


2021

Can nutrition improve involuntary culling rates? Smartamine[®] M can help!

Ideally, culling should be an economic decision and not an unexpected event.

It is well known that farm cash flow will be negatively impacted if cows are culled involuntarily and early. Most involuntary culling happens within the first couple of months of lactation as a consequence of a poor transition period characterized by metabolic problems, retained placenta, metritis, or early lactation mastitis. The transition period can also be a time of opportunity, not just challenges. The transition period is an opportunity to design high quality diets to meet the specific nutritional needs of the transition cow, boosting her health and performance. **Smartamine[®] M** is the most cost-effective source of the nutrient methionine and its pre- and postpartum supplementation has been shown to improve cow health and decrease early involuntary culling rate.

This was demonstrated in a recent trial (n = 166 cows) summarized in Figure 1. Another recent trial (n = 470 cows) found percent of cows leaving the herd decreased with **Smartamine M** supplementation (16.9 vs. 10.7%) resulting in more cows in the herd for longer time (Figure 2). Plus, cows supplemented with **Smartamine M** in the second trial produced 0.12%-units greater milk protein and 0.11%-units greater butterfat, bringing an immediate economic return to the farm.

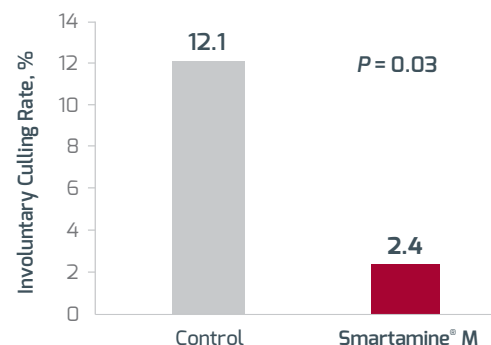


Figure 1. Involuntary culling rate within the first 60 DIM for cows fed a control diet or a control diet with Smartamine M, 3 weeks before and 3 weeks after calving (Leão et al., 2019).

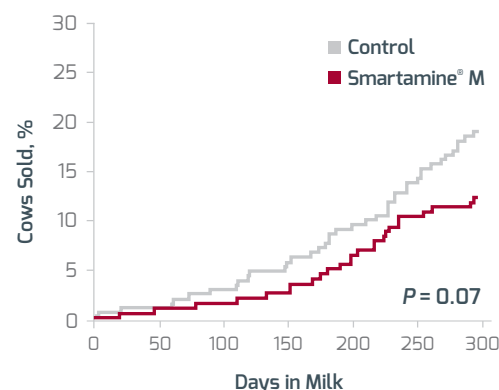


Figure 2. Proportion of cows sold during lactation fed a control diet or control diet with Smartamine M. Diets were fed 21 days before calving until 150 DIM (Toledo et al., 2020).

