

Once-a-Day (OAD) Milking: Surveys of Farmer Opinion

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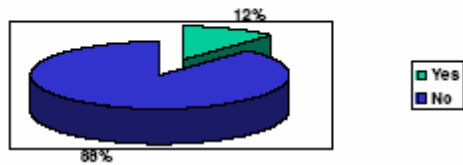
Two surveys

- Sample of NZ dairy farmers
 - Attitudes to OAD milking
- Sample of OAD farmers
 - Advantages
 - Disadvantages
 - Impact on production and profit
 - Intentions

Survey One: Random sample of NZ dairy farmers

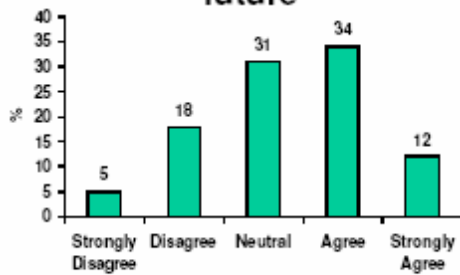
- Conducted by LIC Business Information Unit
- December 2006
- Postal
- 359 respondents
- Includes TAD and OAD farmers at random

Are you currently using, or have used in the past, the OAD technique?

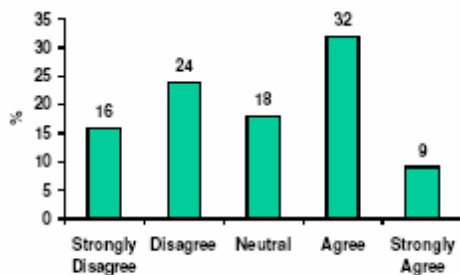


NB: OAD not defined

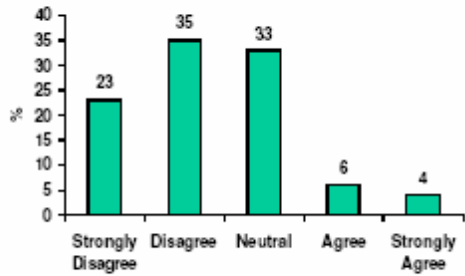
OAD milking will become increasingly popular in the future



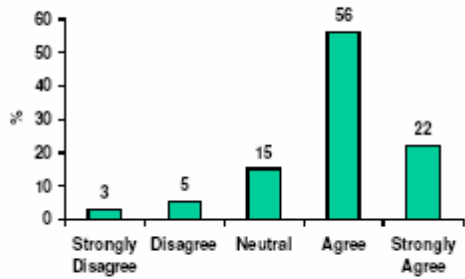
I may be interested in using OAD at some stage



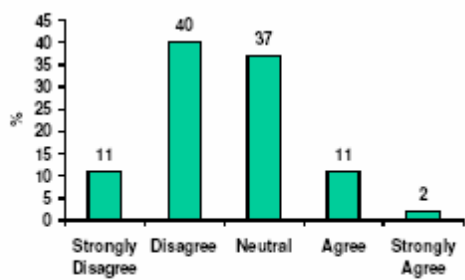
Farmers who milk OAD are lazy



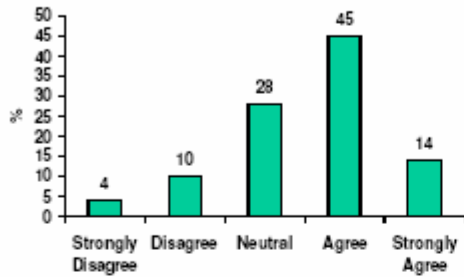
OAD milking is a good lifestyle option



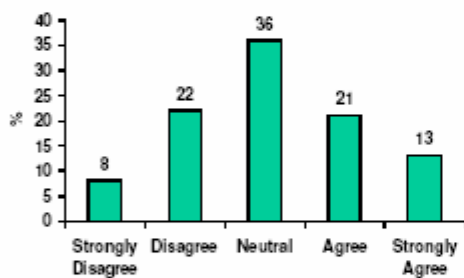
OAD milking is a fad that will die out



In some circumstances OAD is the most profitable option



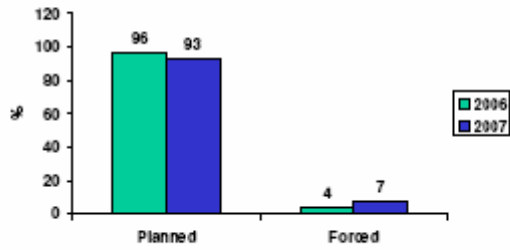
OAD milking is not an option for ambitious farmers



Survey Two: Sample of OAD herds

- Conducted by LIC Business Information Unit
- March 2007
- Postal
- 208 respondents
- Respondents qualified as OAD prior to peak production, with the intention of remaining OAD till drying off

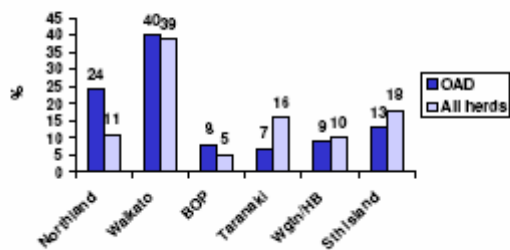
Planned or forced to go OAD?



