Reproduction

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Introduction

The Veterinary Herd Controlling System (VHC-System), introduced by MANSFELD et al. (2002), is a pyramidal, dynamic quality assurance system for dairy herds. It allows optimization of process quality and product related quality. Individual farm goals are pursued through farm specific strategies and target to performance comparison.

Materials and Methods

By means of a search of international literature a quantity of direct (directly related to animal health) and indirect (related to factors affecting animal health) critical control points (CCP) and control points (CP) and their corresponding indicators was collected. The indicators are quantitative or semi quantitative criteria and allow evaluation of a herd or a group of animals and to set goals. Suitable CCPs and CPs were implemented in a flow chart system to be used by veterinarians as a tool for the status quo assessment as the first step as well as for regularly performed procedures.

Results

In the control area, 'reproduction´ determination of 'AI-balance´, 'pregnancy rate´ and 'incidences of reproductive disorders´ (ovarian cysts, retained placenta, dystocia, endometritis, abortions and milk fever) were fixed as CCPs on the lowest level. If corresponding indicators deviate from the normal range, the VHC-System provides further logical steps to identify reasons for variations and to coutermand them. Further checks are concerning the factors 'management´ (management of AI, management of heat detection, analysis of the reproductive efficiency), 'feeding´ (check of the energy balance and protein supply), 'housing´ and 'breeding´.

Significance

The described quality assurance system, designed as a flow diagram, represents an efficient tool to control 'reproduction´ on dairy farms. During the 2nd part of the project the components of the QAS will be implemented into the dairy production process. True effectiveness as an early warning QAS working as a Controlling System will be determined and an economical evaluation will be done.