

“Having insight into behaviour means making the right decision at the right time.”

Tru-Test
DATAMARS

Smart monitoring for safer and more efficient herd management

Bloemen Melkvee is a familyrun dairy farm located in Vredepeel, the Netherlands, with a long tradition rooted in dairy farming. Founded in 1955 and taken over by Jan Bloemen in 1992, the farm is today managed by Jan together with his wife Ria and their son Wouter. While Jan is fully involved in the daily work on the farm, Wouter combines farm activities with work outside the business, and Ria manages administration alongside an external job

The farm currently manages **85 dairy cows and 10 dry cows**, reaching an average **305 day production of 11,700 kg of milk** with strong fat and protein percentages. Over the years, growth has been gradual and carefully planned. *“Since the end of the milk quota era, we have grown by around four to five cows per year”* Jan explains. *“Dutch regulations make expansion challenging, so optimisation has become even more important than growth in numbers.”*

A key area in need of improvement was heat detection, especially in the heifers. *“We noticed that heats in the heifers were not always being recognised in time”* Wouter recalls. This challenge was the starting point for investing in an electronic monitoring solution. Shortly after implementing the system for the young animals, the decision was made to extend it to the entire dairy herd.


In **November 2023**, Bloemen Melkvee switched to **Datamars Livestock Active Tag with collars**, following Datamars’ acquisition of IDA (Connecterra). *“This gave us the opportunity to transition to the new sensors”*, Wouter explains.

IN SUMMARY

 **Farm:** Bloemen Melkvee

 **Location:** Vredepeel – Netherlands

 **Herd size:** 85 dairy cows + 10 dry cows

 **Production:**
11.599 Kg, 4.49% Fat, 3.55% Protein, 305 days

 **Production system:** Conventional milking

CHALLENGES

- Difficult heat detection, especially in heifers
- Need for accurate insemination timing
- Limited physical presence on the farm
- Need for better insight into health and recovery

DATAMARS LIVESTOCK SYSTEM USED

Active Tag with collars

BENEFITS

- Accurate and timely heat detection
- Improved reproductive performance and reduced hormone use
- Better health monitoring and targeted treatments
- Greater peace of mind thanks to remote alerts
- Strong support and easy access to the Datamars team
- Confident, datadriven daily decisionmaking

Thanks to previous experience with monitoring technology, the learning curve was smooth. *“The graphs looked slightly different and Datamars Livestock provides more detailed data, but the system is intuitive and easy to use. Pairing sensors via the app is very straightforward.”*

Today, the system is fully embedded in daily routines. Each morning before milking, the app is checked for **heat alerts or health notifications**, allowing cows to be separated immediately during milking. The same process is repeated in the evening, while during the day the system continuously monitors the animals and sends alerts only when attention is needed. *“If a health alert comes in, we check the cow straight away”,* Wouter explains. *“That allows us to act fast and prevent issues from escalating.”*

One of the system’s strongest advantages is the insight it provides through **reproduction, health and calving reports**. These are used to identify cows with irregular cycles, follow recovery after illness and receive timely **calving alerts**. *“Especially when I’m not on the farm myself, calving alerts are extremely useful. I can ask someone else to check the cow at the right moment”,* Wouter notes.

The impact on herd performance is tangible. *“We can now determine the right insemination moment more accurately based on the indications in the app”,* Wouter explains. This has resulted in **lower hormone use, a shorter calving age in heifers** and improved reproductive efficiency. Health monitoring contributes to more targeted treatments: *“By following the health index, we can see whether a cow is recovering or not. Sometimes a painkiller is enough, instead of a heavier treatment.”*



Beyond performance metrics, the greatest benefit is confidence and peace of mind. *“The system gives confirmation”,* Jan explains. *“If I think a cow has recovered, I can verify that by checking her behaviour data in the app.”* Being able to monitor the herd remotely is especially valuable since Jan and Wouter are not always physically present on the farm. *“Even when I’m away, I know that cows in heat or with health issues will be reported”,* he adds.

Support and accessibility also play an important role. *“Datamars Livestock is easy to reach if something goes wrong, and issues are resolved quickly”,* Wouter says. *“That makes a real difference in daytoday work.”*

Looking ahead, Bloemen Melkvee aims to further **optimise herd management**, with a possible expansion of the herd while improving **milk production and longevity**. Datamars Livestock technology is expected to remain a key partner in achieving these goals. *“The system helps by sending timely alerts and providing the right insights to support our decisions,”* Wouter concludes.



For more information:

intl.livestock.datamars.com