

Cohort Analysis: A unique method to conduct analyses of subgroups in dairy herds

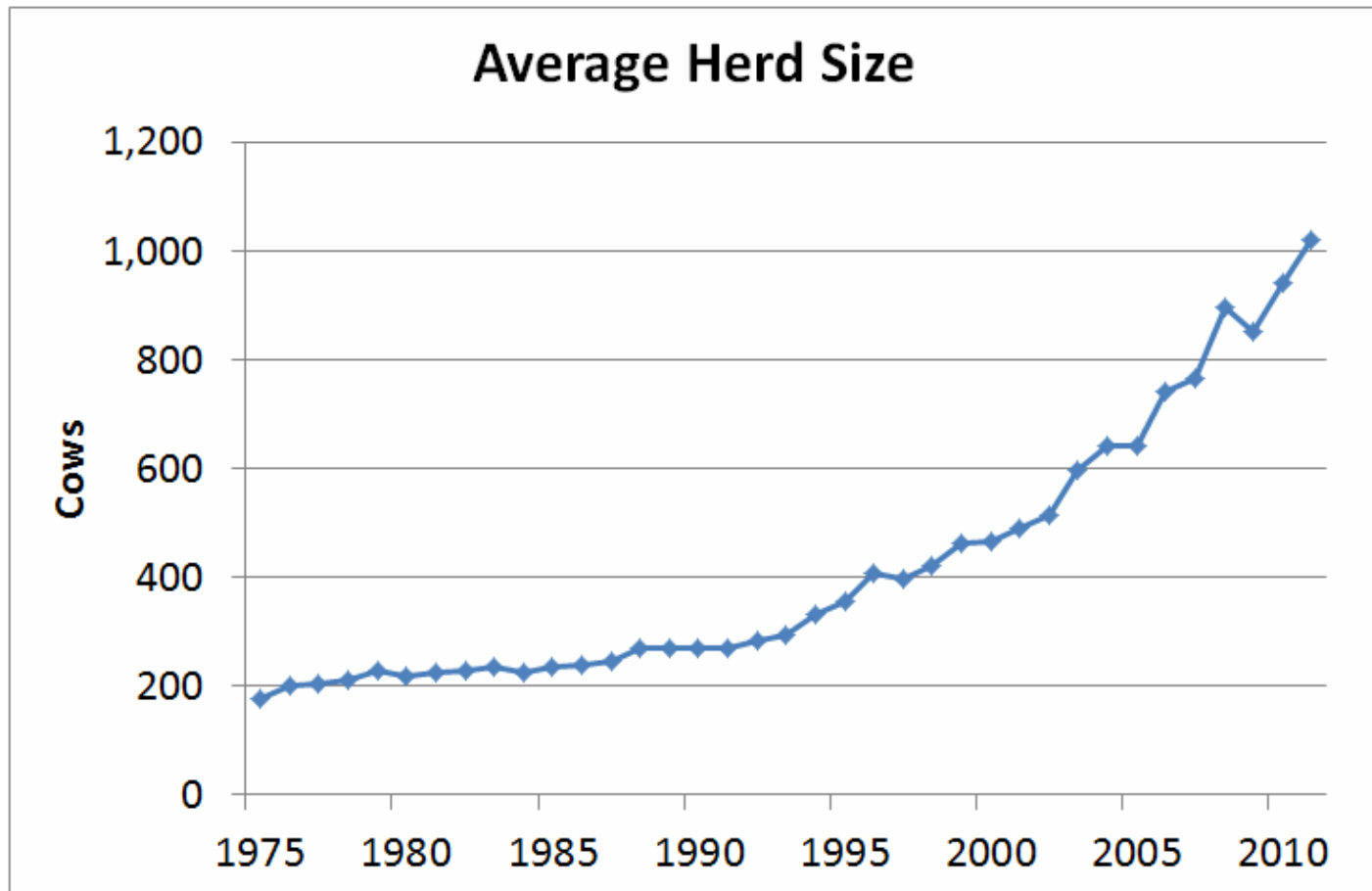
S.C. Smith

*DHI-Provo; a division of
DHI Computing Service, Inc.
Provo, Utah, USA*



DHI-PROVO

Consolidation in the Dairy Industry



Herds processed at DHI-Provo

9,800 Cow Dairy



DHI-PROVO

500% Increase in Herd Size

- ▶ Dairy producers are using more:
 - Professional consulting services:
 - Feed nutritionists
 - Reproduction specialists
 - Udder health specialists
 - Specialized labor:
 - Maternity and fresh cows
 - Reproduction
 - Feeding
 - Milking
 - Young stock raising



Dairy Producers and Consultants



Traditional Herd Summary

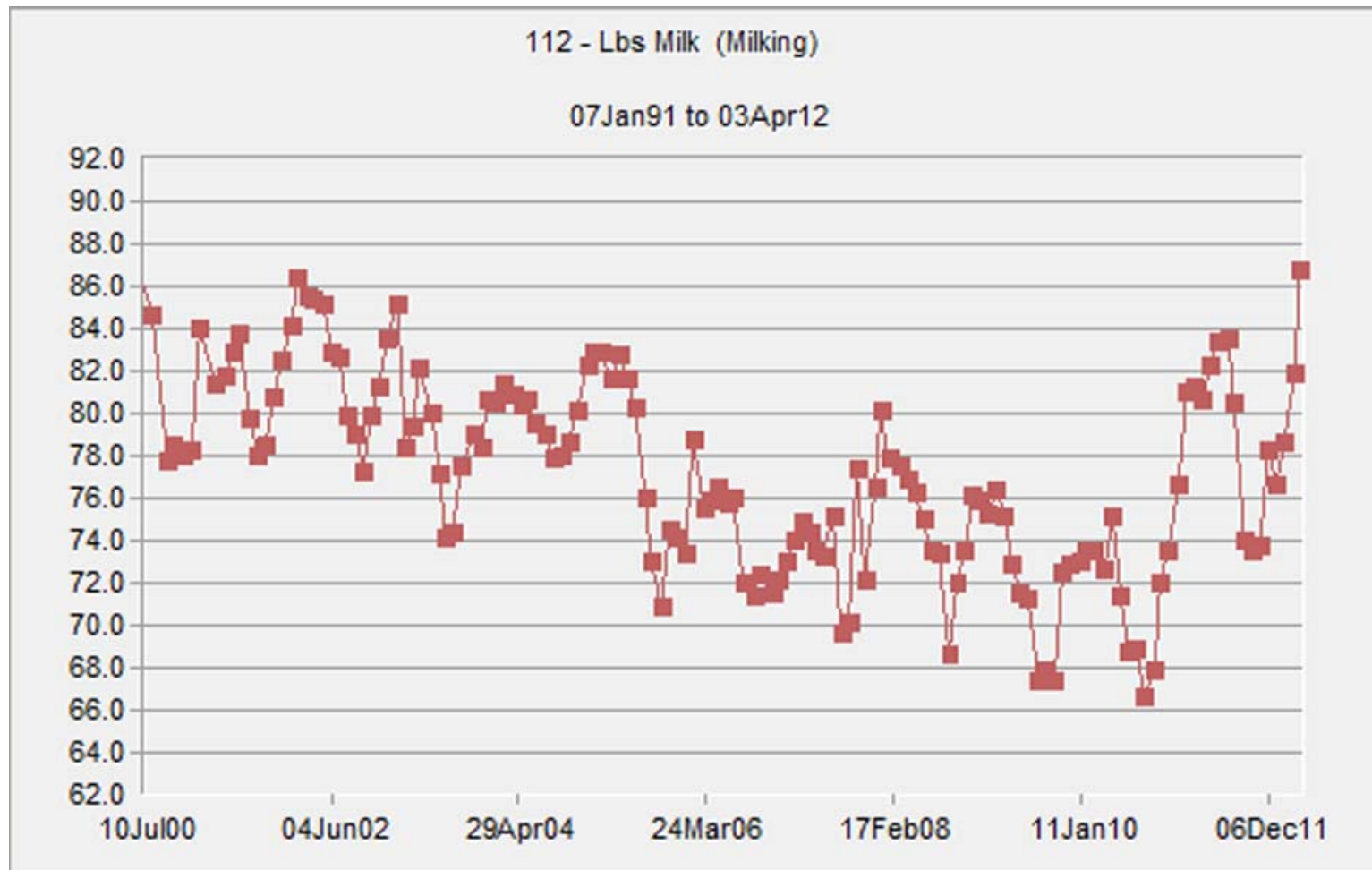
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Characteristics of Traditional Herd Summary Reports

