Handy advice for using your Dairy Comp Herd Management Software

New look for Dairy Comp and SCOUT

Dairy Comp and SCOUT are now available in a new updated look called Dairy Comp XE.

Added features of XE includes:

- a choice of various styles and colours to customize the appearance
- expanded font styles and sizes
- improved print preview system
- Excel and PDF exports to reports

The set-up and background function of XE is relatively the same and it will not alter cowfiles, allowing continuing compatibility with the original style.

The pull-down menus remain unchanged as well as the reports and the command line is still present in Dairy Comp.

To upgrade to XE, please contact Dairy Comp support.

Go ‘mobile’ with Pocket Cowcard.

Pocket CowCard gives you handy access to all your Dairy Comp information via your Android phone or tablet.

With it’s user-friendly navigation system, Pocket CowCard makes it easy to quickly look up individual animal information, enter data, and scan RFID tags.

For more information on Pocket Cowcard, contact Dairy Comp support at 1-800-549-4373.
New information available in SCOUT & Dairy Comp 305

Enhancements have been made to improve the efficiencies of importing and storing more of your herd data into your Dairy Comp program after each DHI test day.

Milk Pregnancy Test Results

If you’re using the convenient milk pregnancy test service, OPEN and PREG test results can now be loaded into your software which will update the repro status of those cows. When downloading your test day results, you will also download the milk preg test results file as well. (Note that the RECHECK (inconclusive) results will NOT BE LOADED). You will continue to receive your milk pregnancy test results from DHI (paper, email, etc). You will need to review any RECHECK results received and decide how to enter those results in your software so they can appear on the appropriate herd attention lists. Consider using ‘Add cow to vet list’ option to have these cows show up on your next vet list.

Lifetime Profit Index (LPI)

LPI values are now being loaded for cows and heifers with the download of your test day results. For Dairy Comp users, the ‘item’ is called LPI, and for SCOUT users, the ‘item’ is called PI. The items are created and populated automatically, there are no manual changes required. After downloading your next test day results, the item LPI/PI can be added to one of the cow card pages, or you can use ALTER to add the item to the Adult or Heifer inventory reports which you can use to rank animals by their LPI value.

A look at udder health in Dairy Comp

Research shows that 85% of cows with SCC>200,000 (Linear Score (LS)>4) are fighting a mastitis-causing pathogen. Somatic cell count is one of the best indicators for signifying there is an intra-mammary infection occurring.

Having cow-level SCC, or LS, is very useful in indicating the presence of a pathogen and your Dairy Comp program is an excellent way to investigate and monitor both.

