



Dairy
Australia

InCalf

Your Levy at Work

Bulls: power up!

Having enough 'mop-up' bulls on hand is a simple, cheap and effective way to improve dairy herd fertility.

Many dairy farms don't use enough bulls. With InCalf's Bulls: power up! it is easier than ever to make sure you have enough bulls for the coming mating season.

Rule of thumb

Seasonal/split calving herds: a team of three bulls for every 100 cows at mating start date or four per hundred if synchrony is used.

Year-round calving herds: a team of two bulls for every 100 milking cows.

Sounds like a lot? That's because you need to allow enough bulls to rotate and spell. It's why many dairy herds are under-powered with bulls.

It's easy to get it right

Once you've got the right total number of bulls on hand, it's easy to manage them for good results.

1. Have the bulls on the farm eight weeks before mating start date.
2. Run half the bulls with the herd at any one time; spell the rest; rotate the group no more than weekly.
3. Avoid fighting by grouping bulls of similar size, age and temperament.
4. Always run a minimum of two bulls with a small mob.

5. Use bulls aged between 15 months and four years.

6. Vaccinate, especially for Vibrio.

7. Test for Pestivirus and remove any carriers

Synchrony, a special case

If you are synchronising, there's one more thing to plan for: lots of returns within a few days. Run all the bulls the week you expect returns, then go back to rotating and spelling.

Testing bulls for breeding soundness

In each team of bulls some will have lower fertility or be infertile. Testing them for breeding soundness ensures your bull team is up for the job.

More information:

Dairy Australia

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E enquiries@dairyaustralia.com.au

www.dairyaustralia.com.au/incalf

My bull team

Number of bulls I need to have on the property by mating start date:

Rules of thumb

Seasonal/split calving herds:

**3 bulls for every 100 cows at mating start date
(or 4 per 100 if mating synchrony is used)**

Year-round calving herds:

2 bulls for every 100 milking cows

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