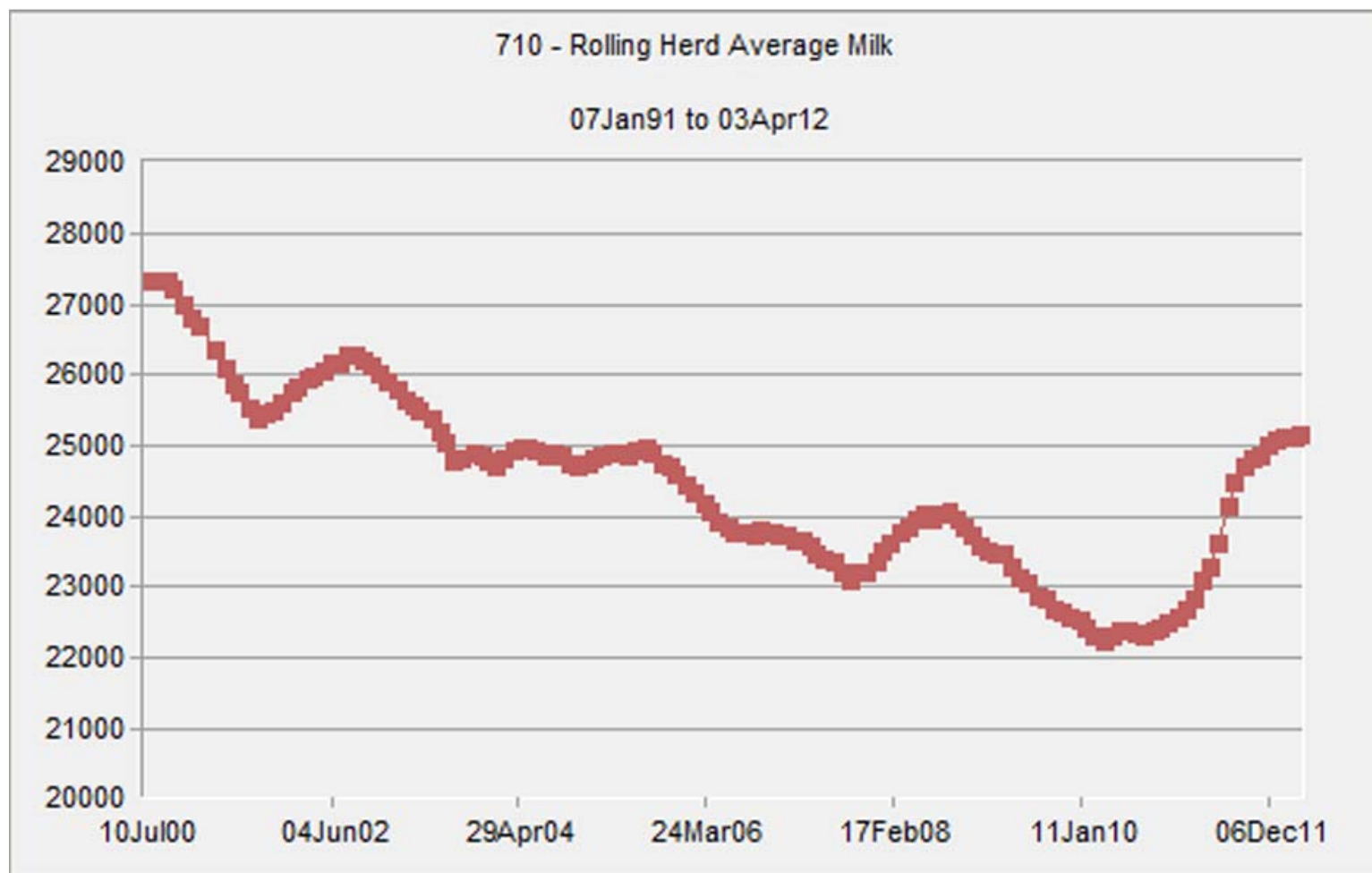
- ▶ Statistics are generally calculated on:
 - Whole herd
 - Lactation groups
- ▶ Statistics are based on:
 - Current and prior test day values
 - Reproduction events in the lactation
 - 365 day Rolling Herd Average (RHA) values
- ▶ As data is aggregated over time and data sets get larger the statistics become more “stable”



Current Test Date Milk

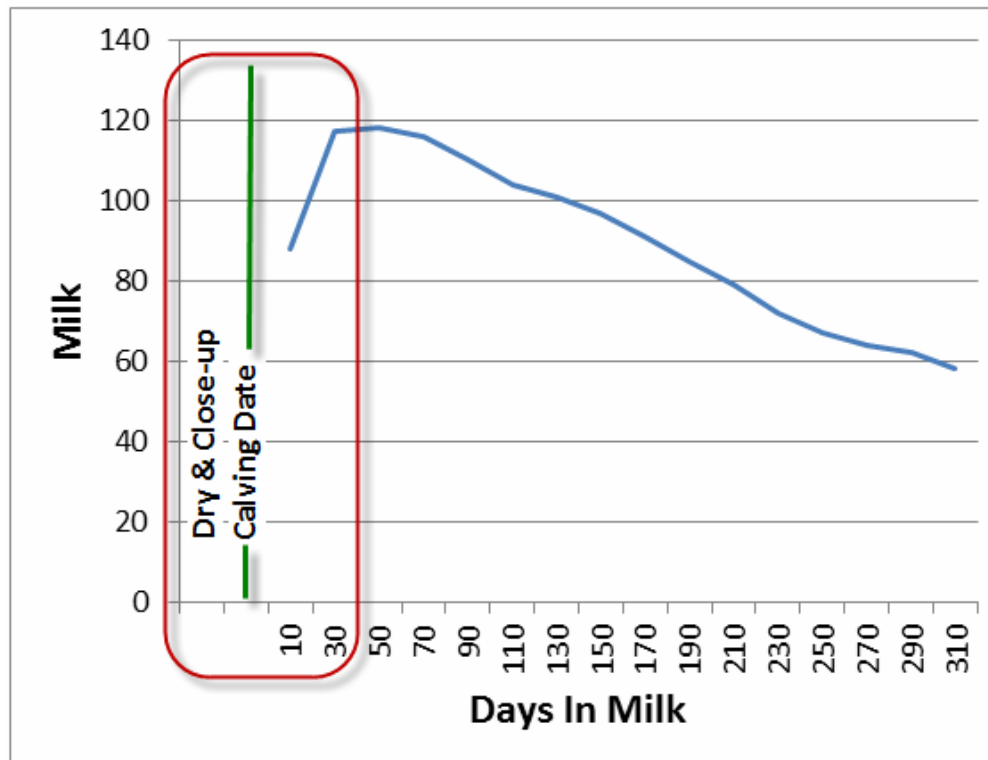


365 Day Rolling Herd Average Milk



Transition Cow Management

- ▶ A cow's whole lactation is influenced by the dry, close-up and fresh periods



Transition Cow Management

► Feed Rations:

- Dry cows
- Close-ups
- Fresh cows

► Cow Comfort:

- Adequate housing and feed bunk space
- Clean, dry and well-ventilated maternity facilities
- Grouping and social interaction



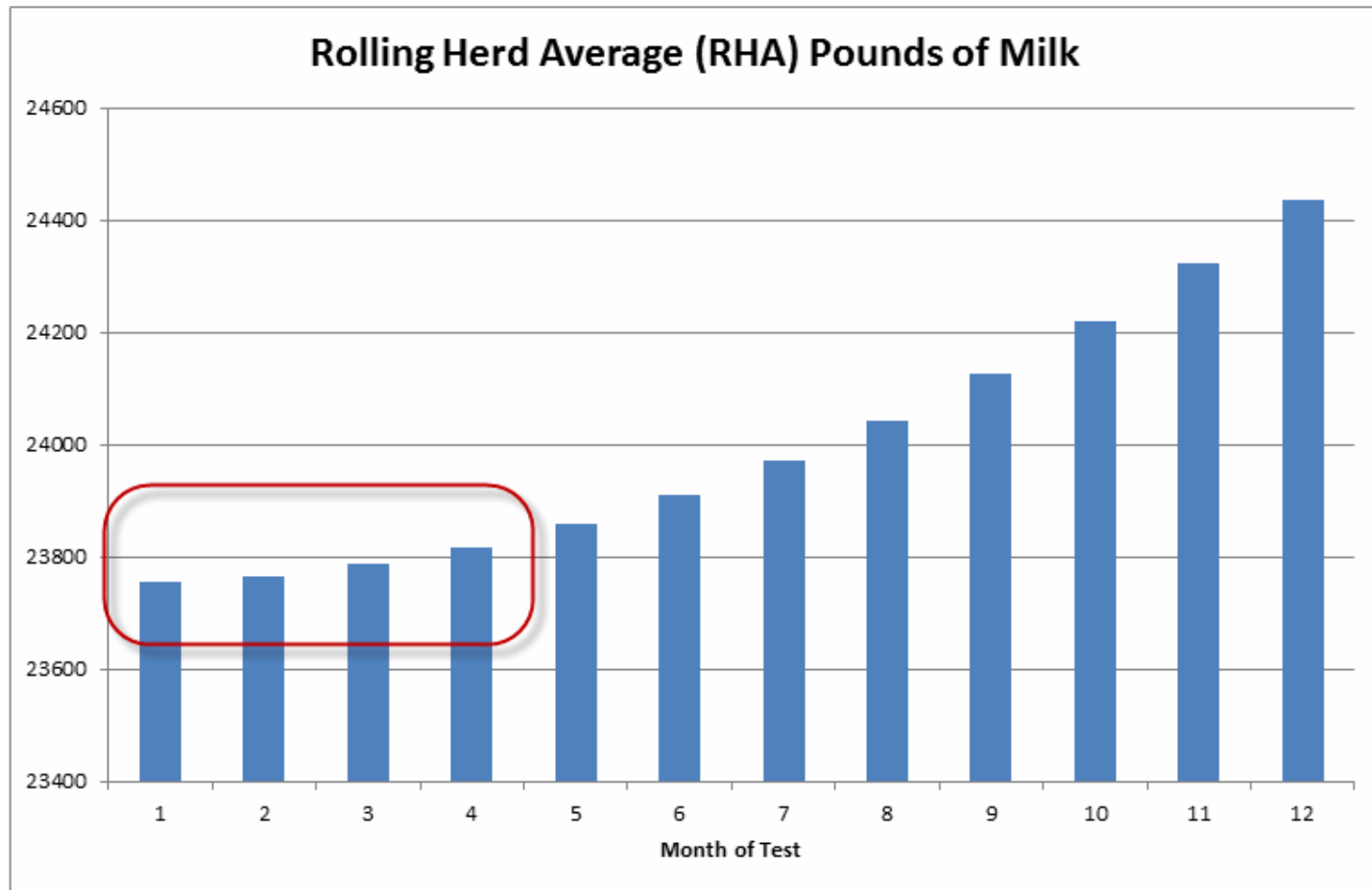
Changes within a Dairy

- ▶ Some important changes, such as in the transition program, may affect just a small portion of the herd initially



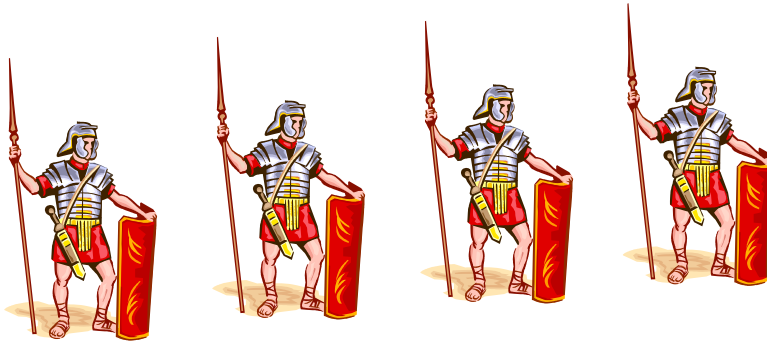
- ▶ It takes time for the whole herd to be influenced by the changes

Lag Effect of a Change on the RHA



Cohort

- ▶ Group of Roman Soldiers



- ▶ Class of school students
- ▶ Group of medical research subjects
- ▶ Group of cows that calved the same month

Number of Cows Calved by Month

DIM	Data	Apr 12	Mar 12	Feb 12	Jan 12	Dec 11	Nov 11
Lact. All							
Transition	# Calved	<u>35</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>101</u>	<u>101</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>114</u>
Lact. 1							
Transition	# Calved	<u>17</u>	<u>29</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>34</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>31</u>
Lact. 2							
Transition	# Calved	<u>10</u>	<u>24</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>31</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>31</u>
Lact. 3+							
Transition	# Calved	<u>8</u>	<u>33</u>	<u>38</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>52</u>