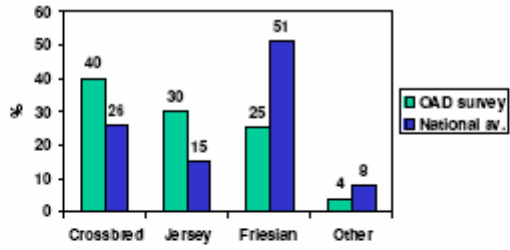
Herd/mob size

- Mean 239
- Median 190
- Minimum 40
- Maximum 1650

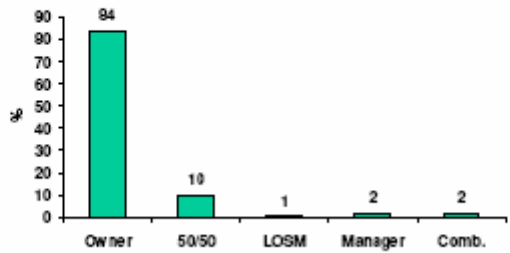
Region



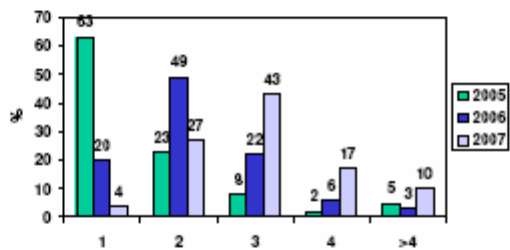
Main breed of cow



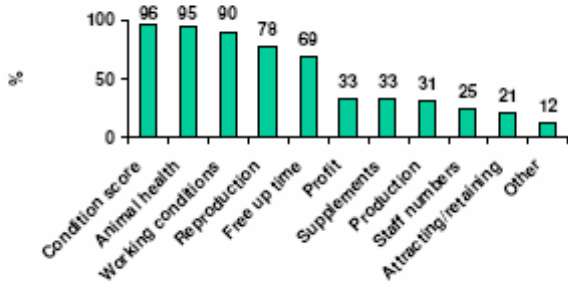
Farm ownership status



How many seasons have you milked OAD?



Benefits experienced?



Respondents identified 6 benefits on average, all identified some

Other benefits of OAD

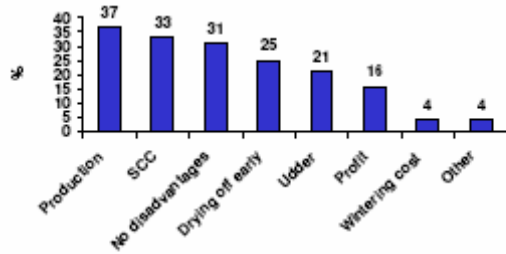
- Extended lactation
- Avoiding capital expenditure
- Milking off land not usable in TAD system
- De-stressed
- Happier cows, happier me
- Hate PM milking
- Lower costs

(cont.)

Other benefits of OAD (cont.)

- Less water required
- Less effluent to deal with
- Less heat/fly stress
- No lameness
- Returns from cull cows
- Renewed interest
- Able to milk all season by myself
- I'm still here

Disadvantages experienced?

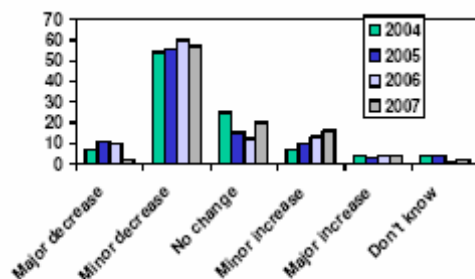


31% listed no disadvantages

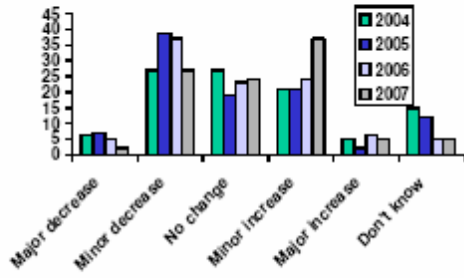
Other disadvantages of OAD

- Longer morning milking
- Essential to have 15% more animals
- Cup slip in spring
- Cooling requirements
- More mastitis
- Some heifer wastage as not suited to OAD

