

# OVERALL ADVISORY

## A SUMMARY OF THE FIRST YEAR OF FUNCTIONING.

The idea of the Overall Advisory service - launched at the beginning of 2017 - was to support breeders using milk recording service in optimization of data resulting from milk recording use for their herds benefit including improvement of milk production and herd management widely understood. During the first year of functioning this group of advisors, we have been focusing on trainings in order to provide them with the broadest possible knowhow to support their work. The group of 14 Overall Advisors (group composition and contact details on the page: 77) was trained in the field of:

- Effective communication with a client
- Milking hygiene
- Mastitis prevention
- Feeding dairy cattle
- A set of various topic trainings organized by the Agricultural Advisory Center
- Training for agri-environmental advisors finished by getting certificates.

These trainings and the first advisors' experience have shown that in the further development of advisory services, **we should be focused on the efficient use of MR data in preventive actions – aimed at decreasing of the average level of somatic cells in herds.** It is the main reason of losing money in dairy herds, what sometimes is not so obvious for breeders and hard to recognize.

**In the rough number approach, the summary of yearly work of the group consisting from 14 Overall Advisors shows as follows:**

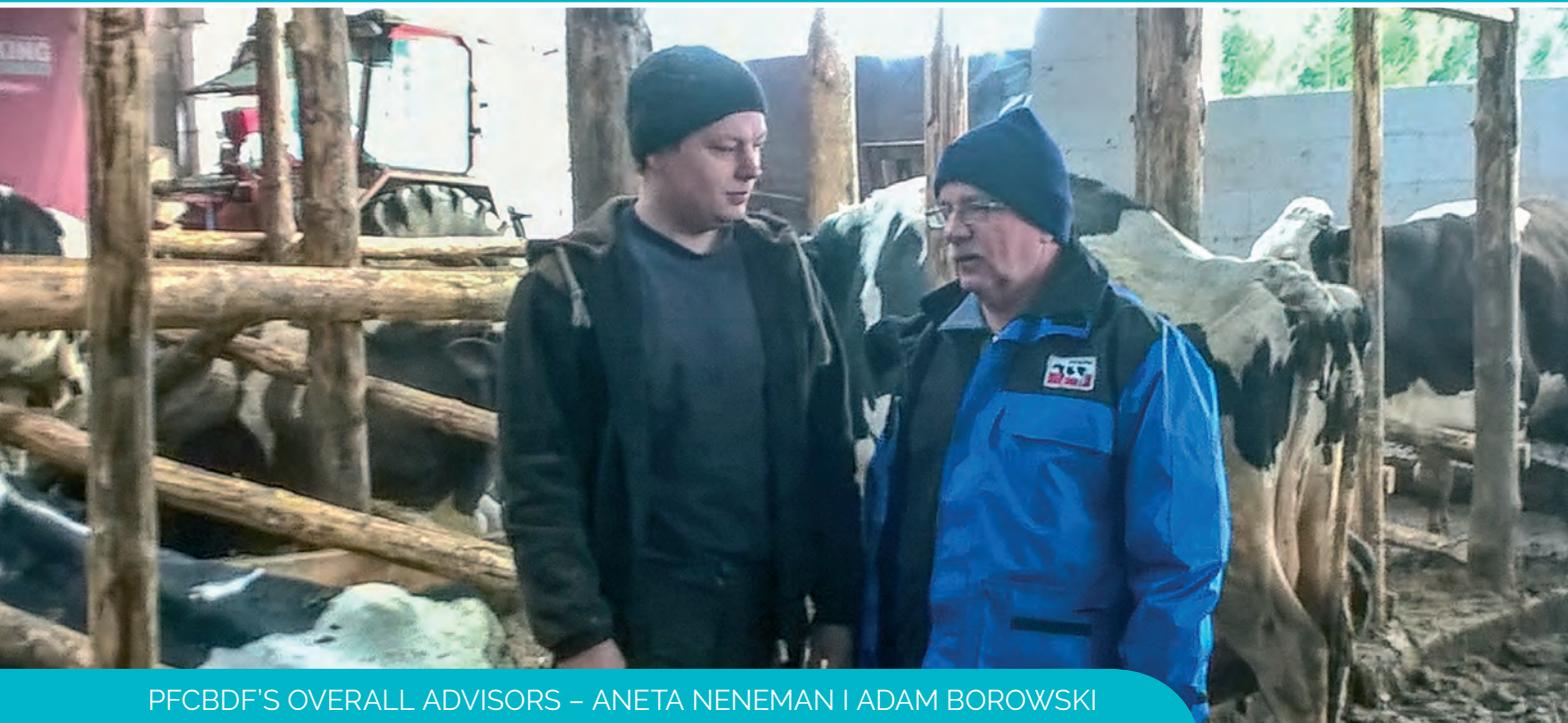
	MRR PARZNIW	MRR BYDGOSZCZ	MRR POZNAŃ	TOTAL
ADVISORY VISITS: "LET'S MEET" and "WE KNOW EACH OTHER", DOKO, COW SIGNALS	1 327	1 038	1 072	3 437
<i>PER 1 PERSON</i>	<i>221,2</i>	<i>259,5</i>	<i>268,0</i>	<i>245,5</i>
TRAININGS (days)	197	156	138	491
<i>PER 1 PERSON</i>	<i>32,8</i>	<i>39,0</i>	<i>34,5</i>	<i>35,1</i>

