Successful combining of robotic milking & grazing strategies in Dutch context

EAAP 2015 session 34 2 September

Maarten Vrolijk  maarten.vrolijk@wur.nl
Bert Philipsen  Jessica Cornelissen

René Schepers
Robotic Milking and Grazing project context

- Dutch Dairy Processors initiative
- September 2014 – October 2015
- Funded by Sustainable Dairy Chain
- Grazing cows -> Dutch culture
- Decrease in grazing on farms with AMS
- Farmwalk, Grazing coaches, Weideman weekly newsletter, EU Amazing Grazing, Dynamic Grazing network ...
- Challenges: high milk yield / ha
  small house plots
  robotic milking
Robotic Milking and Grazing project structure

460 AMS dairyfarmers aiming for successful combi AMS+grazing Farmwalk + coach

4 AMS dairyfarmers team of advisors facilitator Team plan + activities social context

50 AMS dairyfarmers 5 networkgroups + coach R&D new concepts AMS + Grazing
Robotic Milking and Grazing project

conclusions (concept)

- Possible to realise excellent results on AMS + grazing
- Develop a clear and challenging strategy
  - based on farmer values & farm context
  - smart activities
  - timeline: season and 24h based
- Necessary to monitor grassyield, robotdata, effects & results, etc. It takes time.
- Better plan and results with *team of advisors*
- 5 concepts AMS + grazing for 90% of farmers
Framework

My strategy

The basic ingredients of my strategic plan

- Rules
- Tips
- Options

Grazing Concepts (Profiles)

My personal values, skills and goals

Farmer skills and challenges
Support and expertise needed?

- Ambition and Motivation of Farmer
- Farm Context
Robot Milking & Grazing concept profile

- **Farm context**: 2.5 cows/ha
- **Farmer style**: max dm intake during grazing cost leadership
- **Basic rules**: 8 – 12 kg dm intake grazing
  4 – 8 kg dm intake silage
  12 – 18 h/day access to pasture
- **24h time schedule**

| Concept 3 | 0:00 | 0:30 | 1:00 | 1:30 | 2:00 | 2:30 | 3:00 | 3:30 | 4:00 | 4:30 | 5:00 | 5:30 | 6:00 | 6:30 | 7:00 | 7:30 | 8:00 | 8:30 | 9:00 | 9:30 | 10:00 | 10:30 | 11:00 | 11:30 | 12:00 | 12:30 | 13:00 | 13:30 | 14:00 | 14:30 | 15:00 | 15:30 | 16:00 | 16:30 | 17:00 | 17:30 | 18:00 | 18:30 | 19:00 | 19:30 | 20:00 | 20:30 | 21:00 | 21:30 | 22:00 | 22:30 | 23:00 | 23:30 |
|-----------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
Team of advisors Robotic milking and grazing: method

- Feed supplier, veterinarian, accountant, dealer milking robot, farmer, partner, and others start as a team, initialized by the farmer
- 3 meetings during wintertime, inventing challenges, searching for possible solutions, goals and activities
- Process facilitator
- Grazing season: monthly update progress, 1 summer meeting
- After grazing season: team evaluation and plan next year
Team of advisors Robotic milking and grazing: 9 steps

- **Teambuilding:** people, expertises and roles (process facilitator)
- **Team start-up:** share motivation and goals, playing field, team, rules
- **Context awareness:** entrepreneur style, dreams, farm structure, environment, possibilities
- **Goals, conditions, challenges:** formulate, team, farmer decides
- **Creative process:** diverge, portfolio of possibilities, converge, options
- **Decision making:** matrix of coherent possibilities, farmer decides
- **Action plan and activities:** time, everyone on the job, limitations,
- **Feedback:** plan moments of team reflection on results and process
- **Activity based reports:** activity scheme
Team of advisors Robotic milking and grazing: experiences

- Continu!
- Second year and on: 1 meeting/year
- Team member can facilitate the process
- Remote experienced facilitator
- Better ideas and solutions, more power.
- Other themes and farmers
- Businessmodel: time vs quality of advice
- Risk management, higher importance, teamwork
Team of advisors Robotic milking and grazing: the power of

- **Community**: clear goals + reality based = energy boosting for team members
- **Knowledge synergy**: different points of view = more creativity and solutions
- **Focus and attention**: all attention on robot milking and grazing, explicit
- **Commitment**: power and realisation
- **Sharing**: positive energy and brotherhood
- **Passion**: pleasure working together
- **Competition**: challenge to show best of you and your organisation
Team of advisors Robotic milking and grazing: critical basic rules

- One goal
- Respect each other (new roles)
- Use same language
- Everyone in action mode
- Time for learning and reflection
- Role of facilitator (free actor)
- Takes more time: quick => alone; far and better => together
- Celebrate successes
More information

maarten.vrolijk@wur.nl
T +31 317 480485
@marvrolijk