



# Farmers' evaluation of a disease recording study in dairy herds in Denmark

## Introduction

Information and specific data obtained from farmers are often used in epidemiological studies. It is therefore important that there is a mutual understanding of the expectations between farmers and researchers.

### Objectives:

The aim of the study was to obtain farmers' opinion on all aspects of their participation in an epidemiological study including:

- General information of the study purpose.
- Specifications on how they should perform recording.
- Information on study progress.
- Reminders.

### Why?

### Material & Methods

- 118 evaluation questionnaires were sent out to the participating dairy farmers in Denmark.
- 89 responders (79%).
- 16 closed question and lines for 'other comments' were included in the questionnaire.

### How?

### Communication with farmers

#### Invitation letter for the disease registration study served as:

- Background information, how the system works.
- Aim of the disease registration: To get a picture of the true disease status in dairy herds in the Nordic countries.
- Amount of time needed, 2x2 month periods with disease registrations on the farm.
- Perspectives: Improved registration system.

#### Welcoming letter served as:

- A "Thank you" for your participation.
- Information on how and when to fill in the registration sheets.
- Registration sheets to be sent in each month.

#### Update before the second data collecting period:

- Information about the second data collection period.
- Descriptive data from the first period.
- Works as a reminder that the second data period is about to start.

#### Reminders:

- Sms reminder every 2, 4 and 6 weeks.
- Phone call to the farmers without a cell phone after first registration month in each period.

#### Farmers action:

- Send in registration sheets monthly.

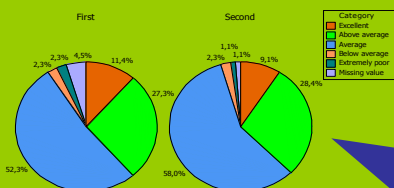
#### Final letter served as:

- To thank the farmers for participating.
- Send out an evaluation questionnaire.
- Work as a reminder as well – please remember to send in all remaining sheets.

➔ All together the project informed the farmers 4 times and the farmers should send in registration sheets twice in each period.

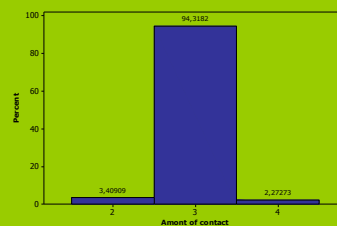
## Results

### Farmers' evaluation on their own completion of registration forms:



>90% stated that they were performing average or better when filling in the registration sheets in both periods

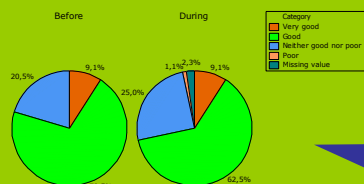
### Evaluation of the amount of contact (letters/reminders) from research group



94% stated that the amount of contact was 'reasonable'.

1=definitely excessive, 2=a bit excessive, 3=reasonable, 4=Not quite enough & 5=definitely not enough.

### Evaluation of the information given in the letters before and during the study period



The information given before and during the study period was on average

## Conclusion

#### Satisfying co-operation :

- Farmers perceived own performance to be on average or above.
- The amount of contact from research group was reasonable.
- The quality of information was in general considered good but only few gave the highest score.

## Perspectives

#### Suggestions for further studies:

- Midterm evaluation to reach the 10% who did not receive enough information.



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