Dry, Close-up and Transition Health

- ▶ All statistics in a column are based on the cows that calved that month (Cohort Group)

DIM	Data	Apr 12	Mar 12	Feb 12	Jan 12	Dec 11	Nov 11
Lact. All							
Transition	# Calved	<u>35</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>101</u>	<u>101</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>114</u>
	Prev Days Dry	69	76	74	70	68	65
	Days Close-up	20	21	19	21	22	22
	% DOA's	5.7	10.5	6.9	7.9	10.7	3.5
	% Twins		4.7	4.0	9.2	4.8	2.7
	% Milk Fever		1.2		4.0	1.2	4.4
	% RP				10.9	11.9	7.0
	% DA			3.0	1.0		
	% Mastitis	2.9	3.5	9.9	6.9	6.0	10.5

Dry, Close-up and Transition Health

- ▶ Statistics on a row show performance over time

DIM	Data	Apr 12	Mar 12	Feb 12	Jan 12	Dec 11	Nov 11	
Lact. All								
Transition	# Calved	<u>35</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>101</u>	<u>101</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>114</u>	
	Prev Days Dry	69	76	74	70	68	65	
	Days Close-up	20	21	19	21	22	22	
	% DOA's	5.7	10.5	6.9	7.9	10.7	3.5	
	% Twins		4.7	4.0	9.2	4.8	2.7	
	% Milk Fever		1.2		4.0	1.2	4.4	
	% RP				10.9	11.9	7.0	
	% DA			3.0	1.0			
	% Mastitis	2.9	3.5	9.9	6.9	6.0	10.5	

Highlighting

- ▶ Green = One standard deviation above the mean
- ▶ Yellow = One standard deviation below the mean

DIM	Data	Apr 12	Mar 12	Feb 12	Jan 12	Dec 11	Nov 11	Oct 11
Lact. All								
Transition	# Calved	35	86	101	101	84	114	94
	Prev Days Dry	69	76	74	70	68	65	63
	Days Close-up	20	21	19	21	22	22	21
	% DOA's	5.7	10.5	6.9	7.9	10.7	3.5	7.4
	% Twins		4.7	4.0	9.2	4.8	2.7	3.3
	% Milk Fever		1.2		4.0	1.2	4.4	1.1
	% RP				10.9	11.9	7.0	6.4
	% DA			3.0	1.0			1.1
	% Mastitis	2.9	3.5	9.9	6.9	6.0	10.5	12.8



Milk Production (30 DIM Groups)

DIM	Data	Apr 12	Mar 12	Feb 12	Jan 12	Dec 11	Nov 11	Oct 11	Sep 11	Aug 11
Lact. All										
Transition	# Calved	<u>35</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>101</u>	<u>101</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>94</u>	<u>108</u>	<u>111</u>
1-30	# of Weights	<u>0</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>69</u>	<u>103</u>	<u>92</u>
	Milk		102.9	93.6	101.2	87.5	105.0	98.6	95.4	90.6
31-60	# of Weights		<u>13</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>107</u>	<u>114</u>
	Milk		106.0	103.6	107.6	99.3	107.0	104.4	96.7	93.2
61-90	# of Weights			<u>13</u>	<u>112</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>117</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>110</u>
	Milk			101.6	105.2	100.4	101.7	97.7	99.6	88.0
91-120	# of Weights				<u>14</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>94</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>103</u>	<u>93</u>
	Milk				100.1	95.4	97.8	91.0	89.7	88.2
121-150	# of Weights					<u>7</u>	<u>113</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>98</u>	<u>108</u>
	Milk					96.7	95.1	87.9	86.5	81.7
151-180	# of Weights						<u>19</u>	<u>81</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>110</u>
	Milk						92.7	87.3	83.4	77.6

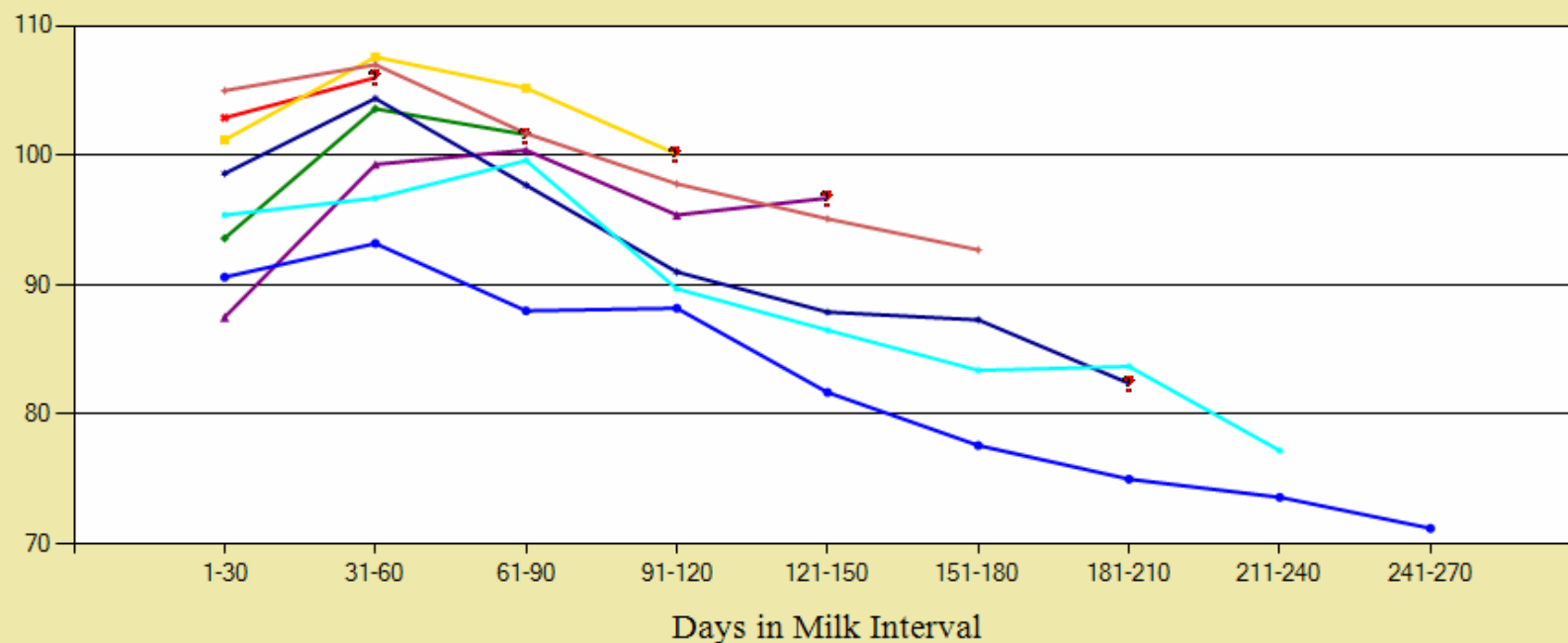
Graphs

“There is no statistical tool that is as powerful as a well-chosen graph.” John M. Chambers



Milk Production: Month of Calving Cohort Groups

Milk by Cohort Groups - Lact Curves

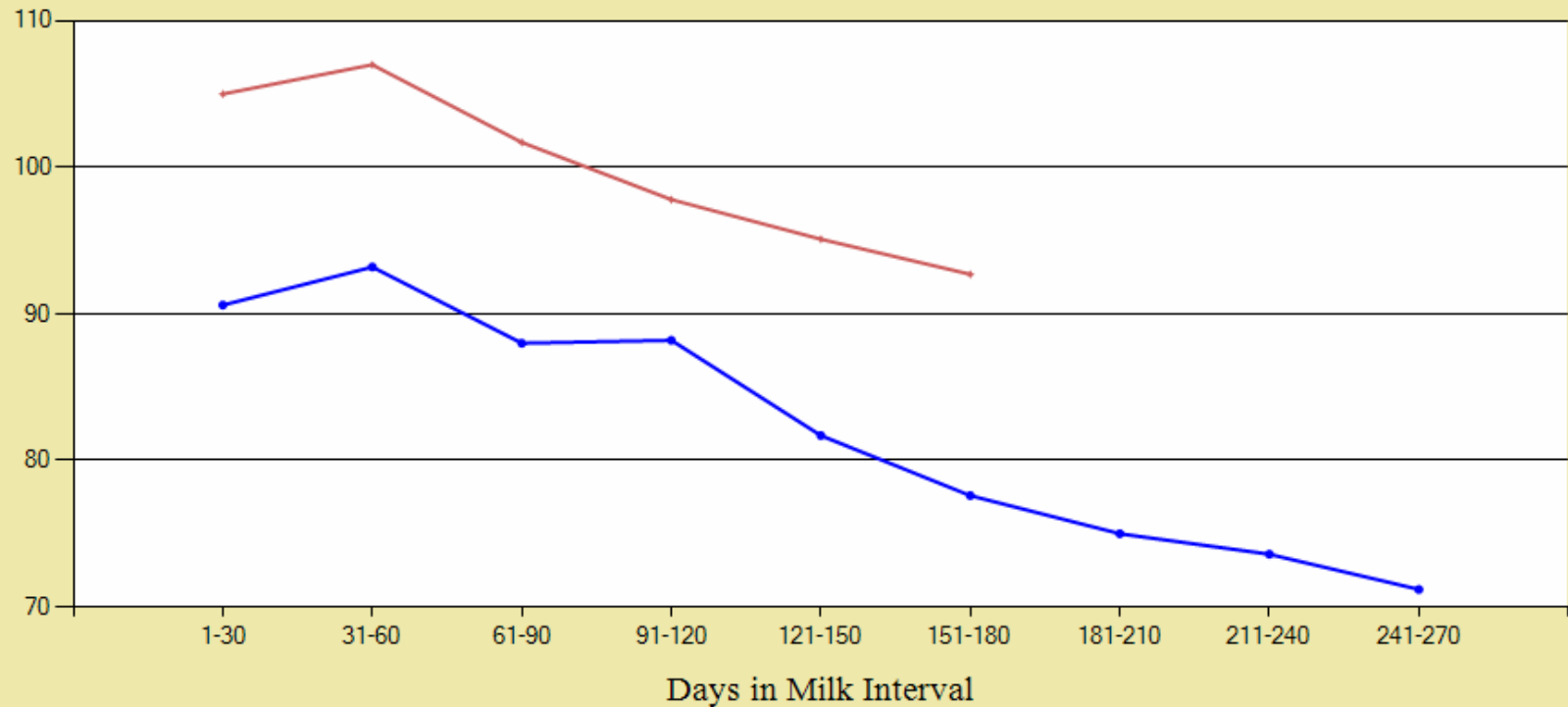


Legend:

