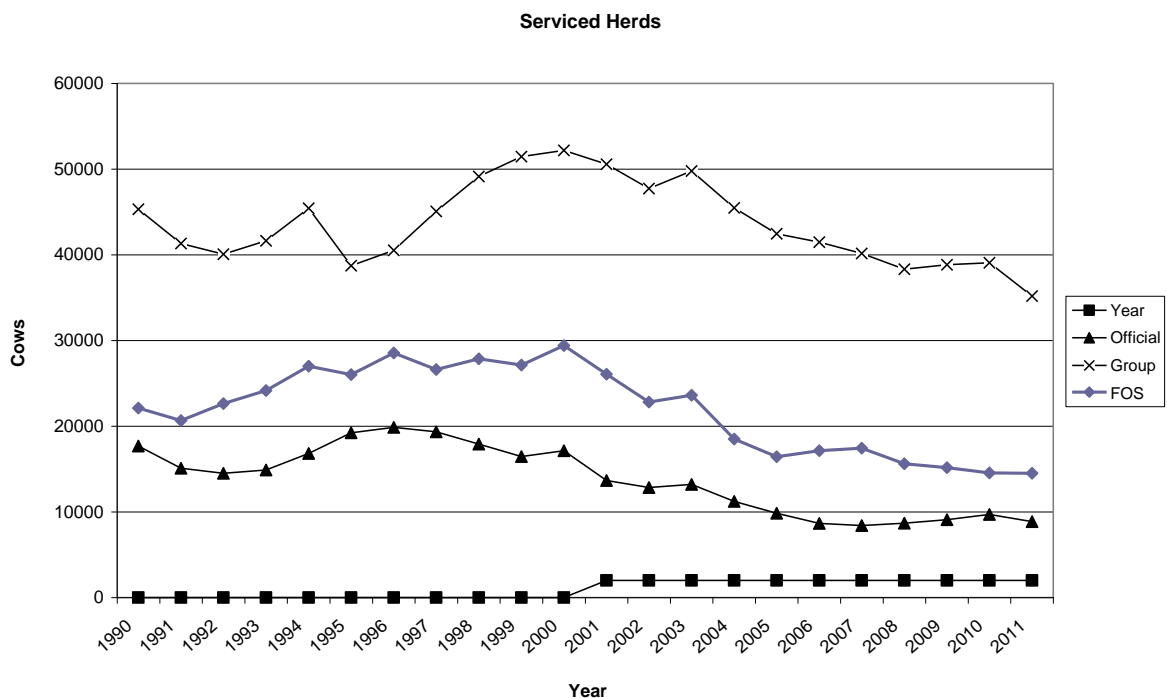
## TRENDS IN RECORDED HERDS

The Dairy Express database allows a unique opportunity to reflect on trends in the NSW dairy herd.

### Serviced Herds

Figure 1 presents the graph for the three categories of service. This year shows the effect of a shrinking industry with farmers changing from group to FOS that no doubt reflects farmers looking at ways to reduce costs while maintaining the benefits of herd recording.

Figure 1. Cows recorded in each service category, 1990 - 2011



### **Production Trends**

Figure 2 describes overall milk yields for the past 17 years. Milk production has steadily increased at an average rate of almost 3% per year for ten years. This year sees a slight drop no doubt tied in with the extreme weather events.

