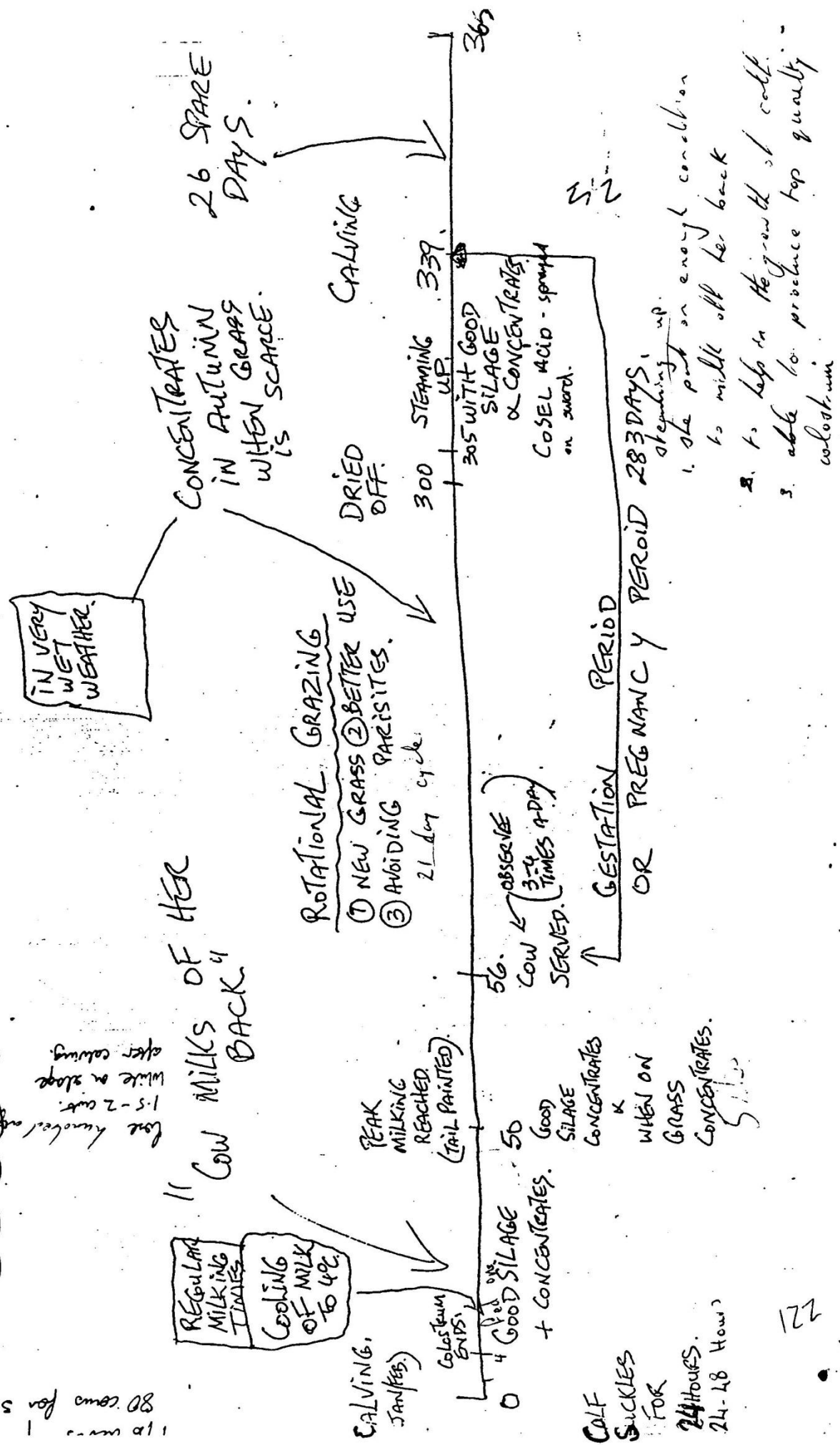


# THE MANAGEMENT OF A DAIRY COW.

80 cows for 5 weeks



## *The Management of a Dairy Cow*

*Management of cows through a 365 day period.*

- day 0* - calving in january / february, calves suckle for hours.
- day 4* - colostrum ends, regular milking times, cooling of milk to 4 degrees celcius.  
good silage and concentrates.  
"cow milks of her back"
- day 50* - peak milking reached (tail painting).  
good silage concentrates and when on grass concentrates.
- day 56* - cow served (observe 3-4 times a day)  
gestation period or pregnancy period of 283 days.  
rotational grazing 1) new grass  
2) better use  
3) avoiding parasites.  
use concentrates in autumn when grass is scarce.
- day 300* - dried off
- day 305* - steaming up with good silage and concentrates.
- day 339* - calving.
- days 339 to 365* include 26 spare days.

