

ABS TECHNICAL Services

NEWSLETTER Winter 2014



Welcome to the Winter edition of the TS Newsletter!

This newsletter will highlight part of our 1st Genus ABS Global Technical Service Meeting held in the United States during the month of November. There are many words that come to mind when I recap that meeting, some of them include: world-class global team, commitment, enthusiasm, ABS-way, momentum, professional, fun and friends. It was a meeting that will go down in the books as something that gave us all more wood in the fire, tools in our belt, and confidence in working with our global customers.

I challenge you all to ask someone that attended the meeting to tell you two new things that they learned. I can confidentially say that we, the global TS team, are equipped not only with new applied research to help producers; but also with great global people resources only a call, email, or text away that will help us make our customers more profitable.

This newsletter will have thoughts from our technical service group, our speakers, and other company participants. It will include pictures showcasing the meeting and articles with the exciting knowledge that everyone took home. Five of the nine external speakers will be showcased continuing through the final four in the next newsletter. Lastly, there will be excellent tools presented to us that we know will make a lasting imprint on you and your business.

Finally, the newsletter will provide some highlights of our newly launched Reproductive (RMS®) Training Program. Included will also be some testimonials and pictures of the trainees that have gone through the training. It will be a training program that you and/or your customers won't want to miss.

We hope you enjoy the Winter edition of the ABS Global Technical Service Newsletter!

Regards,

Dr. Hernando Lopez
Genus ABS
Global Technical Service Director
hernando.lopez@genusplc.com

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Genus Values Awards - Genus ABS Global Technical Service Team



Lydia Johnson
Genus ABS Global Technical Service
Support Specialist

*"Look around the room at all these resources, we've got to use each other. If you've got something to share, share it. When you go home, don't forget you are part of a global movement."
- Dr. Hernando Lopez*

On the opening day of the Genus ABS Global Technical Services Meeting, Saskia Korink, Genus ABS Chief Operating Officer, presented to our group on the Genus strategies, business performance, expectations and how Technical Service plays into them. She also re-introduced the Genus values and how they are important to work by day-in and day-out. From there, Dr. Hernando Lopez started his Technical Services update with an awards ceremony. One global technical service member was nominated and chosen for each of the five Genus values.

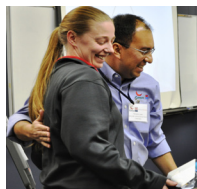
The Customer-Centric Award is about putting customers first and helping them succeed.

Dr. Felipe Arias was the winner of this award as he has a great ability to build long-lasting relationships with key customers based on meeting their individual needs. Felipe is known for facilitating the creation of true partnerships with our customers by promoting their efficiencies and results through the successful delivery of Technical Service solutions. Felipe is also very proactive, keeping us several steps ahead of the competition. He has been a part of the TS team for over 5 years, during which he has worked with customers in the United States, Mexico, Argentina, Uruguay, Brazil, New Zealand and most recently, China. Today, Felipe leads our TS team in Chile. Congratulations to Dr. Felipe Arias in winning the Customer-Centric Award!



The Results-Driven Award is about having the drive to deliver and hold ourselves accountable for our results.

The outstanding work of Jenny Hildon nominated and enabled her to win this award. She is critical in helping us finding opportunities through customer data evaluation and validating the results of our RMS and Technical Services solutions by providing high quality comprehensive reports to our key account managers and field personnel. Throughout



her career of almost 10 years in our organization Jenny has driven customers and Genus ABS personnel to succeed by maintaining the highest level of accountability through results in several countries all over Europe. Today, Jenny manages the largest RMS and automatic heat detection system data sets we have in our business. Congratulations to Jenny Hildon in being awarded the Results-Driven Award!

The Pioneer Award reinforces our vision and represents our desire to be the leading company in the dairy industry, to be innovative, brave, and entrepreneurial.

The person nominated and worthy of this award is Dr. Fernando Cavazos. He was our 1st TS consultant at ABS; so we can truly say he is the pioneer of the TS movement within our organization. It is amazing to see how today, after over 20 years of dedication to our customers and business, some of the most remarkable and innovative ideas come from Fernando. We can see his impact in tools like our TS Walkthrough, Labor Skill Audit and CowSigns. Throughout his career Fernando has delivered pioneering technical solutions to customers all over the Americas and most recently, China. Today he leads our TS team in Latin America. Congratulations to Dr. Fernando Cavazos in winning the Pioneer Award!