However, the most measurable effect and tangible value of each advisor's work are herds results' with whom the Advisory group cooperates and the opinion of the breeder himself. One of such a case is described on the next page.



In January 2017, setting the new Overall Advisors group PFCBDF launched the so called **"Let's Meet Programme" - addressed to breeders who decided to use milk recording service for the first time or returned to using the service after more than 2 years of break.** The main idea of this programme is based on the principle that each new breeder receives an additional support of an Advisor from the very beginning. This assistance of the new client is needed in order the use his data from milk recording in his specific herd as more efficiently as possible. In the reality, it applies to individual consultations and assistance on different aspects such as:

- **detailed analysis** of the herd status based on the data in **Milk Recording Reports** - their profound understanding and practical use from the very beginning;
- defining the farm's profile, organizing its resources and **setting priorities and short and long-term tasks;**
- monitoring **cattle breeding environment, welfare** and animal health;
- improving the **profitability of milk production** by identifying **weak points and suggesting the ways of bettering them both in the barn and milking parlour;**
- support in terms of breeding;
- the analysis animal behaviour using Cow Signals.



PFCBDF'S OVERALL ADVISORS – ANETA NENEMAN | ADAM BOROWSKI

## ZBIGNIEW GRAJ FARM

KRUCZ, WIELKOPOLSKIE VOIVODESHIP

Zbigniew Graj from Kurcz in Wielkopolskie voivodeship, took over the farm from his parents in September 2015, benefiting from the so called Young Farmer funds.

The farm operates on 16 ha of own agricultural land (i.e.: 14.5 ha of permanent grassland on arable land and 1.5 ha of corn); 8 ha of leased land (5 ha for corn + meadows) and 12 ha of forests.

In May 2016, Zbigniew decided to start milk recording in his herd. His decision was made in the same period when PFCBDF made plans to create a group of Overall Advisors. Hence, from the very beginning Zbigniew's herd has been covered with the appropriate support aiming at optimization of milk production in this particular conditions.

At first, Zbigniew Graj's herd had 13 dairy cows with the majority of various kinds of random crossbreeds.

The cows were kept in an old, narrow and dark tie-stalls barn. This building forced huge amount of manual labour, limiting the herd development. There was also a lot to do in terms of cows' welfare improvement.

Zbigniew Graj decided to benefit from the assistance of PFCBDF Advisors' suggestions from the very beginning of the cooperation. He successfully followed advisors' hints particularly in the area of gradual and feasible farm development, identifying the most urgent points for improvement. What has been achieved during that time is: preparation of crop structure, herd increase, selection of bulls for breeding, feeding advisory application and use of investment consultancy. Thanks to cooperation with Overall Advisors Zbigniew Graj decided to sell low yielded crossbreed cows and to invest the money in dairy cows bought at another herd in milk recording.

Currently, the herd has 28.4 cows producing 6 761 kg of milk on average. The average daily milking from a cow is 23-24 kg of milk, while 1.5 years ago it was 18-19 kg.

This is not yet the level of average milk yield in milk recorded herds in Poland, but **the breeder's determination, diligence, consistency, feasible approach to the tasks and gradual pursuing the goal deserve recognition.** The breeder invests in the modernization of the farm taking care of the use of existing opportunities and trying not to overinvest when buying new but expensive machines and devices. Hence the breeder rather bases on used or adapted equipment. **At the moment, the key element for further development is finishing the construction of the free-stalls barn with the milking parlour 2x5, bearing in mind the care for breeder's work comfort as well as cows' well-being.**

In the opinion of Adam Borowski and Aneta Neneman - Overall Advisors who co-work with Zbigniew Graj - everything on the farm is changing dynamically month by month. Zbigniew's comment, when asked how he could determine the effects of cooperation with PFCBDF's advisors, was:

*Everything is better than I wanted*