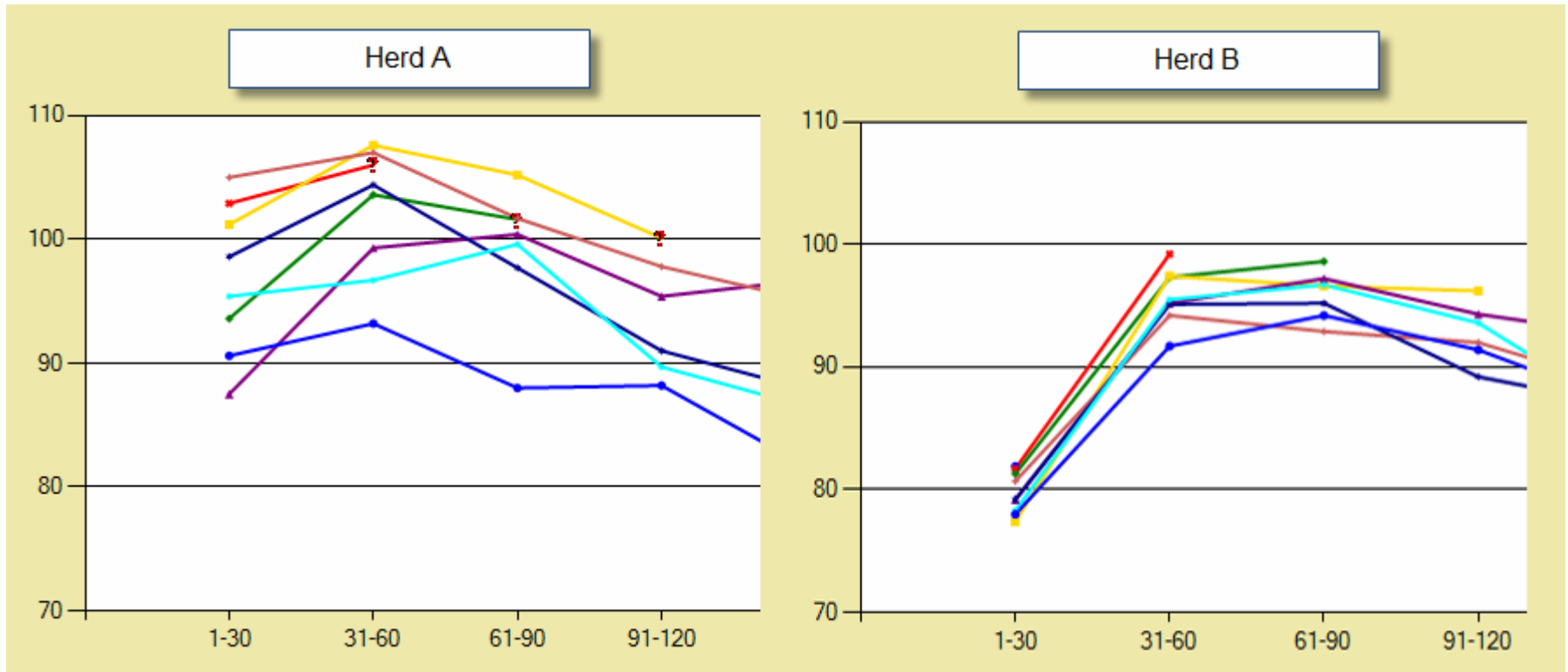
- Milk Lact All Apr 12
- Milk Lact All Mar 12
- Milk Lact All Feb 12
- Milk Lact All Jan 12
- Milk Lact All Dec 11
- Milk Lact All Nov 11
- Milk Lact All Oct 11
- Milk Lact All Sep 11
- Milk Lact All Aug 11

Cohort Groups: Aug. & Nov.

Milk by Cohort Groups - Lact Curves



More Variation in Herd A



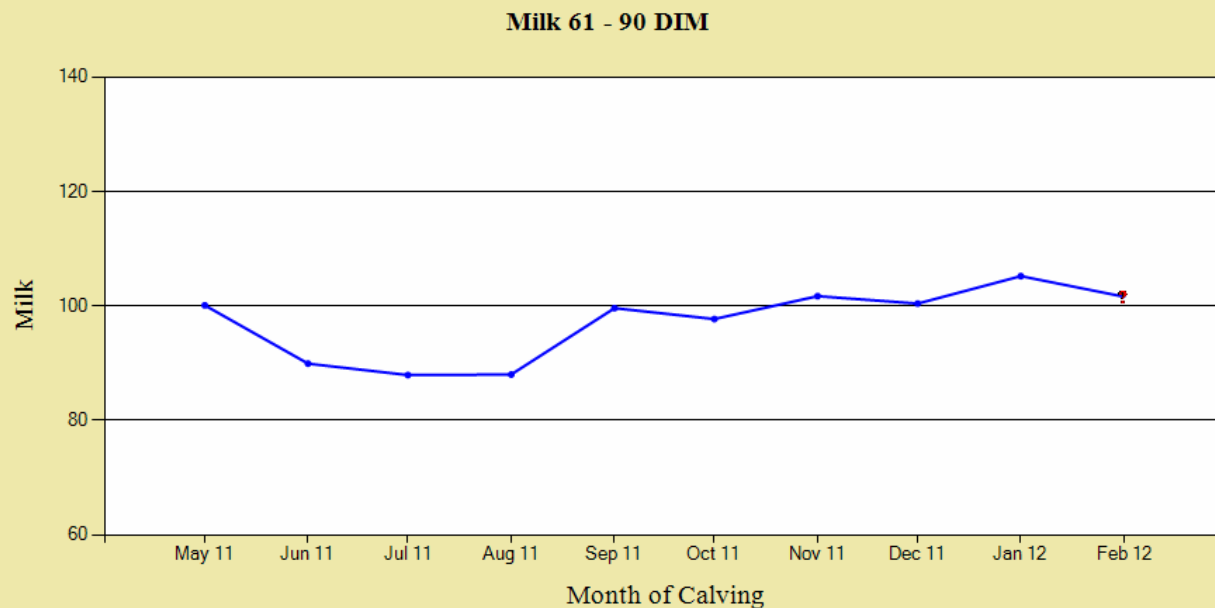
Milk Weights: 61–90 DIM

DIM	Data	Apr 12	Mar 12	Feb 12	Jan 12	Dec 11	Nov 11	Oct 11	Sep 11	Aug 11	Jul 11	Jun
Lact. All												
Transition	# Calved	<u>35</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>101</u>	<u>101</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>94</u>	<u>108</u>	<u>111</u>	<u>92</u>	
1-30	# of Weights	<u>0</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>69</u>	<u>103</u>	<u>92</u>	<u>77</u>	
	Milk		102.9	93.6	101.2	87.5	105.0	98.6	95.4	90.6	92.8	100.0
31-60	# of Weights		<u>13</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>107</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>72</u>	
	Milk		106.0	103.6	107.6	99.3	107.0	104.4	96.7	93.2	92.5	100.0
61-90	# of Weights			<u>13</u>	<u>112</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>117</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>110</u>	<u>93</u>	
	Milk			101.6	105.2	100.4	101.7	97.7	99.6	88.0	87.9	85.0
91-120	# of Weights				<u>14</u>	<u>77</u>	<u>94</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>103</u>	<u>93</u>	<u>94</u>	
	Milk				100.1	95.4	97.8	91.0	89.7	88.2	81.1	82.0
121-150	# of Weights					<u>7</u>	<u>113</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>98</u>	<u>108</u>	<u>68</u>	



Milk Weights: 61–90 DIM

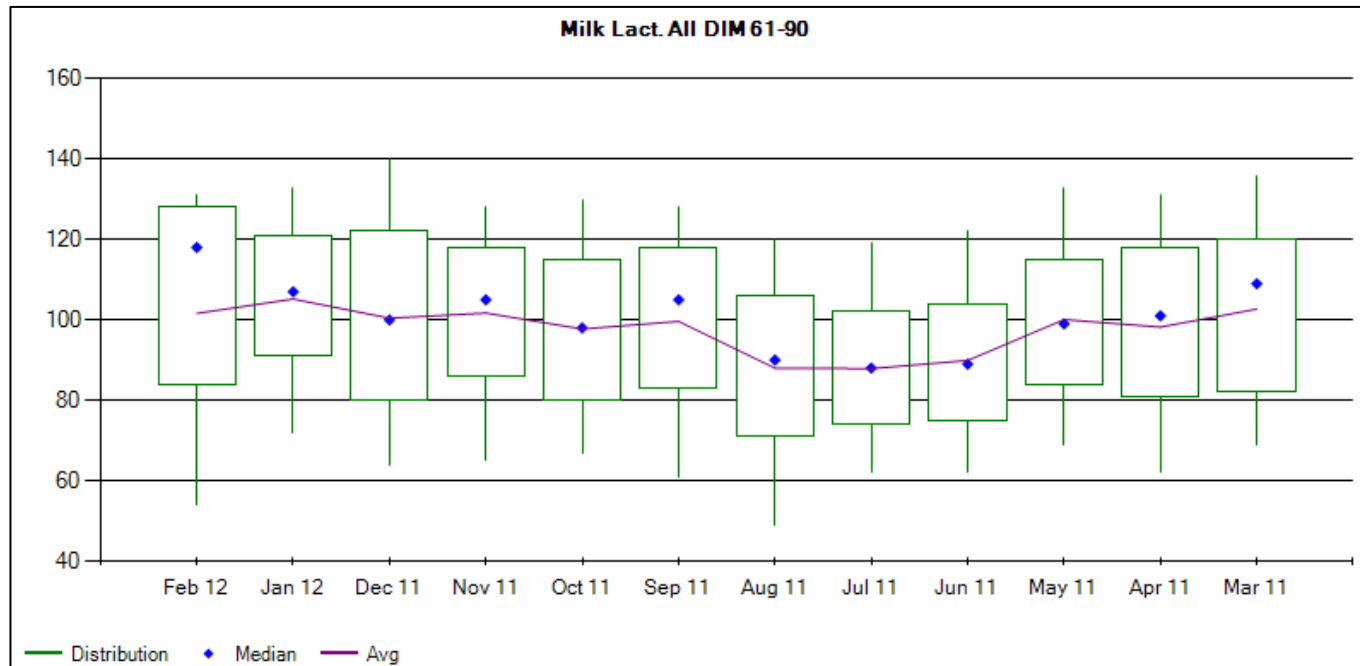
DIM	Data	Apr 12	Mar 12	Feb 12	Jan 12	Dec 11	Nov 11	Oct 11	Sep 11	Aug 11	Jul 11	Jun 11
Lact. All												
Transition	# Calved	<u>35</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>101</u>	<u>101</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>94</u>	<u>108</u>	<u>111</u>	<u>92</u>	
1-30	# of Weights	<u>0</u>	<u>76</u>	<u>79</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>71</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>69</u>	<u>103</u>	<u>92</u>	<u>77</u>	
	Milk		102.9	93.6	101.2	87.5	105.0	98.6	95.4	90.6	92.8	100.0
31-60	# of Weights		<u>13</u>	<u>97</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>82</u>	<u>107</u>	<u>114</u>	<u>72</u>	
	Milk		106.0	103.6	107.6	99.3	107.0	104.4	96.7	93.2	92.5	100.0
61-90	# of Weights			<u>13</u>	<u>112</u>	<u>67</u>	<u>117</u>	<u>87</u>	<u>84</u>	<u>110</u>	<u>93</u>	
	Milk			101.6	105.2	100.4	101.7	97.7	99.6	88.0	87.9	85.0
91-120	# of Weights										<u>94</u>	
	Milk										81.1	82.0
121-150	# of Weights										<u>68</u>	