The People-Focused Award reminds us even though we are a business rooted in science, we are an organization built around our people.

Philip Salkeld was nominated and given this award as he has a genuine interest for our people to be the best they can. He is very inspirational, challenging us with respect and objectivity; but also giving us high quality support and training for everyone to perform, develop, grow and succeed. Throughout Phil's 10 year career in our organization he has trained, developed and empowered hundreds of RMS technicians, in-house breeders and customers all over Europe, Russia and Africa, redefining the standards of quality for our people and industry. Congratulations to Philip Salkeld in becoming



the winner of the People-Focused Award!

The Responsible Award is about honesty, integrity, and being trustworthy.

Dr. Alex Garnett clearly illustrates the meaning of being truthful, ethical and professional, and is very deserving of this award. The outstanding work of Alex ensures every solution we offer and implement, and any initiative we bring to the industry meets the requirements and expectations of our customers, colleagues, animals, communities and consumers. Even though Alex is one of the more recent additions to our team, she holds the privilege and great responsibility to represent Genus ABS in front of the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs which is the entity responsible for creating policies



and regulations on the environment, food, and animal welfare in the UK. Congratulations to Dr. Alex Garnett for winning the Responsible Award!



Award Winners (left to right): Dr. Fernando Cavazos, Dr. Felipe Arias, Philip Salkeld, Dr. Alex Garnett & Jenny Hildon

Traits of Highly Successful Dairy Producers



Greg Squires
Manager of Dairy Enterprise Services

Greg Squires provided us an overview of what it takes to be a highly successful dairy producer in today's and future markets. Several traits are common among successful dairy producers and will be discussed. How do producers make decisions? How do they relate? What does a successful dairy producer look like?

Intense Reproductive Management. It is one of the most significant production drivers on dairy operations. Getting cows pregnant in a short, optimal window means success. Furthermore, measuring and monitoring that performance allows dairies to thrive in the long run.

Set Expectations (in Relationships). Setting relationship expectations with on-farm staff, family members, hired contractors and/or industry personnel will set successful dairy producers ahead. They relay goals and expectations of each person and/or relationship on to all stakeholders. This type of management builds trust and cultivates productivity.

Manage Risk. Producers realize the larger their operation gets, the higher the risk of operating and turning over consistent profit. Some of the biggest risks to a dairy are milk prices, safety, land values and performance. Some producers will sacrifice some overall new income over the long term to reduce the volatility of the peaks and valleys of the markets, ultimately increasing their stability. These producers will be looking to the future markets, locking prices in, and trying to

manage their margins to ensure profit.

Take Care of People. On-farm staff are treated as family in successful operations. They still need to meet the set expectations, but staff that is trainable, conscientious and consistently puts forth effort, will be valued with big efforts to be maintained. They understand the business cost of having high turnover rates as staff can make or break operations due to not following standard operating procedures (SOPs).

Passionate about Information. Successful producers have a need for information as this information allows them to track their profitability and efficiency. Some metrics that they track are: income over feed costs (IOFC), pregnancy rate, peak flow rate, labor \$/cwt and profit/cow/stall.

Aggressively Manage Costs. As farms get larger and set more expectations, they will want to optimize their margins as much as they can. However, they want and know vendors need to be successful and profitable too. So they will try to balance this margin.

Understand the Importance of Growth. Successful producers realize the importance of growth. Growth could mean exploring new markets, improving milk performance, buying additional land, and/or increasing cow counts. Some grow to prevent being bored and others grow out of purposeful strategic decisions, maximizing efficiencies and taking advantage of specialization that comes with a particular growth stage.

Our challenge as a bovine genetics company is to offer services and products to ensure we are helping them meet these traits. But even more so, we need to make sure we always have the customers bottom-line in our thought process. What will your next step be with a key customer? What opportunity can we assist in right now to increase profitability?