to remove from the herd (sell, kill)

## Culling of Cows

20/10

In general one fifth of the Dairy Herd is culled and replaced on an annual basis and for the following reasons :-

- 1) age (after seven to eight lactations), (quality + quantity of milk is affected)
- 2) disease or udder damage,
- 3) lameness or feet difficulties,
- 4) difficulty getting her in calf or difficulty in calving,
- 5) a rogue (wild),
- 6) producing poor calves,
- 7) a lengthening of the udder which causes difficulty at milking and dirt collection,
- 8) poor milker or a reduction of quantity over the lactation,
- 9) tending to put on body weight,
- 10) difficult to feed.

## Mating

A heifer is mated to calf down at three and a half years with an easy calving breed of birth. The heifer should weigh 300 kgs at mating and should be weighing 450 kgs or more at calving.

450 → 550 kg<sup>+</sup>

## Care of Pregnant heifer or cow

Like any other animal, grass is the best food for the cow with good silage for the winter period. Concentration must be fed in the last eight weeks of pregnancy and steaming up the cow is very important.

It has the following advantages :-

- 1) to bring the cow to peak condition for calving and milk production,
- 2) to build reserves to be drawn on later for milk production (milking off her back),
- 3) steaming up is necessary for calf development at the time of the greatest calf growth,

Concentrates are also necessary after calving to enable the cow to reach full production of milk.

steaming up → 1. growth of the calf  
2. help her milk off her back  
3. plenty of colostrum.

## Selecting a Heifer or Replacement Heifer for a Dairy Herd

You pick heifer's calves from progeny best bulls.

- 1) History - daughter of a good mother or history of milk production in the sire's herd.
- 2) Four teats in udder.
- 3) Triangular in shape.
- 4) Good feet, lively gate, healthy (no history of disease).
- 5) A narrow tail is a milk production indicator.
- 6) A good feeder.
- 7) No history of calving difficulty.
- 8) History of milk production in mother.
- 9) Has a big mouth (one of the most important factors).

## Tail Painting

The use of a water (*emulsion*) paint is commonly used in dairy herds. Cows are painted with a bright colour paint (*every 7 to 8 days*), to help the farmer to detect the cow in heat. The paint will be broken or rubbed off by other rising cows or the servicing bull. The colour is then changed, so that repeats of heat can again be detected and the repeat service once again recorded. This practice of tail painting, reduces the need for round the clock observation and the detection of cows who may have short (*2 hours*) standing heat periods. Tail paint when dry.

## Advantages of Artificial Insemination.

- 1) Longer period for inserting the sperm in the vagina.
- 2) Better use of the semen produced by the bull as it can be diluted to service a number of cows.
- 3) The life of the bulls is pro-longed by the use of refrigeration of the semen.
- 4) The need of feeding the bull in a farm is not required.
- 5) The use of pure strain bulls in beef and milk are more available to dairy and beef herds.
- 6) The success at fertilisation is greater.
- 7) Less risk of disease transfer.

## *The Importance of Compact Calving. Tail painting*

*The importance of Compact Calving in late January / early February is important for the farmer in the management of his dairy herd as follows :*

- 1) Cows milking for the same period.
- 2) Cows going to grass at peak milking.
- 3) Cows drying off together.
- 4) Cows being steamed up together.
- 5) Tail painting of all cows together.
- 6) A group of even calves.
- 7) Cows are not using unnecessary food.
- 8) Milk yeilds will be higher.
- 9) Detection of heat confinded to shorter periods for the farmer.
- 10) The calving period is confined to a shorter period.

## Outline the Factors which Effect the Yield and Composition of Milk.

*solids which are not fat*

- 1) The breed. (S.N.F. is lower in low genetic animals. )
- 2) Stage of lactation. (S.N.F. lower at end of lactation. ) - *low levels of propionic acid is low b.fat.*
- 3) Age of cow.
- 4) Feeding levels and quality of the food taken. (a cow under-fed, S.N.F. is lower.)
- 5) The efficiency of milking (a definite programme )
- 6) The length of time between milkings. (regularity )
- 7) Time of year. (lower in winter time.)

### Composition of milk

#### Milk is made up of:

water, milk fat and solid non fat (S.N.F.),  
proteins (casein, albumen, globulin),  
sugars (lactose, glucose)  
and minerals (mainly calcium and phosphorus).

Milk Fat - 3.5 % to 4 % for friesans  
7 % for jersey's.

Milk below 3 % is said to be below legal standard.

S.N.F. must be up on legal standard of 8.5 % and will be as high as 10 % in jersey's.

SNF = Solids non fat