

DairyNZ InCalf Fertility Focus Report

FAQ's

There's always room for improvement





Running a Fertility Focus Report

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Q: "I can't get this season's report; it defaults to the previous year"

A: This is either due to insufficient calving or mating records being entered, or the herd has reduced in size. If less than 70% of cows re-calved from the previous season, the report won't run because it thinks there are unrecorded calvings yet to be entered. The Fertility Focus Report will default back to the previous season if this is the case.

Q: "I can't run a Fertility Focus Report; it says 'too many funny calvings'"

A: Some calvings have been batch-entered (many calvings entered on a single day – around HT time for example). The Fertility Focus Report requires accurate calving pattern information to run.

Q: "We transferred a lot of cows to another herd during mating – how does that impact the Fertility Focus Report?"

A: The Fertility Focus Report requires an uninterrupted sequence of calving dates, mating records, early-aged pregnancy test results, and records of culls and deaths. Large transfers of cows from one herd to another during mating interrupts this sequence and prevents normal calculations running much like large changes in herd size does in section 1a. This may block your Fertility Focus Report.



Discrepancies in herd details

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Q: "The MSD is different to what I expected."

A: The MSD on the Fertility Focus Report is the first of two consecutive days that had at least one recorded mating (AB or natural), and at least three of the next six days also had recorded matings. If some cows are mated ahead of the herd (e.g. for embryo transfer) it may trigger an early MSD. If the MSD is later than it should be, this is likely due to unrecorded matings or insufficient consecutive days of recorded matings to have triggered the correct MSD.

Q: "My MED was different to the one on the Fertility Focus Report"

A: The MED is either the latest date of a recorded mating in the mating period, or the last date with two conceptions (from early-aged pregnancy testing) followed by at least 30 days with no conceptions. The figure on the report is based on the records that were entered into MINDA. For example, if you do AB for 5 weeks and record these matings, then put the bulls out and neither record natural matings nor early-aged pregnancy test results, the MED will appear as the last day with a recorded AB. Another instance that can cause the same effect is when the AB period is shorter than 30 days, and positive pregnancy test records are provided only for cows conceiving to natural bull matings. Avoid this by entering at least two early aged positive pregnancy tests records of conceptions occurring during the early-mid AB period.

Q: "My herd size is not what I actually had on farm"

A: The herd size is reported as 'cows analysed' (Eligible cows) on the Fertility Focus Report. The 'cows analysed' are a subset of cows in the herd that calved in the respective season that were present at MSD. Any cows culled before MSD are not included, but cows that were culled after MSD are included. Cows which entered the herd after MSD are also excluded.

Q: "I had no cows calve on the 'these cows calved between' dates"

A: The dates shown in that section of the Fertility Focus Report are not the actual dates that cows calved on; it's the calving window that identifies eligible cows to be analysed. When a Fertility Focus Report reports on herd reproductive performance, it is assessing how quickly cows that have calved within a recent window get back in calf. The report calculates MSD to decide which cows to report on and includes the cows that calved up to 130 days before MSD, to 59 days after MSD for seasonal calving herds. This is the 'these cows calved between' date range.



The Results

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Q: "The not-in-calf rate is higher than my scanner told me"

A: On-farm empty rates quoted by scanners and farmers can be lower than the not-in-calf rate shown on the Fertility Focus Report if they are quoting the proportion of cows that were scanned empty on the day of pregnancy testing. Fertility Focus Report not-in-calf rate is the proportion of the 'cows analysed' that were not recorded as pregnant, and includes empty cows, doubtfuls, cows that were culled after MSD or before pregnancy testing and cows that didn't have a cull or PD against them at all. The reason for this is that the proportion of any herd present at scanning can vary widely from farm to farm and year to year depending on culling practices. The Fertility Focus Report uses the more consistent and comparable 'cows analysed' group of cows as the denominator (calved in the season and present in the herd at MSD). The most common cause of not-in-calf rate being falsely inflated is cows with no culling record and no pregnancy test records. This tally of unaccounted animals is typically 1-3% even in well recorded herds.

Q: "My Fertility Focus Report figures look worse than they should be because I deliberately didn't mate some cows, or ran some cows with a bull during the AB period"

A: If cows deliberately weren't mated or were run with a bull instead, or culled the day after mating started, they will still be included in the denominator for submission rate and depress this figure. It will also depress estimated 6-week in-calf rate in the intermediate Fertility Focus Report. Since the detailed Fertility Focus Report displays actual 6-week in-calf rate based on scanning results, natural matings will be incorporated into in-calf rate. The report cannot see what management practices were undertaken on farm, and the Fertility Focus Report cannot be adjusted. Cows deliberately withheld from mating are not in-calf and therefore not available to calve down in the herd next season, so the reproductive performance of the herd has been impacted by the decision. It is also important that farmers remember that it is unusual to not mate more than 5% of the cows in your herd which makes this decision impact be less significant.