Figure 2. Milk yield trend, NSW 1990-2011

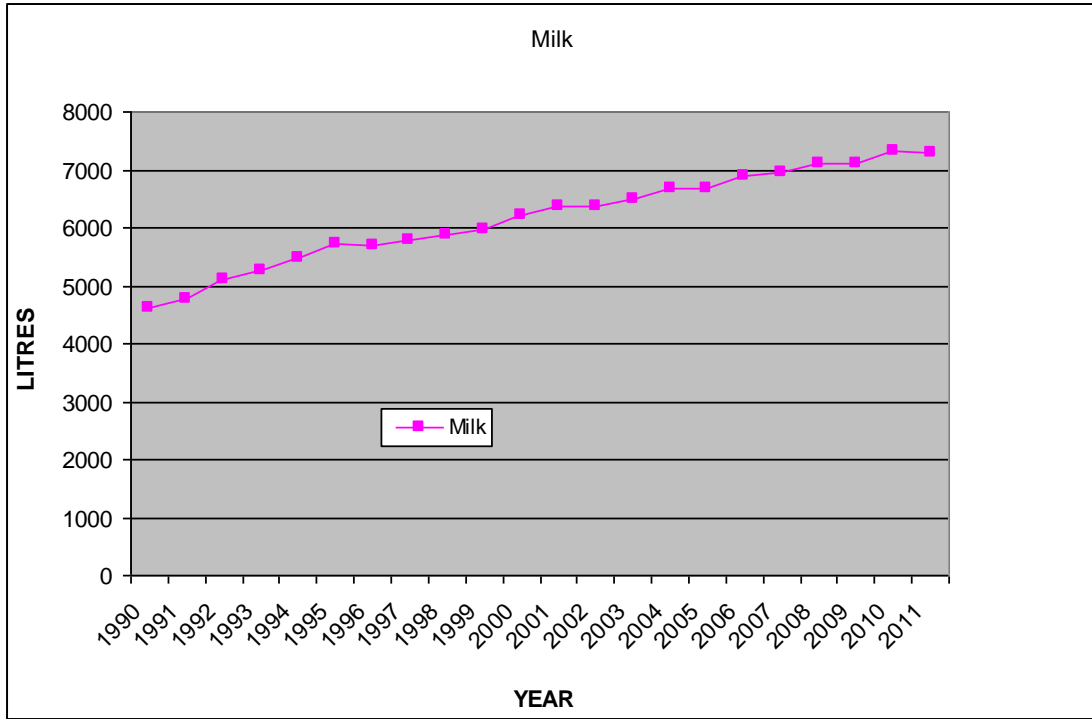
