

Contemporary Groups for New Zealand Standard Dairy Herd Testing

Under the New Zealand Standard Dairy Herd Testing (NZS 8100:2015), New Zealand Animal Evaluation Limited is required to describe contemporary groups within a herd on a test day. This is necessary to satisfy a condition that certified herd testers must meet under the Standard — that all lactating cows in a contemporary group must be tested, other than cows accounted for as unfit for testing. NZS 8100:2015 (1. Procedures and Practices, 1.1.9 Definitions, Contemporary group).

1. Summary

For a cow tested in a particular herd at a particular herd test there are eight possible contemporary groups within the herd for genetic evaluation purposes. The grouping is based on a combination of age at calving and season of calving.

Cows are assigned to the same contemporary group if they are herd tested:

- In the same herd;
- On the same test day;
- Belonging to the same age group – 2 year old, 3 year old, 4 year old, 5-7 year old;
- With the same season of calving – spring or autumn.

2. Detailed description

These four categories defining contemporary groups for the New Zealand Test Day Model for milk production traits are described in more detail below.

2.1 Herd

Herd is defined with reference to two data fields: (i) Farm location; (ii) Herd number. These data fields are described in NZS 8100:2015 (2. Core Data Requirements, 2.3 Explanation of terms used in the data fields).

2.2 Date

The Herd test date data field is described in NZS 8100:2015 (2. Core Data Requirements, 2.3 Explanation of terms used in the data fields). If the herd test is completed over more than one day, the first sample date is used as the herd test date.