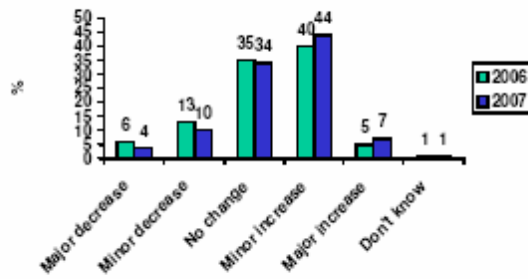
Impact on production



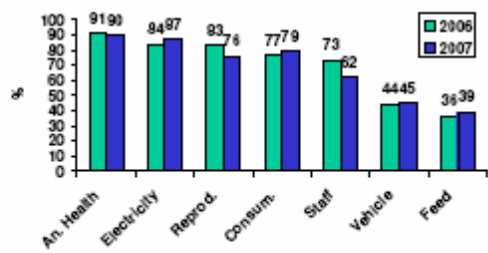
Impact on profit



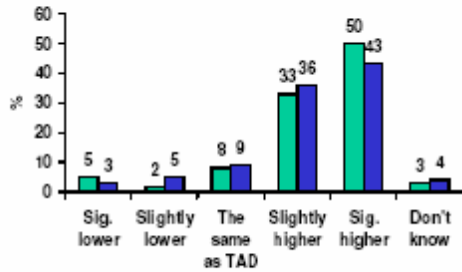
Impact on bulk SCC



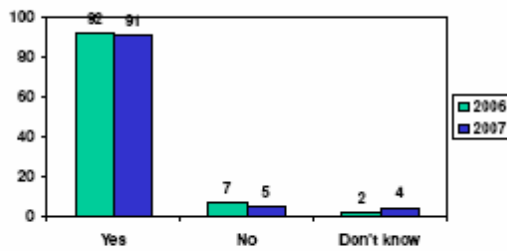
Expenses reduced



When milking OAD, fertility is....



Intend to continue OAD next season?



What will you do differently?

- Calve a week earlier to lengthen lactation
- Change to different brand of cup liners
- Dry cow therapy (first time in 4 years)
- Herd test for cell counts
- Fewer staff
- Increase stocking rate to utilise condition advantage
- Use the best bulls for OAD milking
- Shorten calving spread from 12-9 weeks

Every respondent took the opportunity to make a general comment about their OAD milking experience

“The potential for this style of farming has yet to be achieved”.

“We have more mastitis than on TAD, and milk has to be kept from the vat for 8 days instead of 4”.

“Does require increased culling for low persistency in late lactation, mastitis cows and udder/teat conformation. However better health and low MT rate assist by reducing involuntary culling”.

“Get over your preconceptions and give it a go, you’ll be pleasantly surprised”.

“I believe it is the future to dairying in Northland”.

“It’s great. We have just reached 1400 kgMS/ha and we are on a par with the best production ever achieved. 70% of our cows have conceived to 4^{1/2} weeks AB”.

“Same production, less work, so why milk twice a day?”.

“Concept suits us but still like to see higher production. Key probably pasture management/quality and cow selection”.

“Some high BW 2yo Friesians have dried off before December. A lot of young cows leaking milk”.

“This 3 year trial has demonstrated that if the right stocking rate is employed, cows are selected for OAD and low SCC, very good production (1150-1200 kgMS/ha) can be achieved. This compares very favourably with 1250 in our control TAD herd”.

“Udders – up to 4% extra culls from failure of udders. OAD index is rubbish. Bulls need index over 6 years, not just 2 years”.

“It is the simple way to milk large herds. After you walk 2km each way OAD becomes more profitable than TAD”.

“OAD cows must have excellent udders, ie, low cell count, good teat placement, good udder connection. If any of these are not right the cow will not survive OAD”.

“OAD has been extremely positive for animal and man. The cows have produced way beyond our expectations. The secret for us has been to fully feed the cows”.

“OAD milking has given me a new, fresh outlook on farming. I was tired of the 24/7 tie to the farm and very little time for my family. I was ready to sell up, then we took the plunge and went OAD and I have never been happier”.

“OAD milking is the best management system that I have enacted in my career of 29 years milking cows. Last year I made more taxable income than I ever have”

“Don't tell everyone”.