— Milk Lact All 61-90

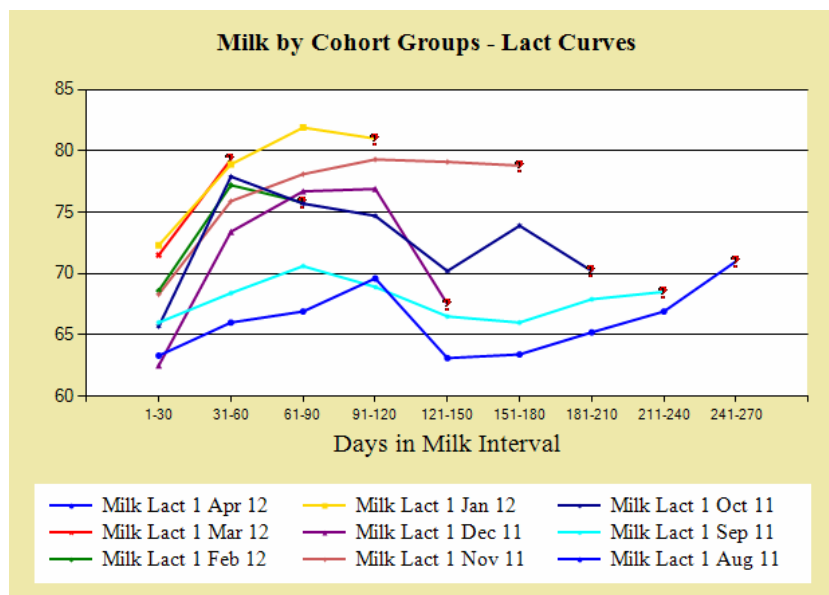
Milk Weights: 61–90 DIM (Box Plot)