"I hope the event was a great success. I'm referring to it as an event for two reasons: the quality of your group and the quality of the agenda assembled."
- Greg Squires

University of Wisconsin-Madison Presentations



Dr. Milo Wiltbank
Professor and Researcher in Dairy Science

Dr. Milo Wiltbank spoke to us on opportunities to improve reproduction. He presented some of the latest research while allowing an open discussion with our group. Some highlights from the discussion are below.

Measure reproductive performance.

It is important to know how the past performance was but more importantly knowing how the cows are performing now and what the goal is that you and the customer want to achieve. In order to do that, reproductive data must be accurate and monitored continuously. Stakeholders must also know that to improve the reproductive program they need to make accurate and realistic evaluations with an end goal in sight. Knowing where you stand reproductively today, having a plan in place of how you will reach your goal and monitoring it continuously will ensure an efficient and effective reproductive performance going forward.

Improve profitability through reproduction.

Having long lactations results in lowered daily milk production. Dr. Wiltbank gave an example comparing a 12 month calving interval with the industry standard, 13 month calving interval. The average milk production was 83.1 lb/d with a 12 month calving interval and only 80.0 lb/d for a 13 month calving interval. This equates to \$100/cow/lactation (\$14 milk price) for improving reproduction by getting cows pregnant a month earlier.

Reproductive culling decreases profitability. A common thought is that herds with good reproduction have lower cull rates than herds with poor reproduction. This isn't necessarily true. However, they do have a lot more flexibility over who they cull versus poor reproduction herds. With good reproduction, producers can cull low value cows much easier due to a lower percentage of involuntary reproductive culling.

Take advantage of the first insemination opportunity. Although milk production has been on the rise for many decades, the common misconception of

fertility being negatively affected by production was once again shown to us. Dr. Wiltbank showed a graph that in the last 15 years fertility has actually started rebounding. Why is this? Oddly enough, first service fertility hasn't budged, so the answer doesn't lie there.

Dr. Wiltbank explained their compiled data which showed synchronization rates have increased by ~65% in those 15 years, while days to first AI have decreased

15 days. Submission risk and the fact that reproduction management has been taken to a different level is likely the reason why reproduction has been improving. Using fertility programs to maximize fertility at first AI (Presynch – OvSynch or Double Ovsynch) is a huge opportunity that, if managed correctly, can equate to large profits for a producer. This means, improved reproduction, fewer days opens, higher lactational milk production, etc.

**"To really have an impact on the industry, we have to get perspective from those out in the field. I love meetings like these because this is where I get the needed perspective."
– Dr. Milo Wiltbank**



Hans Vromans and Sander Hendriks asking follow-up questions to Dr. Milo Wiltbank's presentation

Common customer & ABS reproductive questions.

Should we be cherry-picking off the prostaglandin injections in a presynch program? Dr. Wiltbank's studies have shown there isn't a benefit from cherry picking in low or inaccurate submission risk (heat detection risk) herds as there is a 15.9% difference, or 50% improvement in pregnancy production if all animals are bred to the initial TAI fertility program. Dr. Paul Fricke's studies have also shown this; however, to 7% difference in fertility or a 22.5% pregnancy production improvement. However, he stated that you have to weigh your options according to the

chart below. This will determine what works best for the dairy and its situation.

	Time to First AI	Hormone Treatments \$	Fertility
Cherry-Picking & Pre-Synch	↓	↓	↓
Pre-Synch Only	↑	↑	↑

Can a customer get away with using only one prostaglandin during a PreSynch, instead of two? No, one injection doesn't help increase fertility and/or synchronize animals. However, if the motive is to reduce time to first AI, shortening the interval between the two prostaglandin injections from 14 days to 11 or 12 days is a great opportunity, that'll ultimately increase fertility.

I would like to increase the voluntary waiting period (VWP), what do you recommend? Dr. Wiltbank recommends moving away from a prostaglandin-based program we are used to (PreSynch OvSynch) and go to a GnRH-based (Double OvSynch) program. These types of programs encourage cyclicity, ultimately increasing fertility.