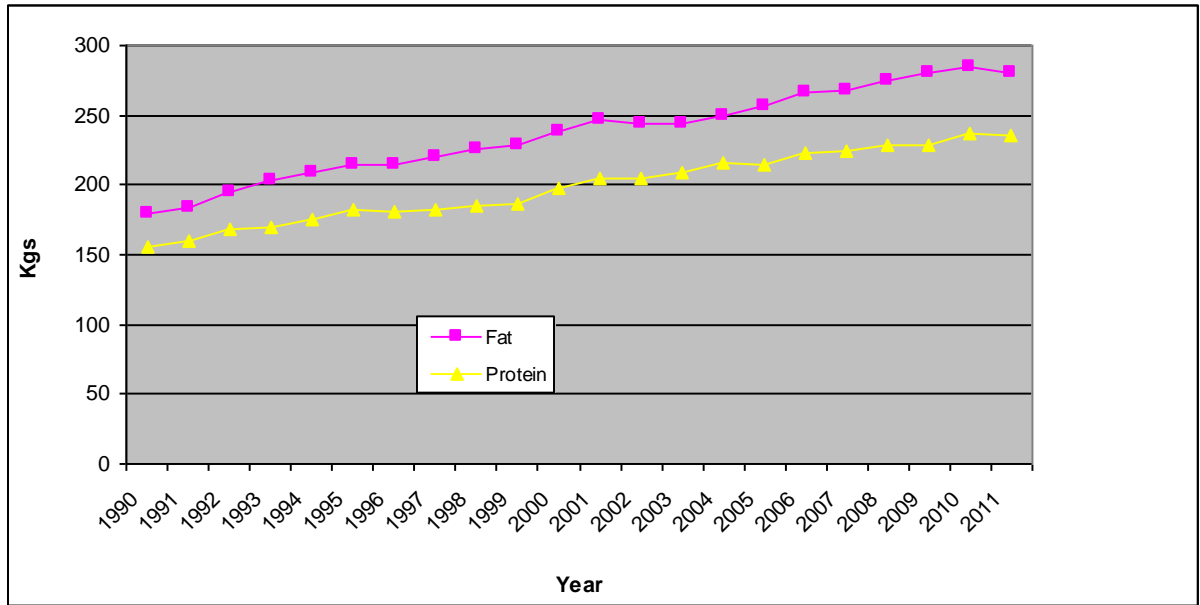
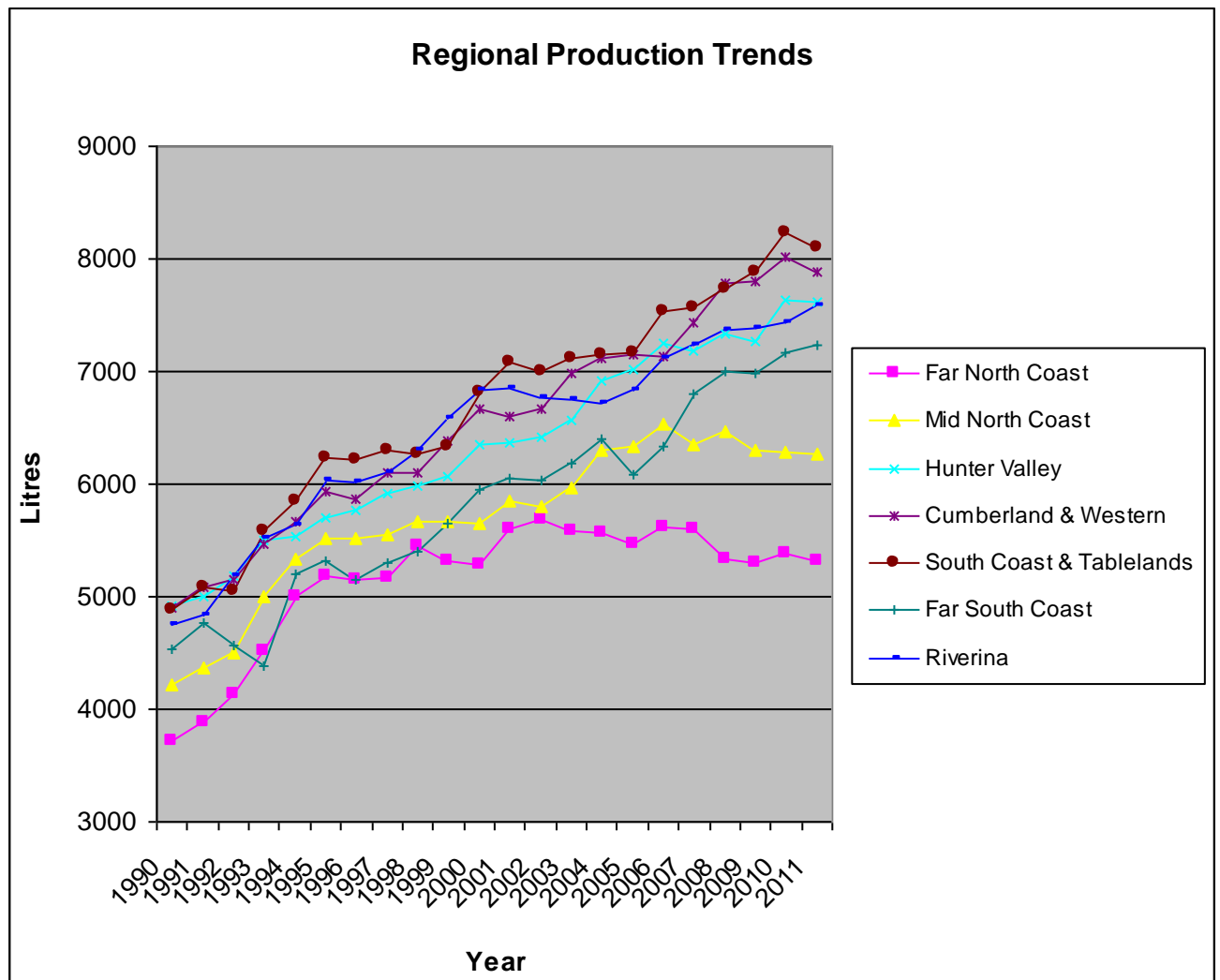


