

Lactation extension and its association with milk production traits in high-yield Montbéliarde cows

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Summary

The aim of the study was to evaluate the influence of number of cows' calving and milk yield (during 305 days after calving and in peak lactation) on frequency of lactations longer than 305-day standard in a herd of Montbéliarde cows. There was also estimated the influence of extended lactation on milk yield and fat, protein and dry solids content. The research was carried out in a herd consisting of 250 cows. The animals were housed in a loose barn and were fed a balanced TMR. The research included 981 lactations, in which 731 ones were longer at least 1 day than 305-day standard. It was found that frequency of extended lactations was 74.1%, and moreover, the most frequently (26.4%) the period of extension lasted up to 30 days. The extension of lactation was mostly affected by milk yield in standard lactation and number of cows' calving. During the extension period milk production was higher by 2.7-47.0% (taking into account the effect of lactation extension length) in compare to milk yield in standard lactation. Lactation extending was significantly connected with milk yield per 1 day of milking. Values of this trait were highest (29.5 kg) in the case of lactation extended maximum by 60 days, while the longest lactations were connected with the lowest milk yield per 1 day of complete lactation.

KEY WORDS: Montbéliarde cows / high milk yield / lactation extension