- ▶ Statistics over time
- ▶ Distribution within each cohort group

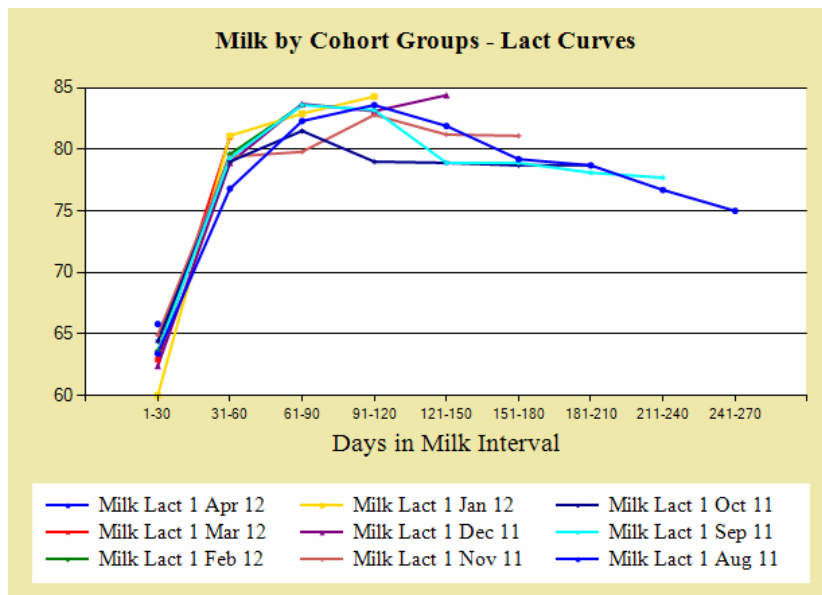


Lactation 1

Herd A

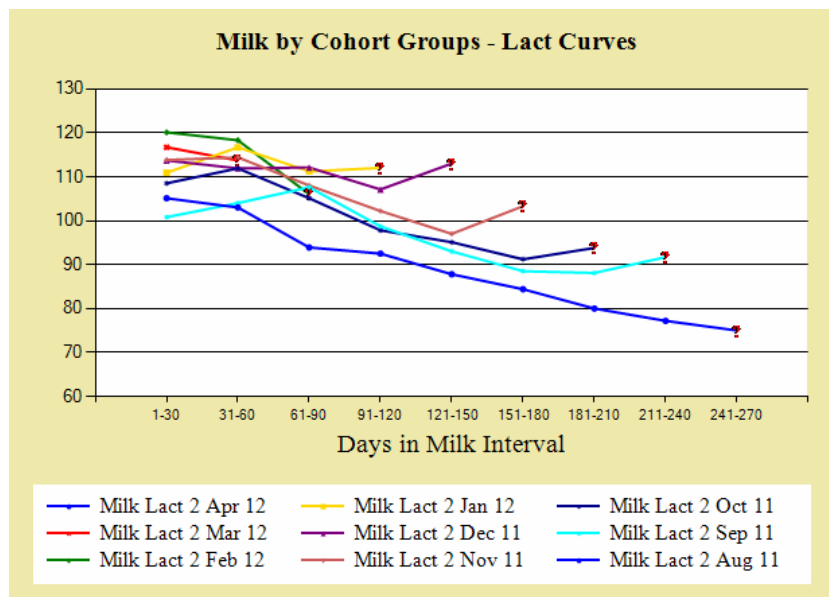


Herd B

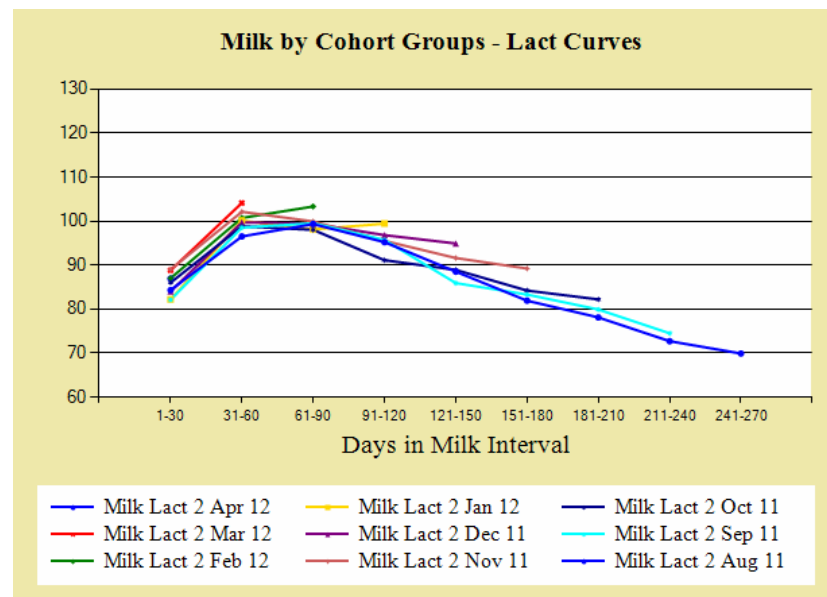


Lactation 2

Herd A

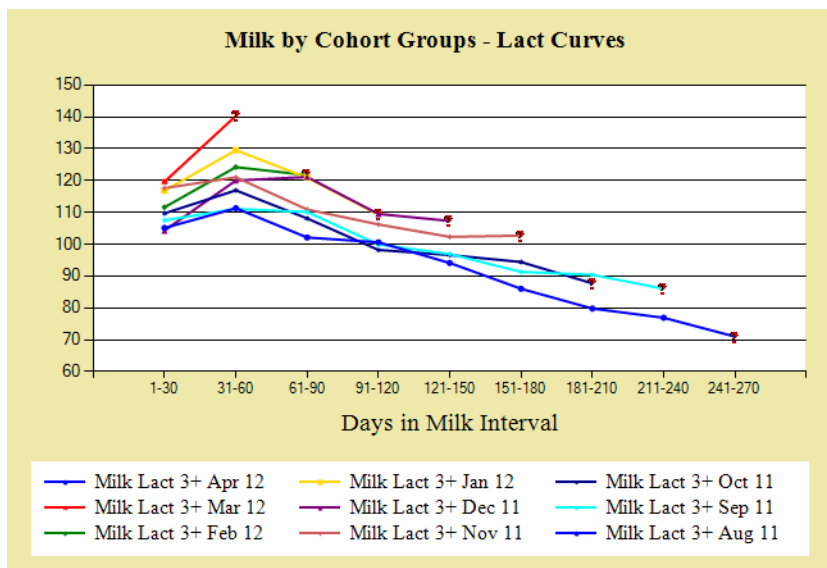


Herd B

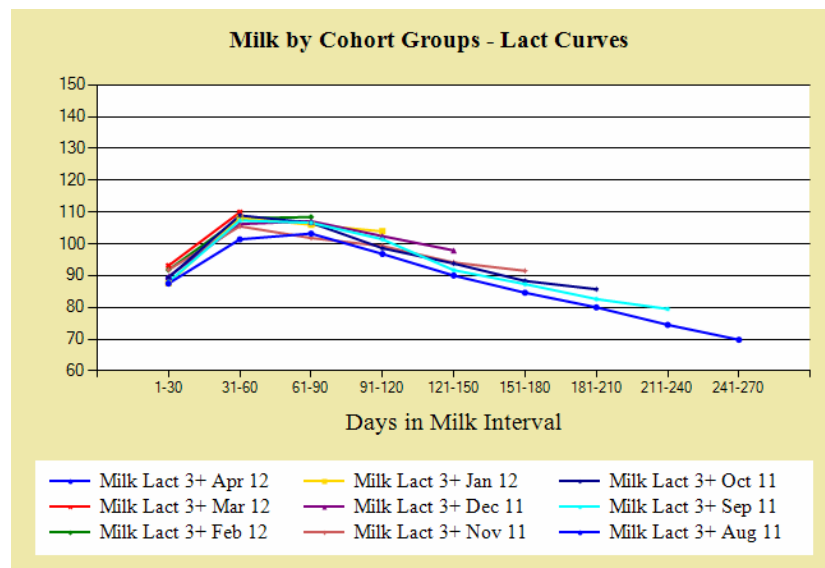


Lactation 3+

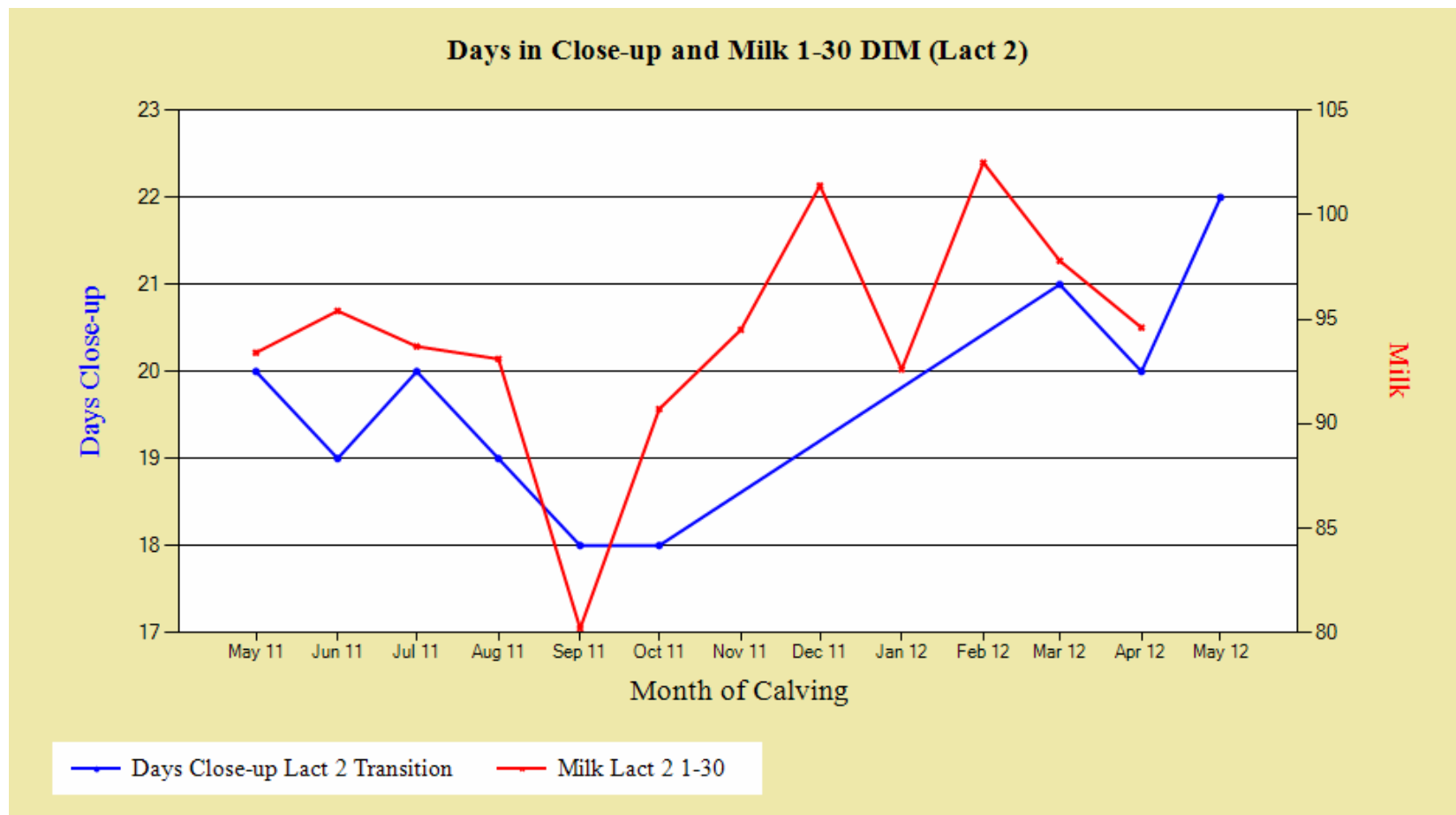
Herd A



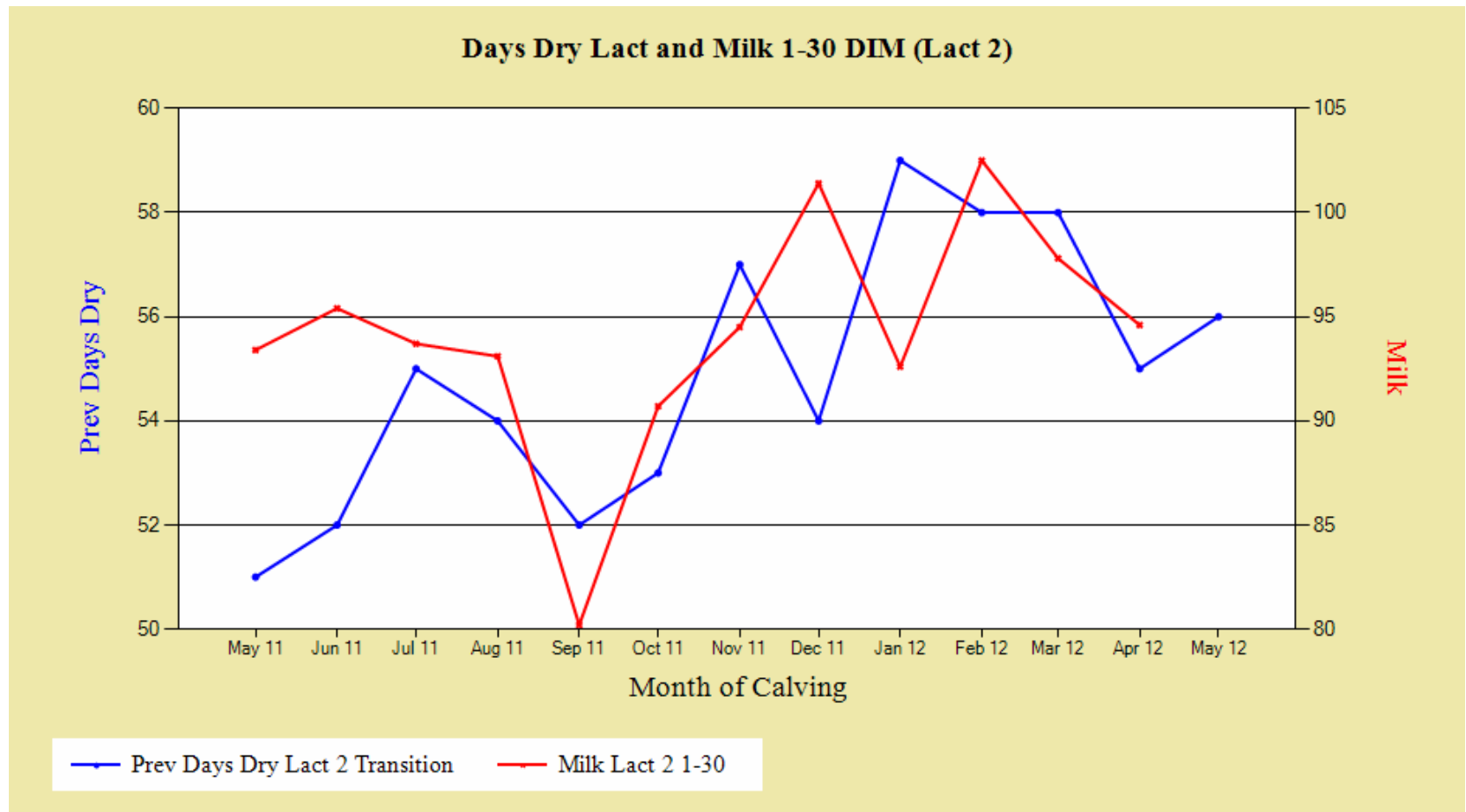
Herd B



Days in Close-up and Milk 1-30 DIM



Previous Days Dry and Milk 1-30 DIM



Quarterly Cohort Groups

- Useful for smaller herds

DIM	Data	Apr 12	Jan 12	Oct 11	Jul 11	Apr 11	Jan 11
Lact. All							
Transition	# Calved	<u>19</u>	<u>89</u>	<u>126</u>	<u>96</u>	<u>109</u>	<u>30</u>
	Prev Days Dry	53	53	52	46	49	53
	% DOA's	21.1	5.6	13.5	1.0	10.1	3.3
	% Twins		4.8	0.9		3.1	3.4
	305 ME Milk	22,017	24,100	25,758	26,717	27,075	27,776