Q: "My Fertility Focus Report figures are different to those in MINDA"

A: The figures match in the majority of herds, however, a small proportion of herds may have a difference of roughly 1-2% in their figures. Causes of these discrepancies are still under investigation to get the closest possible alignment.



The Results

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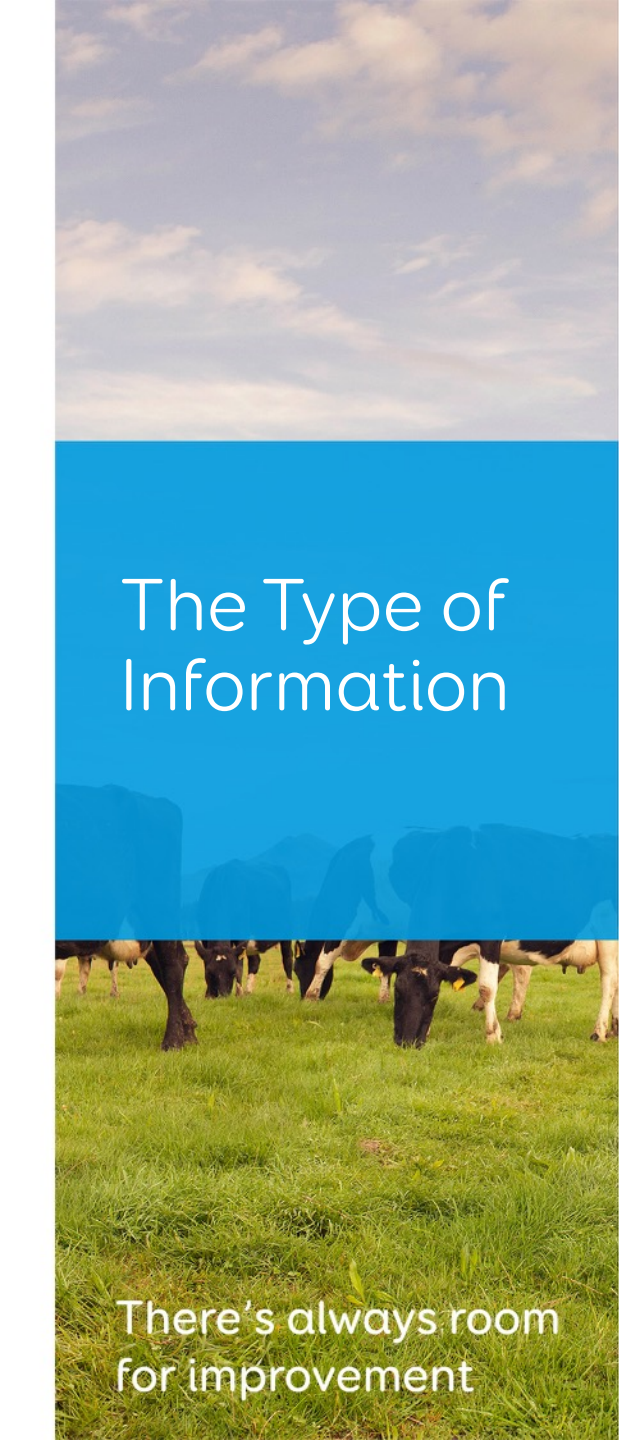
Q: "The 6-week in-calf rate and not-in-calf rates are different to what I get off MINDApro reports such as the Pregnancy Confirmation Report (PCR)"

A: Different reports measure different things, so results will differ. MINDA pro reports produce different figures because they are run on different groups of cows and use different calculations to the Fertility Focus Report. The Fertility Focus Report 'cows analysed' group runs on the cows that calved this season that were still in the herd at MSD. However, most farmers run MINDApro reports off their numbered animals group, which only includes current animals. An example of this is the PCR. The PCR only reports on animals that actually had a pregnancy test, meaning that any culls or animals that weren't scanned are not included in the denominator for 6-week in-calf rate and not-in-calf rate calculations.

Q: "My 6-week in-calf rate and conception rate seem too low. The % of herd in calf graph flat lines during the last few weeks of AB then climbs steeply after AB ends"

A: This can occur when the farmer records 'run with bull' matings in MINDA Live. This creates a natural bull mating date on the same date for virtually every cow in the herd. These false mating records corrupt the 6-week in-calf and conception rate calculations.





The Type of Information

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Q: "Why can't I get NRR?"

A: A 2-24 day NRR is reported only on intermediate Fertility Focus Report if the AB period is long enough so that at least 50 eligible AB matings returns are recorded. NRR will not appear on detailed Fertility Focus Reports where pregnancy test results provide a more accurate estimate of conception rate. NRR is thus superseded by conception rate.

Q: "My report doesn't show conception rate"

A: Check the report type on the back page of the Fertility Focus Report, it should show intermediate or basic. Intermediate and basic reports have insufficient early-aged pregnancy testing to produce conception rate information, but display NRR instead if sufficient matings have been recorded.

