

Alternative CIDR Treatment Regimes – A Veterinary Centre Trial –

In the current season everyone has to be cost aware to ensure their farm system remains profitable for the current season and the seasons to come.

'Days in milk' is one of the biggest economic drivers of farm profitability.

What you do over this mating period will have a strong influence on income in the following season. Also with limited mating periods sub-optimal performance in the first 1-2 cycles will lead to unacceptable cow wastage.

Last season our practice looked at two

approaches to treating non-cycling cows. The concept was to see if a cheaper non-standard approach could still provide similar days in milk and give a similar net return when compared to early treatment with CIDRs.

THE TRIAL SET UP WAS AS FOLLOWS:

- On day -9 before the PSM all non-cyclers calved greater than 35 days were enrolled.
- On a random basis (every alternate cow), cow were allocated to 1 of 2 groups.
- Group 1 cows received a CIDR at day -9 completed a standard CIDR program which saw them mated on day 1 and 2 of mating.
- Group 2 cows received no treatment on day -9 and on day -2, all cows which had not cycled over the following previous 7 days were given prostaglandin (PG). These cows were mated to detected heat (from the PSM) and then on day +5 of mating cows which had still not cycled were enrolled in a standard CIDR program

The data below comes from a local 1500 cow farm enrolled in the trial. At day -9 before PSM, it had 600 non-cycling cows (calved >35 days) which were enrolled.

- 290 cows were allocated into **Group 1** and were CIDRed (mated on day 1 and 2 of mating)

- 309 cows were allocated into **Group 2**

By day -2, 85 group 2 cows had 'cycled', leaving 224 (72%) to be given PG

By day +5, 82 had been mated (after PG injection), leaving 142 (45%) non-cycling cows

These 142 non-cyclers were then

CIDRed and mated on day 14 and 15 of mating.

The results from this farm appear in the graph below. In this graph both **Group 1** and **Group 2** cows are reported as well as the remainder of the herd as a comparison.

Results

By day 2 of mating 56% of the Group 1 cows were pregnant, which is a very good conception rate.

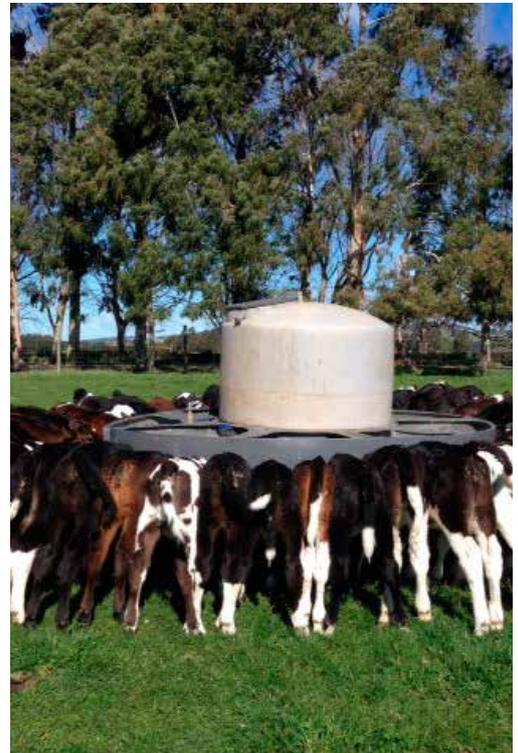
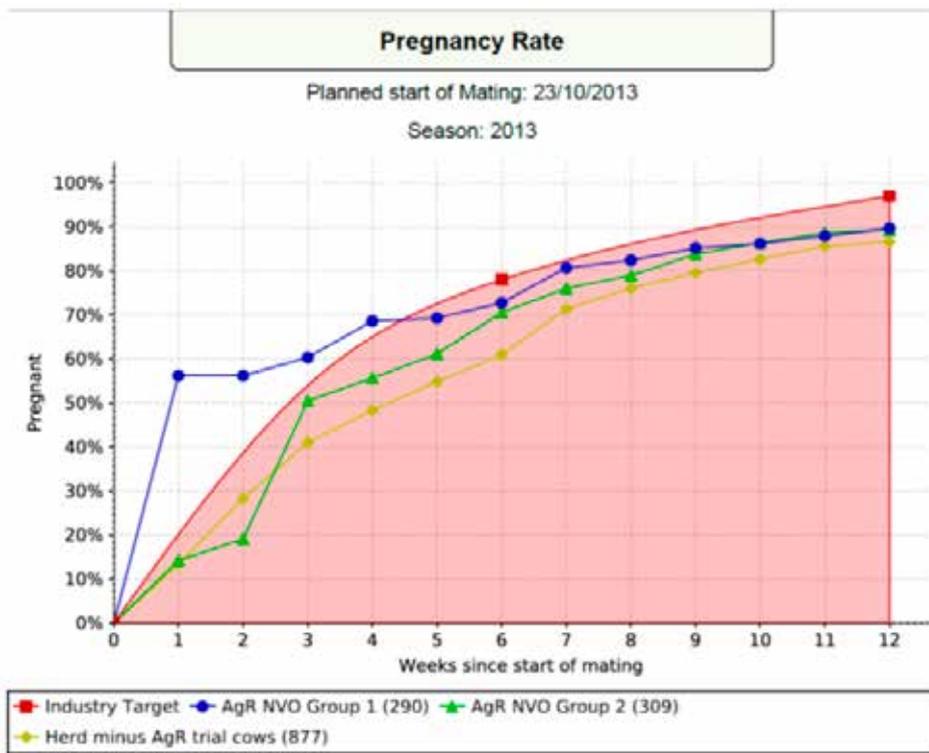
It wasn't till the end of week 3 that

just 50% of the Group 2 cows were pregnant.

After 10 weeks of mating there was no difference in pregnancy rate between the two groups but both groups were 3% better than the rest of the herd (**Yellow**).

The difference in days in milk the following season can be calculated from the area under the graph.





Economic Analysis

If we worked on a maximum mating period of 10 weeks going forward:

The Group 1 cows (early CIDRS - treated at Day -9) on average would have 51.5 days in milk by the end of week 10 of calving this season.

The Group 2 cows (received a dose of PG at day -2 and cows not cycled by day +5 were CIDRed), on average would have 38.7 days in milk by the end of week 10 of calving this season.

Gross return differential between the two programs

Days in milk $12.8 \times \$6.50/\text{kgMS}$ (long term average?)
 $\times 1.4\text{kgMS}/\text{day} = \mathbf{\$116.40}$

Cost difference between the two programs

- Group 1 - ~\$43/cow (all treated)
- Group 2 - 224/309 received PG @ \$5.40 = \$3.90, plus 142/309 received a CIDR @ \$43/cow = \$19.70. The total therefore comes to ~\$23.6/cow average
- This represent a cost differential of \$20.60

Based on this there was still an economic advantage of \$95.80/cow enrolled in the Group 1 over Group 2 (\$116.40- \$20.60). This does not take into account the benefits of calving earlier next year on non-cycler reduction. After a six week AI period there would have been the same number of heifer calves born.

Overall both programs were pretty effective with similar six week in-calf rates (73 v71%) and low empty rates after 10 weeks mating, but the group 1 cows had a significant economic advantage over group 2. Both groups in the trial had less cow wastage (empties) than the main cycling herd after a 10 week mating period.

Veterinary Centre TRIAL