Weekly Cohort Groups

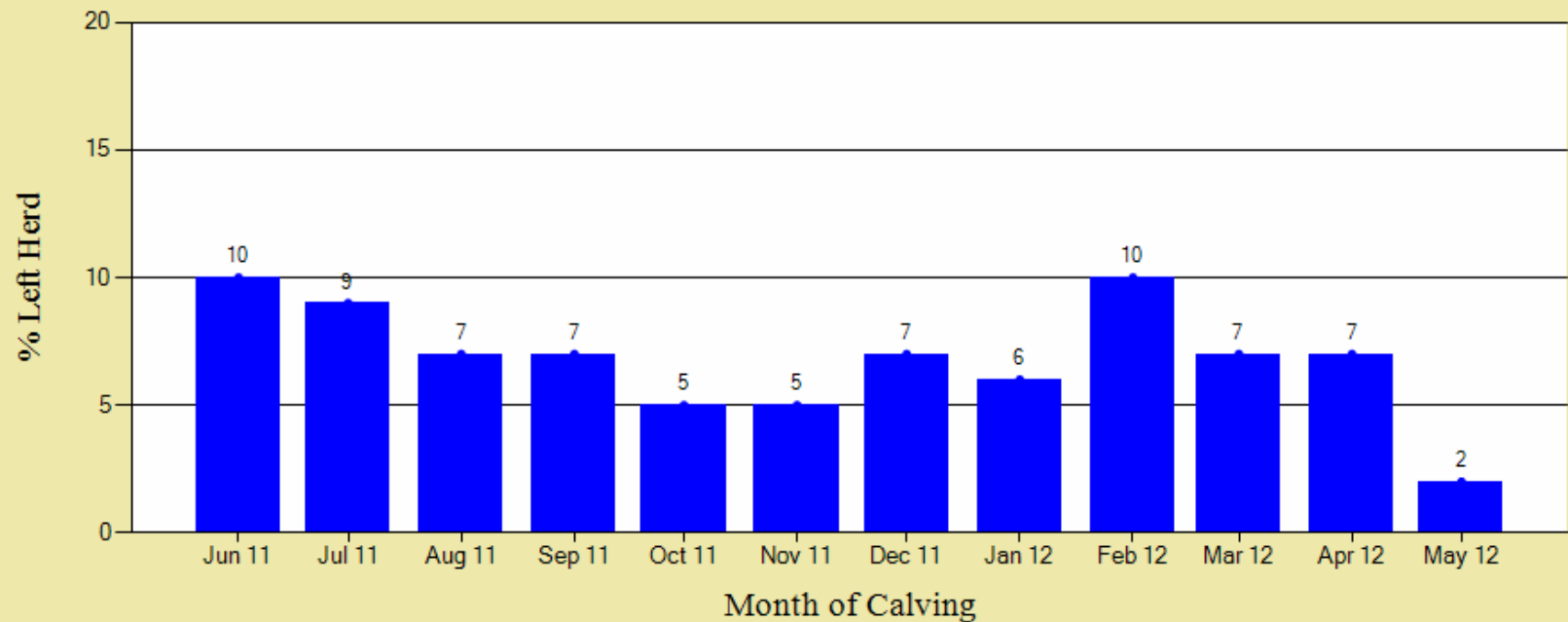
- Provide more detail for larger herds

DIM	Data	May 13	May 06	Apr 29	Apr 22	Apr 15	Apr 08	Apr 01	Mar 25	Mar 18	Mar 11	Mar 04	Feb 26
Lact. All													
Transition	# Calved	<u>28</u>	<u>164</u>	<u>172</u>	<u>176</u>	<u>175</u>	<u>156</u>	<u>188</u>	<u>173</u>	<u>190</u>	<u>155</u>	<u>192</u>	<u>168</u>
	% DOA's		4.3	8.7	10.2	6.9	6.4	4.3	5.2	3.2	11.0	5.7	6.5
	% Twins			1.9	0.6	0.6	3.4	0.6	1.8	3.3	0.7	1.1	2.5
	% Milk Fever				0.6	0.6		1.6		1.1			1.8
	% RP	3.6	2.4						4.0	0.5	2.6	2.1	1.2
	% DA			0.6		1.1	0.6	0.5	1.7	0.5	0.6	0.5	1.2
Lact. 1													
Transition	# Calved	<u>10</u>	<u>58</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>74</u>	<u>62</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>66</u>	<u>64</u>	<u>57</u>	<u>66</u>	<u>57</u>
	% DOA's		10.3	17.9	20.3	17.7	12.3	7.7	10.6	4.7	21.1	7.6	8.8
	% Twins			1.3	1.4		3.5		1.5			1.5	3.6
	% Milk Fever												
	% RP										1.8		1.8
	% DA						1.8		3.0		1.8		
Lact. 2													
Transition	# Calved	<u>12</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>41</u>	<u>43</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>37</u>	<u>48</u>	<u>52</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>40</u>
	% DOA's			2.3	4.9		4.3			2.1	5.8	3.8	7.5
	% Twins			2.4			2.3		2.8	6.4			
	% Milk Fever				2.4					2.1			2.5
	% RP	8.3	1.9						2.7		1.9	3.8	2.5
	% DA							2.2				1.9	2.5
Lact. 3+													
Transition	# Calved	<u>6</u>	<u>54</u>	<u>51</u>	<u>61</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>53</u>	<u>64</u>	<u>70</u>	<u>78</u>	<u>46</u>	<u>73</u>	<u>71</u>
	% DOA's		1.9		1.6	1.4	1.9	3.1	2.9	2.6	4.3	5.5	4.2
	% Twins			2.3		1.5	4.3	1.7	1.4	4.2	2.2	1.5	2.9
	% Milk Fever					1.4		4.7		1.3			2.8
	% RP		5.6						8.6	1.3	4.3	2.7	
	% DA			2.0		2.9			1.4	1.3			1.4



Leaving the Herd: First 30 DIM

Turnover - Left Herd 1-30 DIM



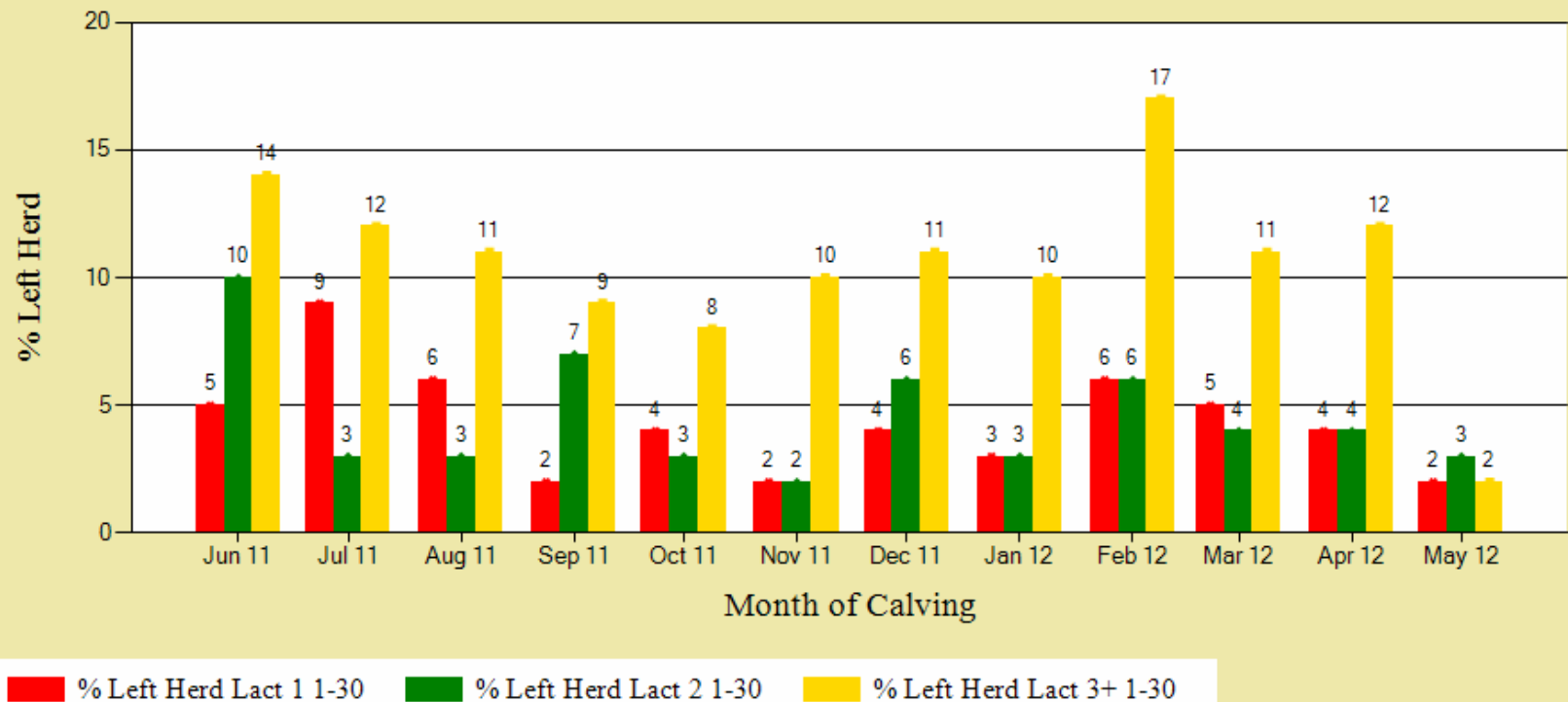
% Left Herd Lact All 1-30



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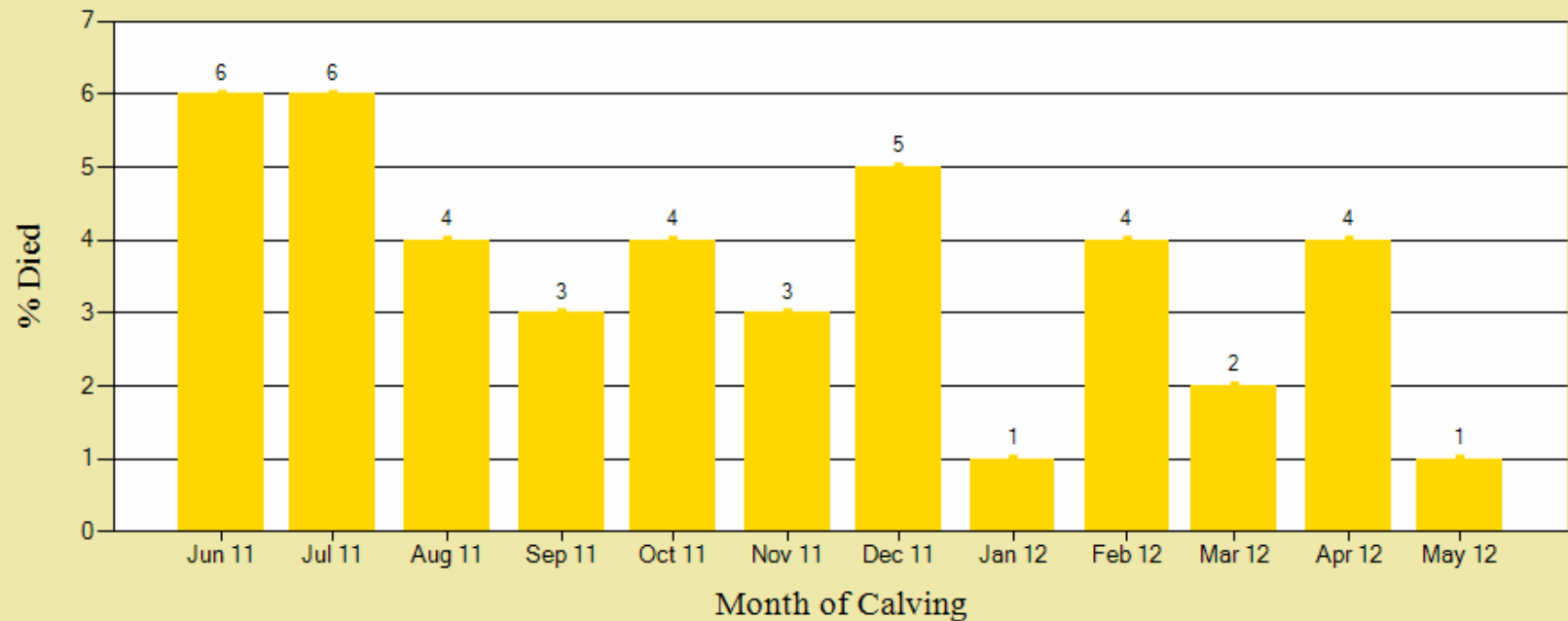
Leaving the Herd by Lactation

