

Incentive management in AMS

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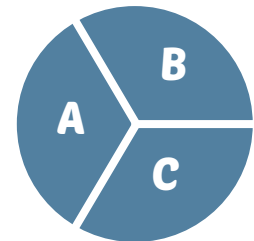
1 The farming system (pasture-based or indoors) has a strong impact on cow behaviour. But in both systems, **feed is the main incentive to encourage voluntary and distributed cow traffic to the dairy.**

2 A small number of AMS farms decide to operate in batch milking or semi-voluntary mode throughout the entire year or during certain times.

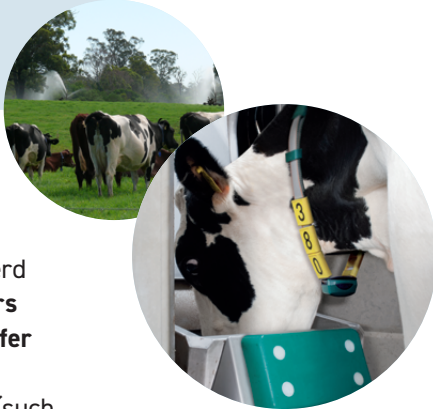


3 The basic of feeding cows and the total herd requirements do not change with AMS. But farmers learn to manipulate **type, frequency, timing, size and location of feed to manage cow traffic** in order to ensure milk production and system utilisation targets are achieved.

4 Most pasture-based AMS farms are **divided in 3 areas that are allocated to cows over a 24h period.** In some cases farmers might also decide to offer their cows access to either 2 or 4 allocations.



5 Depending on the season, feed availability or herd requirements, **farmers might also need to offer their cows access to supplementary feed** (such as hay, silage or a PMR). This might be offered in the paddock or in a separate feeding area. If this replaces a grazing allocation, farmers will have to provide access to a loafing area.



6 Farmers can also offer concentrates (pellets or meal) or grains in the robot and/or external feed stations.

7 In indoor AMS farmers can choose to have:

- **Free cow traffic:** no separation between resting, feeding and milking area, the feed offered in the robot becomes the driver to visit the robot.
- **Guided cow traffic:** separation between resting, feeding and milking area, the fact that cows perform their daily activities in bouts becomes the driver for them to visit the robot.

8 There will always be a proportion of cows that have not visited the dairy within an expected timeframe, and will therefore have to be fetched (to avoid long milking intervals that have a negative impact on milk yield and udder health).

9 Farmers highlight the importance of consistency or routine but also of flexibility to **manipulate different incentives** in order to make the system work.



10 Other factors such as weather, drinking water availability and social behaviour all impact on cow traffic to the dairy.



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