

One of the toughest decisions made by dairy producers is whether to keep and treat or cull an individual cow for reproductive failure. Economical requirements and the animal's individual history may indicate that it is more advantageous to eliminate the animal from the herd.

Choosing a management strategy concerning an individual problem cow	Yes	No
Is the particular reproductive problem occurring in more than 5% of your animals?		
Is the animal concerned in its >1st lactation?		
Is the animal concerned more than 200 days in lactation?		
Is this the first time this reproductive problem occurred during the current lactation?		
Is this the first time this animal will be treated for this particular reproduction problem during the current lactation?		
Is this the first time this animal will be treated for any reproduction problems during the current lactation?		
Is the concerned animal currently producing more than 80% of the average milk production of your herd?		
Does your veterinarian estimate the probability of the treatment success above 50%?		
Does your veterinarian estimate the time to next breeding after treatment as shorter than 30 days?		

If the majority of your answers was negative, you should seriously consider with your vet the elimination of the affected animal from the breeding herd. The next Support Page will give you some further direction about such a decision.

The decision to eliminate a milking dairy cow from a herd is very difficult and should be based on solid economical indicators.

Below you will find the basic rules for an economically sound culling decision in a dairy herd:

- Do not re-mate any second or later lactation cows with production below 80% of the herd average. Cull these animals at the end of lactation.
- Inseminate cows with production between 100% and 120% of herd average for up to 160 days postpartum. If not pregnant by that time, continue milking but cull when daily yield is no longer profitable.
- Cows producing more than 120% of the herd average can be inseminated up to 250 days postpartum.
- If the overall production of the herd is to be maintained, any cull decision should be supported by an adequate availability of replacement heifers.