Figure 3 shows again a slight drop this year that ties in with the drop in litres [Figure 3](#). Fat and protein trend, NSW 1990-2011



### Regional Production Trends

Figure 4 highlights trends in lactation yields in the seven major Dairy Express regions.



The continuing poor seasonal conditions and high input costs are slowing down the per cow production gains made over recent years except for the Far South Coast and Riverina.

### Reproduction Performance

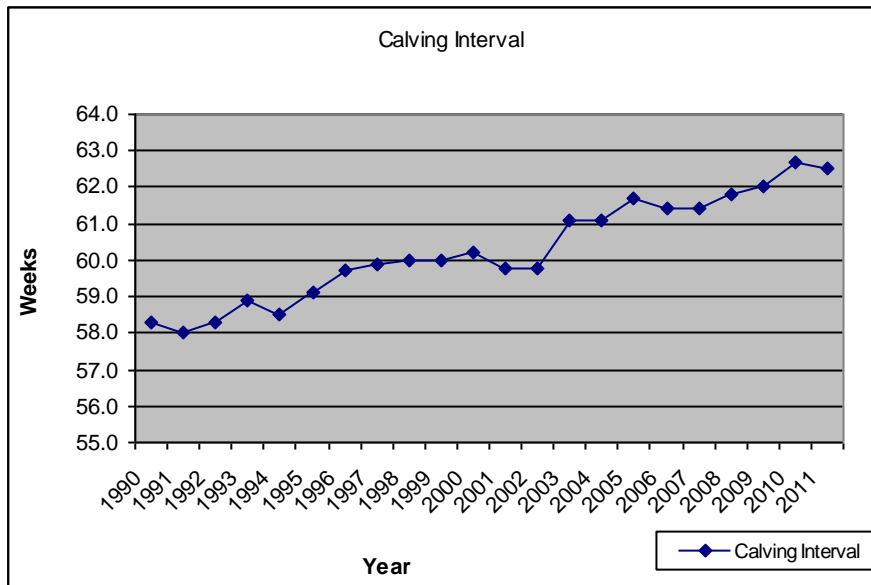
Changes in calving interval and days dry are summarised in figures 5 and 6.

It is stressed that these figures require that an animal have two calvings to permit a calving interval and a number of dry days to be calculated. Consequently, the CI and DD figures relate to the period leading up to the lactation included in this year's statistics.

The calving interval average has come back this year which may reflect the trend of using bulls over AI which many farmers have implemented in the last couple of years.

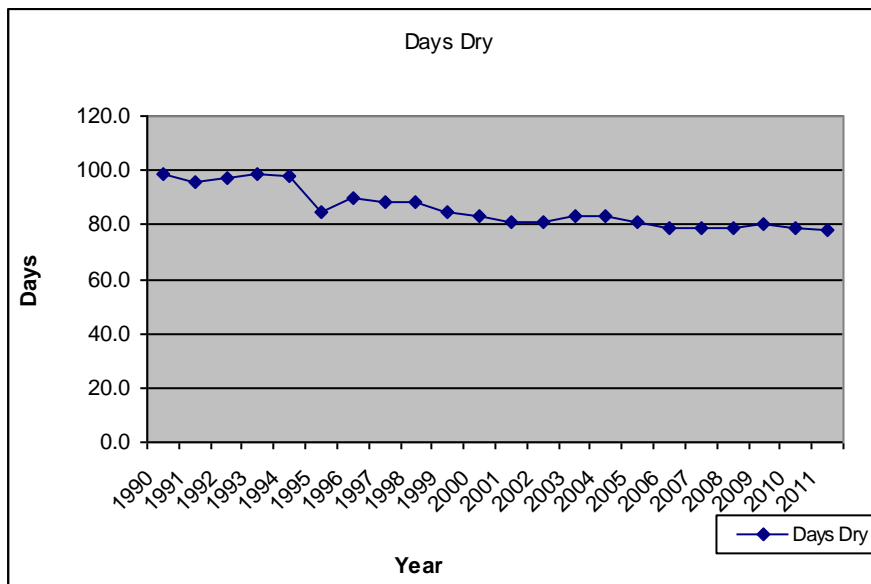


Figure 5. Calving interval, NSW 1990-2011



The decline in the number of days that cows are dry continues its steady reduction.

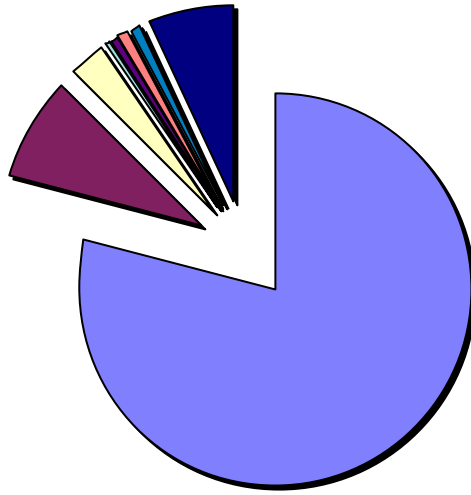
Figure 6. Days Dry, NSW 1990-2011



### Breed Composition

We again present a breed composition pie chart. Holsteins are still by far the dominant breed, while jersey's have increased by 2% with slight increases in Ayrshire and Brown Swiss

## Breed Composition



Holstein	79.02%	Holstein-Friesian	46262
Jersey	8.56%	Jersey	5013
Illawarra	2.86%	Illawarra	1677
Guernsey	0.32%	Guernsey	188
Ayrshire	0.50%	Ayrshire	290
Brown Swiss	0.94%	B. Swiss	548
Aust Red	0.55%	Aust Red	364
Crossbred	6.90%	Crossbred	4043
	100.00%		58544