Entering the command below will provide a detailed report

```
DEFINITIONS

The following four categories add up to 100%:
- Chronic: cows above LS=4 previous test and above LS=4 at current test
- New Inf: cows below LS=4 previous test and above LS=4 at current test
- Cured: cows above LS=4 previous test and below LS=4 at a given test
- Cleaned: cows below LS=4 previous test and below LS=4 at a given test

The following two categories add up to 100%:
- HiFresh: cows tested for first time this lactation and above LS=4 on the first test
- LoFresh: cows tested for first time this lactation and below LS=4 on the first test

Cure Risk: percentage of total cures at current test divided by the total of chronic and new infections at previous test.

New Risk: this indicates the risk (percent) of cows becoming infected, by examining the total new infected cows in current test divided by the total of cows below cut-off previous test.

Note: The LS and SCC cut-off points can be customized.
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Weekly conception rate analysis in Dairy Comp

Getting cows pregnant is often one of the biggest challenges in dairy farming. Dairy Comp is a great tool to assist storing breeding records cows and tracking success.

One of the issues in determining if breeding is successful is the time between insemination and first pregnancy check, which is usually performed between 25-40 days after breeding. Dairy Comp provides conception rate from many different angles, including by week.

The command `BREDSUM` will provide the following graph, calculating conception rate on a weekly basis.

The green bars indicate ‘normal’ conception rate, whereas the red bars indicate the conception rate is lower than expected, meaning there is a high number of animals being re-bred 21 days after their last breeding.

A yellow bar signifies there were more than 10% of breedings with unknown outcomes in that week.

While not shown in this graph, there is also a possibility of a pink bar appearing which indicates more than 10% of animals were bred 0-2 days apart during that week.

A list of animals bred that week is provided by double clicking on the bar or click on the `GRID` tab under the graph to get a table of the data summarized by week.

There are various reasons why conception rates may drop and re-breeding events increase such as a bad semen tank, change in feed or change in weather.

Dairy Comp users should be aware that herd size will affect the statistical calculations, as smaller herds will experience more variation. This may result in a higher occurrence of red bars, so it is recommended to watch for red bars for consecutive weeks and investigate what the issue may be.

For more information on this topic please see the VAS 2013 Newsletter, found in Dairy Comp program under Help menu > New and Documentation Updates.

Understanding the Calf Report

The calf report provides a detailed report of the number of calvings in the last 365 days, including the ratio of male to female calves born.

The report can be obtained by typing `EVENTS` in the command line in Dairy Comp, or in the mini command line found in the top right hand corner of any cowcard in SCOUT.

The Calf Report displays the following column headings:

- **Fresh**: Number of fresh cows per month
- **None**: No information was entered for the calf
- **Twins**: Number of twins, %T: percent of twin calvings
- **Male, Female**: Total number of born alive and dead
- **%F**: percent of female births
- **Alive**: Number of born alive, **Dead**: Number of born dead
- **%D**: percent born dead (stillbirth rate)
- **M:Dead**: Number of male stillbirths, %M: percent of male stillbirths
- **F:Dead**: Number of female stillbirths, %F: percent of female stillbirths
- **Sold**: Number of calves sold
- **DCC**: Number of cows with an abnormal gestation length greater than ±2 weeks from due date

Double-clicking on the month will take you to a list of animals that had freshened in the respective month.

In Dairy Comp 305 you can use the `OPTIONS` wizard at the end of the command line to modify the parameters used to generate the report.

Additional variations to this report can be made with using a ‘BY item’ statement. For example, `EVENTS` will provide a calf table broken down by conception sire. To examine first lactation cows to mature cows, `EVENTS` will break out data by lactation group.
Dealing with Backup Alerts

Have you ever noticed a yellow alert at the bottom of your Dairy Comp or SCOUT screen? It may reveal that your backups are not being created properly.

If you double-click on the yellow alert, it will bring you to the screen below (Figure 1):

This indicates that Dairy Comp/SCOUT cannot find the backup drive letter for your memory stick (in this case, the F:\ drive), and is consequentially performing the backup internally on your local hard drive.

In Figure 2, the USB memory stick drive letter is E:\, so the program settings will need to be changed to E:\ to ensure it is backed up properly.

To do this, simply go to File>Program Setup and click on the Backups tab. Enter the USB memory stick drive letter in the [Optional] Folder for automatic backups window. Lastly, press OK in the upper right end corner.

Ideally, saving backups to an internet location such as Google Drive or DropBox, if hi-speed internet is available, is the most secure option for back-ups. So, in a case where the computer crashes, the internet-based backup would still be available. If internet access is not available, back-ups to a USB storage device (i.e. memory stick, external drive) is also an option.

When installing Dairy Comp or SCOUT, our technicians always ensure that back-ups are kept outside your hard drive in the event of a computer crash. If that should occur, you will always have access to a recent back-up from an internet-based back-up location, or USB storage device.

Please contact Dairy Comp support to assist in setting up a remote back-up for the program, or to correct an alert.

Your Software Support Team

The primary objective of our DHI software sales and support team is to provide professional, efficient and solutions-based service.

Whether you have questions regarding Dairy Comp, Pocket Cowcard, or Feedwatch, we strive to provide the support you require to realize the greatest benefit from your herd management tools.

Our software sales and support team currently offers support to over 1,600 customers in the following regions of Canada:

- South and Midwestern Ontario: District Managers Chris Perry and Rick Alblas
- Eastern Ontario: District Manager Brent Corrigan
- Alberta: District Manager Trevor Fischer
- British Columbia: District Manager Val Holbech

In order to meet your needs in the most efficient way possible, we offer support in the following ways:
- on site
- 1-800 support line
- via the internet using remote access software

We like hearing from our customers and will continue to work with you to ensure you get the most out of your software program by saving you time and helping you make more efficient herd management, or consultation, decisions.

If you have questions on technical support, herd monitoring, data management or computer support, do not hesitate to contact us at 1-800-549-4373.

You can receive Tips & Tricks by mail, email, or view it at www.canwestdhi.com.
If you would like to receive Tips and Tricks by email, please contact us at dcinfo@canwestdhi.com.