

Fact Sheet

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Benefits of lowering Bulk Milk Cell Count

What are the benefits of lower cell counts?

Countdown 2020 has developed an economic model of Australian farms, showing increased income from lowering the annual average Bulk Milk Cell Count (BMCC). The model shows there are gains to be made right down to very low Bulk Milk Cell Counts.

The Step Diagram below shows the increased income per cow per year for reductions in the herd's annual average BMCC, in steps of 50,000 cells per mL.

The increased income per cow is calculated after taking into account benefits such as improved milk production (from the fact that more milk is produced from healthy udders) and additional quality premiums, minus the increased feed costs associated with the increase in milk production.

As BMCC goes down there is decreased infection pressure, decreased new infection rate and BMCC becomes easier to manage.

In this example the model has been set for typical split-calving herds using a typical dairy processor's payment system for the season 2013/2014 with a grain price of \$400/tonne.

The increase in income which results in moving to a lower BMCC level can then be used to compare with the possible costs associated with moving to the lower BMCC level.

* Joe works hard to reduce his average BMCC from 250,000 to 150,000. Following the steps on this graph, he gains \$56 per cow when his herd drops from 250,000 to 200,000 BMCC and another \$47 per cow when the herd drops to 150,000 BMCC. This is a total of \$103 per cow per year for his effort.

* Lowering BMCC Step Diagram