Turnover - Left Herd 1-30 DIM



Lactation 3+ Cows Died

Turnover - Left Herd 1-30 DIM (Died)

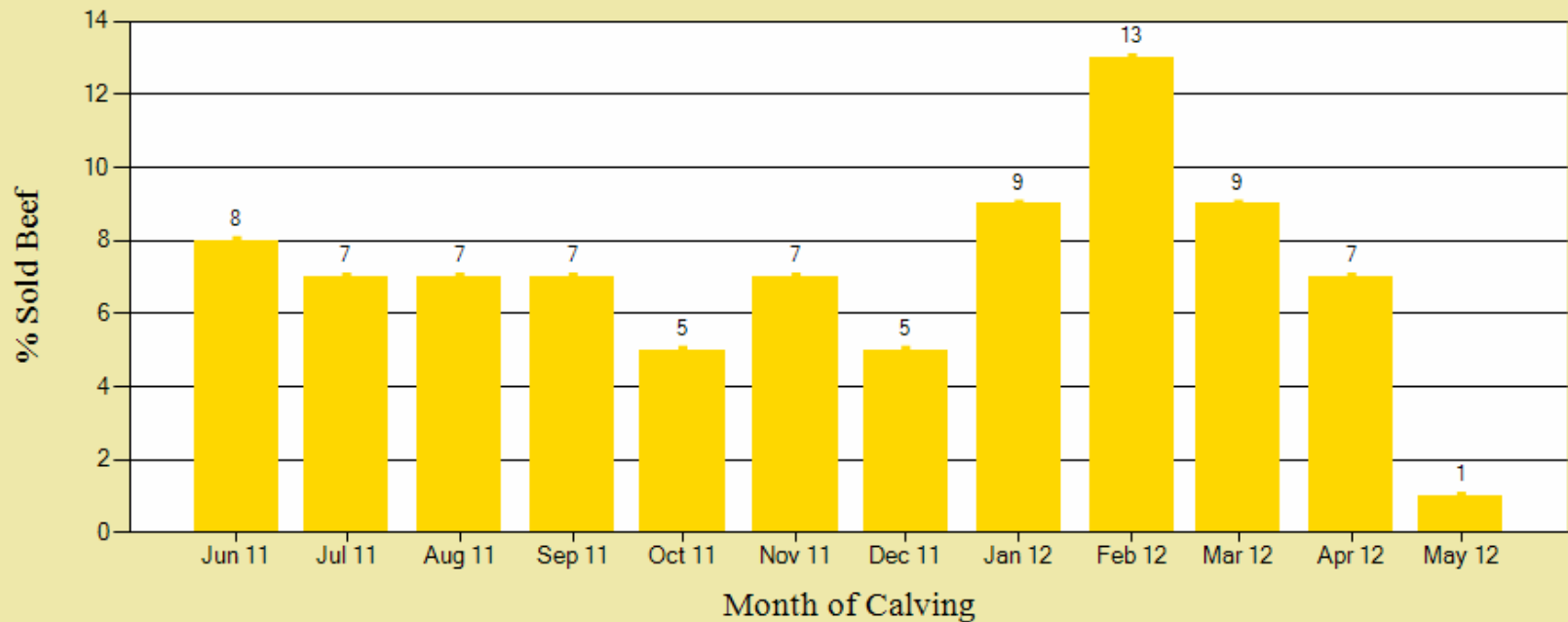


% Died Lact 3+ 1-30



Lactation 3+ Cows Sold

Turnover - Left Herd 1-30 DIM (Sold for Beef)



% Sold Beef Lact 3+ 1-30



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Other Cohort Groupings

- ▶ Health events during the transition period



Displaced Abomasum

- ▶ Lower milk production (5,678 pounds)
- ▶ At \$18.00/cwt. milk = \$1,022

DIM	Data	DA 30DIM	Other	Totals
Lact. All				
Transition	# of Cows	<u>10 (1%)</u>	<u>1234 (99%)</u>	1244
	Days Since Fresh	108	173	141
	305 ME Milk	22,291	27,969	25,130
Lact. 1				
Transition	# of Cows	<u>2 (0%)</u>	<u>432 (100%)</u>	434
	Days Since Fresh	159	174	166
	305 ME Milk	19,900	26,296	23,098
Lact. 2				
Transition	# of Cows	<u>1 (0%)</u>	<u>317 (100%)</u>	318
	Days Since Fresh	284	182	233
	305 ME Milk	32,030	30,194	31,112
Lact. 3+				
Transition	# of Cows	<u>7 (1%)</u>	<u>485 (99%)</u>	492
	Days Since Fresh	69	167	118
	305 ME Milk	21,583	27,962	24,773

Mastitis in the First 60 DIM

- ▶ Lower milk production (1,753 pounds)
- ▶ Lower reproduction performance (7%)

DIM	Data	MAST 60DIM	Other	Totals
Lact. All				
Transition	# of Cows	106 (9%)	1138 (91%)	1244
	Days Since Fresh	175	172	174
	305 ME Milk	26,320	28,073	27,197
1-30	# of Weights	82	920	1002
	% Preg in Lact.			
31-60	# of Weights	98	947	1045
	% Preg in Lact.	5	7	5.8
61-90	# of Weights	87	886	973
	% Preg in Lact.	15	24	19.3
91-120	# of Weights	68	757	825
	% Preg in Lact.	29	39	34.3
121-150	# of Weights	68	682	750
	% Preg in Lact.	46	53	49.8
151-180	# of Weights	52	580	632
	% Preg in Lact.	58	66	62.0
181-210	# of Weights	45	505	550

Other Cohort Groupings

- ▶ Length of time in the close-up pen
- ▶ Month bred
- ▶ User-defined groups:
 - Research groups
- ▶ Heifers:
 - Month of birth
 - Month bred
 - Age at calving



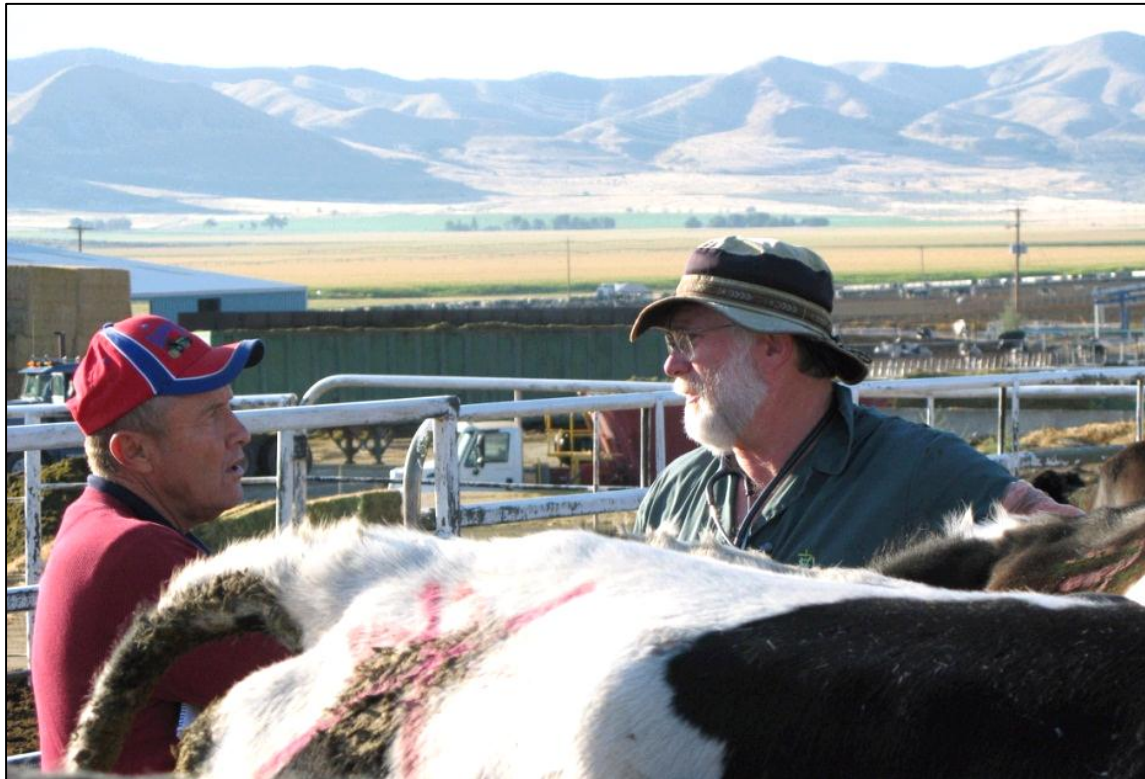
Age at First Calving

DIM	Data	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	Other	Totals
Lact. 1										
Transition	# of Cows	<u>5 (1%)</u>	<u>150 (35%)</u>	<u>183 (42%)</u>	<u>53 (12%)</u>	<u>29 (7%)</u>	<u>10 (2%)</u>	<u>2 (0%)</u>	<u>2 (0%)</u>	434
	% DOA's		12.0	7.1	15.1	13.8	10.0			11.6
	Days Since Fresh	250	195	163	158	164	150	166	77	165
	305 ME Milk	25,624	26,710	26,067	26,675	25,117	24,547	22,020	30,160	25,865
	2 Week Milk	39.3	57.4	57.8	66.3	61.5	62.7	38.1	74.7	57.2
	4 Week Milk	58.3	66.7	67.9	70.7	69.7	75.0	21.9	80.4	63.8
	8 Week Milk	72.9	73.5	76.5	76.3	70.9	84.2	53.9	95.6	75.5



Using the Cohort Analysis Tools

“I am shocked with how well I can drive the herds.”



Conclusion

- ▶ Cohort analyses of subgroups are powerful, analytical management tools
- ▶ You can “see” the relationships of herd management, feed management and weather with production
- ▶ Analyze the impact of health events
- ▶ Drill into the performance of subgroups
- ▶ More sensitive measurement tool
- ▶ Encourages more discussion and the asking of “why?”

