

ZOOTECHNICAL ADVISORY

„WE KNOW EACH OTHER” for two years already

The Polish Federation of Cattle Breeders and Dairy Farmers invariably continues to get focus on the development of advisory services. **GENERAL CONSULTING** introduced in 2017 – has been renamed to **ZOOTECHNICAL ADVISORY** – confirms that there is a need for this kind of professional support. According to our assumptions, this support is especially needed among breeders who have recently decided to join milk recording – advisory package – „**LET’S MEET**” and among breeders who want to use the information deriving from milk recording in more efficient way – advisory package – „**WE KNOW EACH OTHER**”.

The main topics for which Zootechnic Advisors are still needed are:

- milking hygiene – the best practices;
- mastitis prevention practices;
- basics of dairy cattle nutrition using the COLUMB program;
- COW SIGNALS – in optimising animal welfare and its improvement.

Further plans for the development of zootechnical advisory have already been outlined by previous experience and current breeders’ needs and include:

- Improvement in the field of mastitis prevention with the support of technical tools analysing the technical settings of milking equipment - milking parlor audit.
- Feeding cattle optimisation with the support of the COLUMB program
- COWS SIGNALS - practical workshops with the inclusion of checklists and with an extension of FERTILITY SIGNALS.
- Expanding the skills of effective topic presentation.
- Development of the „ADVISOR” module facilitating planning and carrying-out efficient consultancy with a farmer.

In a rough number approach, the summary of the work of the group of 14 Zootechnic Advisors in 2018 is as follows:

	NUMBER OF TASKS ON AVERAGE PER 1 ADVISOR			
	MRR PARZNIEW	MRR POZNAŃ	MRR BYDGOSZCZ	POLAND
„LET’S MEET” PROGRAM	79	30	38	53
„WE KNOW EACH OTHER” PROGRAM	156	219	205	188
MATING PLAN DoKo	22	16	22	20
FORAGE SAMPLES	12	16	23	17
MEETINGS WITH BREEDERS AND OTHER ENTITIES	10	33	30	22

The above statistical statement also reflects the specificity of a given region, which affects the possibilities of performing particular tasks by advisors.

Nevertheless, 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.

CONSEQUENT PLANS IMPLEMENTATION



FARM MAREK PILACHOWSKI

The farm run by Mr. Marek Pilachowski is an example of the development of Polish farms, consistently specializing in milk production. The Pilachowski's herd has been in milk recording 30 years now. Then the herd had only 4 cows. Until 2009 it had been managed by Mr. Andrzej Pilachowski, and 10 years ago, the task was undertaken by the son - Marek.

In 2009, the Pilachowski's herd had, **11.2 cows on average with the yield of 6.805 kg of milk**. Currently, according to the data summarizing 2018, the herd had **30.7 cows on average with a yield of 8.980 kg of milk**. It is also worth emphasizing that due to consistent breeding work - over the last 10 years - the average calving interval has been shortened from **465 to 382 days**, while **reducing the age of the first calving from 760 to 744 days**.

What is the Zootechnical Advisor's support for? According to Mr. Pilachowski:

- Consultations on the cowshed construction plans specification,
- Support in the selection of breeding heifers for purchase,
- Arranging mating plans using the DoKo application,
- Consultation in changing dairy plant for the best offer on the market,
- Consultation when choosing a feeding wagon best suited to the herd needs,
- Consultation in the field of nutrition advisory,

What other plans Mr. Pilachowski associates with Zootechnic Advisor in the future:

- Support in effective use of SOL applications for the herd management,
- Cooperation in enlarging the herd up to 50 cows,
- Coordination of taking over reproduction tasks including inseminations (DIY),
- Cooperation when enlarging the farm by 20 hectares,
- Support in increasing the machinery park and feeding station,
- Consultations on building concrete silos and hardening the area,
- Consultations on investments in renewable energy sources (photovoltaic cells).

Marek's herd goals and intentions for the development are very ambitious, which means that the expectations towards the Zootechnic Advisors are also large. In order to meet them, PFHBiPM constantly invests in training and equipment Advisors with the necessary knowledge and tools.