Can you explain the Double OvSynch protocol and is there a fertility boost? Just as the title suggests it is back-to-back OvSynch's (see chart). Double OvSynch induces ovulations so nearly all cows will be cycling by the time the 2nd OvSynch starts. There will be an approximate 8% increase in fertility over Pre-Synch-12. One opportunity to boost fertility even more is to give two prostaglandin

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					GnRH	
					PGF	
	GnRH					
	GnRH					
	PGF		GnRH PM	AM TAI		

shots on the very last prostaglandin injection, so at 36 and 48 hours prior to TAI. He stated that you can breed off of natural heats but fertility won't be as high as it could be when all cows are TAI at the end. Although fertility is very high with Double OvSynch, this is only recommended for a first TAI protocol and not as a resynch protocol since it is 2.5 weeks longer than a typical OvSynch protocol. Plus, on-farm injection and schedule compliance is a must to be able to reap the benefits of Double OvSynch.

It's an exciting time in the dairy industry with producers being able to get high milk production, along with increased reproduction performance. Dr. Wiltbank pointed out many new opportunities that we could work with our customers on to not only improve reproduction but profitability too.



Dr. Rebecca (Becky) Brotzman
Associate Outreach Specialist for The Dairyland Initiative

Dr. Becky Brotzman spoke to us on the capabilities of The Dairyland Initiative. The main purpose of The Dairyland Initiative is to address how to improve animal well-being through housing options from wet calves to milking cows. The Initiative sets a standard of building guidelines addressing cow comfort and performance, all while addressing consumer concern over animal well-being.

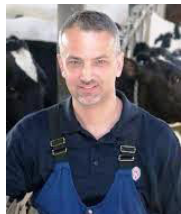
The standards are set on a website through decision trees and virtual tours with the bottom-line goal to help cows thrive and farms to succeed, in which the community around them will also succeed. The Initiative is free to U.S. dairy farmers, educators and lenders, in addition to all worldwide construction, lending professionals and veterinarians.



ABS staff can access The Dairyland Initiative through their local TS representative though an ABS sponsorship to ensure we can work with our global customers to improve animal well-being and productivity through better housing options. Otherwise interested people can gain their own login through The Dairyland Initiative website.

The screenshot shows the website header with the University of Wisconsin-Madison logo and navigation links like 'BLUEPRINT', 'VIRTUAL TOURS', 'TOOLS', 'PROFESSIONALS', 'SERVICES', 'NEWS AND PUBLICATIONS', and 'SUPPORTERS'. The main content area features a cow in a barn, a 'Login' section with an email address field and a 'Dairyland Initiative Number' field, and a list of 'Upcoming Events' including '100lb Dairyland Initiative Tours(TM) & Workshops, Madison, Wisconsin' and 'February 12 - 100lb Dairyland Initiative Tours(TM)'.

University of Wisconsin-Madison Presentations - continued



Dr. Nigel Cook
Clinical Associate Professor and Head of Food Animal Production Medicine

Dr. Nigel Cook presented on the 6 Steps to Improving Lameness Prevention in Dairy Herds. He summarizes lameness as one of the few diseases that has extensive effects on the management and performance of the herd including production, reproduction and risk for early removal. Find his recommended 6 steps to improving lameness prevention below.

Sand bedded stalls. Sand promotes fewer, longer lying bouts since the cow has confident footing. Sand also increases milk production and improves SCC, although it causes manure handling issues and may not be available.

Sufficient time available for adequate rest. Time away from the pen is negatively associated with stall lying time. In mattress herds, cows can only be away from the pen for 60 mins/day compared to 180 mins/day for sand herds. Consider only milking lame cows 2 times/day as no milk production increase is seen with the extra milking. Limit heat stress and overstocking to ensure ample time and opportunity to lay down.

Effective preventive and curative hoof-trimming. Strive for two trimmings between the inner and outer claw per cow's lactation. He recommends trimming heifers prior to calving. Ensure the hoof trimmer is well-trained to determine excessive wear, thus changing trimming approach for those animals.

An effective footbath program. Copper Sulfate (CuSO₄) works best but Formalin is a nice alternative. Longer length footbaths work better than shorter ones.

Flooring to minimize slipping, trauma and wear. Priorities for installing rubber are: transfer lanes, holding areas and parlors. Putting rubber in pens has inconclusive research data on whether it improves lameness or not. Improved, wider concrete grooving that is closer together is more important than rubber.