Q: "I did aged pregnancy testing but I don't have a detailed Fertility Focus Report with a conception rate"

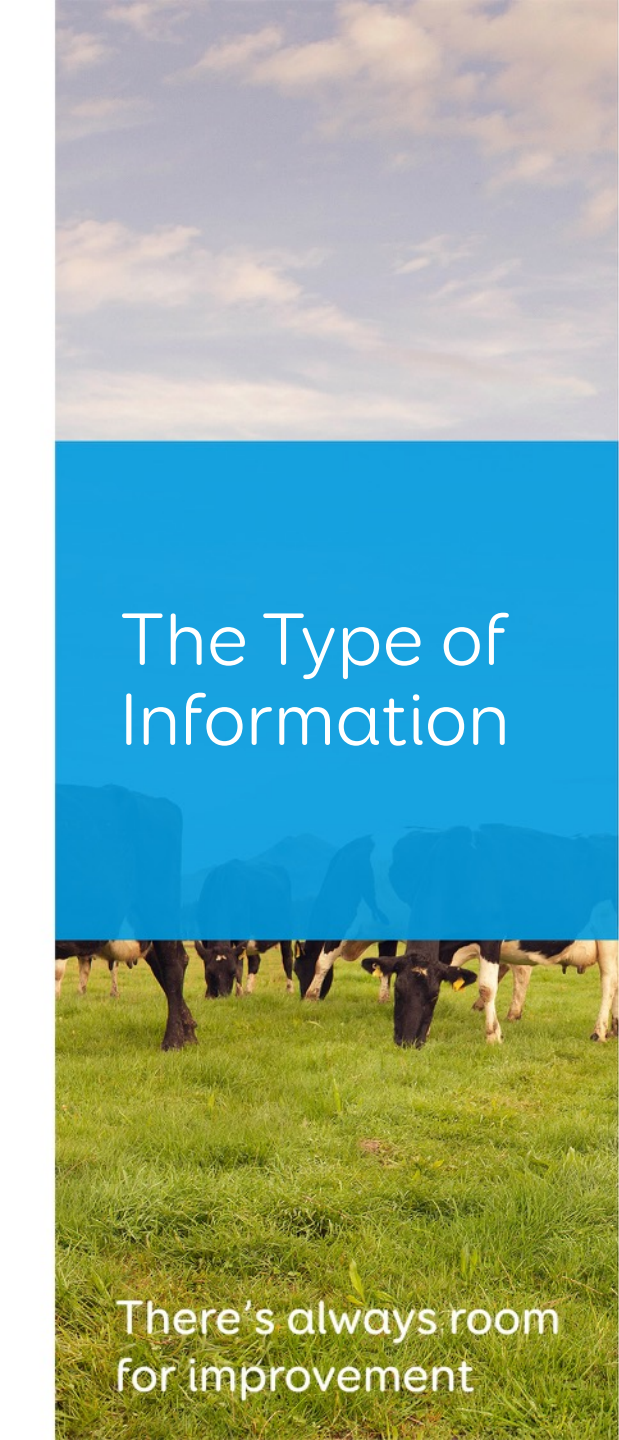
A: Pregnancies get harder to date when they get older than 17 weeks (122 days). To have a detailed Fertility Focus Report with conception rate calculated, at least 80% of cows require a confirmed pregnancy test (pregnant or empty), and of that 80%, 80% require pregnancies aged between 35-122 days (5-17 weeks) gestation. If there is insufficient early-aged pregnancy testing, a detailed report and conception rate will be unavailable and an intermediate Fertility Focus Report will run instead with a NRR instead of conception rate.

Q: "What's the difference between aged and non-aged pregnancy tests?"

A: Aged pregnancy tests are pregnancy diagnoses that have recorded the age of the foetus in days or weeks (empty cows are also considered aged at zero days pregnant).

Non-aged pregnancy tests have simply called the cow pregnant but not recorded the age of the foetus OR the "age of the pregnancy" is outside the 35-122 days. Aged pregnancies should be aged when the foetus is less than 120 days gestation. Sufficient early-aged pregnancies are required to generate detailed reports in MINDA, including in-calf rate graphs, conception rate graphs and a detailed Fertility Focus Report.





The Type of Information

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Q: "My cows have some pregnancies aged less than 35 days, how does that impact the Fertility Focus Report?"

A: Cows with a positive pregnancy record of less than 35 days in calf will still contribute to in-calf rate and not-in-calf calculations, however, they will not be considered to conception rate calculations.

Q: "Some of my cows diagnosed empty were scanned less than 35 days after MED. How will that impact my results?"

A: While these cows were called empty by the scanner, they are classified by the Fertility Focus Report as rechecks, because it is still possible that some could be pregnant. While this will reduce the apparent number of empties in the 'Records available for not-in-calf rate' table on Page 2 of the report, it has no effect on the not-in-calf rate reported.