Adequate heat abatement. Strive for more fans, closer together. Targeted soaking areas, parlor exit lanes or a possible soaking pen/area are his recommended areas to minimize and reduce heat stress.

As we know, lameness can severely affect our reproduction results. Taking into account these steps will help minimize the effects of lameness. Our technical service team is well-versed and ready to assist in working with dairies interested in improving their lameness prevalence.

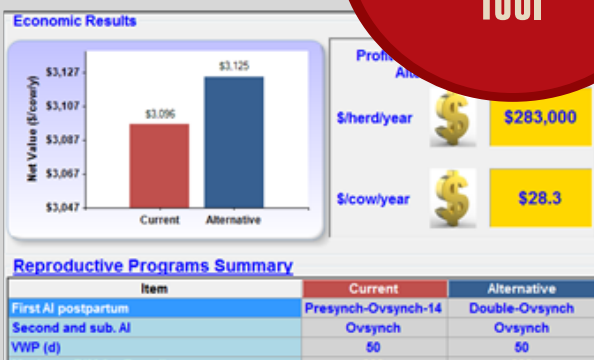
Access the
UWCU-Repro\$
Tool



Dr. Victor Cabrera
Associate Professor in Animal Science

Dr. Victor Cabrera introduced a reproductive economic analysis tool called UWCU-Repro\$. It was built by the University of Wisconsin Madison and Cornell University. This is a free, PC-based tool that allows the user to compare two reproductive protocols. It provides a generated value determining if the alternative reproductive protocol should be implemented.

It takes into account all the additional expenses as well as the gains in performance. If you are wanting to look at the



economic returns in implementing a change to your current reproductive program, this tool is a great addition to your toolbox. Contact your local Technical Service consultant for assistance on the tool.



Reproductive Training Program

Are you interested in joining the group of Certified Advanced RMS® Technicians?

The Reproductive (RMS) Training Program is a 6-day training program that will enable trainees to walk away tooled with the ability to make accurate breeding decisions to enhance reproduction on any dairy. The program consists of 3 different avenues of training.

- On-Farm. Held at a state-of-the-art, 14,000 cow freestall and open lot Holstein dairy and an open lot heifer ranch, consisting of Jerseys and Holsteins, in the state of Idaho, USA. The Trainer has managed reproductive programs on large dairies for 7 years, is an experienced herdsman, a certified ultrasound technician and has multilingual coaching skills.
- Classroom. ABS paired with industry professionals from the University of Idaho Extension Team to provide trainings on various reproductive and other herd management areas.
- Online. Utilizing Genus University, trainees will further their knowledge to ensure they feel equipped to not only manage a reproductive program but also to increase dairy management fundamental skill sets.

Please contact Lydia Johnson for further information on enrolling into the RMS Training Program at lydia.johnson@genusplc.com.



University of Idaho
College of Agricultural and Life Sciences



Learn more
information on the
TS website

RMS Training Program Testimonial



Dr. Alex Garnett
Genus ABS Technical Service Consultant

I spent three days at the Double A Dairy, near Twin Falls, Idaho to experience the training available to ABS RMS technicians. It is a fantastic opportunity for cattle inseminating technicians to experience working with large numbers of cows and heifers. Dr. Jesus Berumen is an excellent RMS trainer with vast amounts of experience in breeding and chalking cattle. The dairy offers trainees the opportunity to see how each aspect of the dairy is efficiently organized and run on a huge scale. The training program also includes lectures at the University of Idaho and time in the laboratory working with reproductive tracts. I would recommend this training experience to any technician looking to advance their skill sets.

Listen to
Philip Salkeld's
testimonial

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A new gateway, linking you to resources that help build a more profitable business.

Featuring—

- Interactive tools and calculators
- Vast technical library
- On-farm cow management training material
- Exclusive reproductive management software, ABS Monitor
- Remote consulting
- Information on Reproductive (RMS®) Training Program **NEW!**

This new space was conceived due to the need to help producers around the world better understand their indices, economic impacts and ways to enhance reproductive performance. Come join us and be a part of our group of producers using new technologies to simplify life and improve results.



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