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specialist in milk & fat

Interview with Klaus Dann – A look behind the scenes of the successful dairy farm

Klaus Dann provides insights into the feeding and health management of his farm and shows how he achieves sustainable top performance through modern technology, genomics and targeted feeding.

“With genomic selection and a specialised calf milk, we lay the foundation for high performance.“

Farm data Dann
Bad Wünnenberg (Germany)

Milked cows:	approx. 250 cows
Milk system:	4 automatic milking units
Milk yield:	12,600 kg
Calving interval:	394 days
Insemination index:	heifers: 1.47, cows: 1.92
Pregnancy rate:	over 30 %
Calf rearing:	
Week 1+2:	Pair housing Traditional teat bucket
Week 3-12:	6-7 animals per pen Milk bar with special teats
Weaning:	from week 8 to week 12

Question 1: How do you lay the foundations for successful calf rearing?

“We start with a clear strategy: selection takes place right at mating – only the top third receives sexed female semen.“

Question 2: What is important in the first days of life?

“Right after birth, we ensure optimal colostrum supply: at least four litres within the first two hours of life are a must. We check the quality using a refractometer – only top-quality colostrum is fed.“

Question 3: What does calf milk need to do for the animals to realise their full potential?

„High growth rates during the milk-feeding phase are only achievable with sufficient energy and a high protein content – this is also confirmed by the latest recommendations, which advise at least 24 to 25 % crude protein in calf milk replacers. That’s exactly why we’ve been using **BEWI-MILK® AM 5** for around two years. The milk is rich in crude protein and helps us achieve daily gains of 1,050 to 1,100 grams.

The high protein content supports organ development, while the low fat content (17 %) encourages early concentrate intake and prevents early satiety. Even with 1.5 kg of powder per day, digestion remains consistently stable despite the high protein levels. Each milk Bar must have one more teat than there are calves in the group – this ensures calmness.“

A teat with high suction resistance – meaning more than 2 minutes per litre of milk – supports optimal digestion of the milk feed.

Question 4: How do you manage to get through calf rearing with so few losses?

„Our losses are below 1% – and only because we had an issue with bluetongue. Before that, they were even lower. One of the best decisions I made was vaccinating against mycoplasma in addition to the calf flu vaccination. Things have been running even better since then.“

Question 5: What role does concentrate feed play in your rearing concept?

„Concentrate feed plays a central role for us. Our local supplier adjusts the composition according to our specifications. Most recently, we reduced the starch content (max. 20% maize) and added glucose – this is gentler on the young rumen. Our first concentrate contains rumen-protected protein to continue the high protein supply to the small intestine provided by the 1.5 kg of **BEWI-MILK® AM 5**.

As soon as the calves eat 1 kg of concentrate, we start weaning: for 7 weeks they receive 1.5 kg of powder/day, then the milk is reduced by 2 litres a week for 5 weeks. After 11-12 weeks, they are weaned and consume over 2 kg of concentrate – with stable digestion. Growth rates remain consistent even after that.“

Metabolic programming shows lasting effects!

Age at first calving:	22.8 months
Initial milk yield:	42 kg

A look into the future

With genomic selection as a foundation, high-quality feed, and a clear strategy, Klaus Dann has laid the groundwork for a high-performance herd. **BEWI-MILK® AM 5** plays a key role during the milk-feeding phase – helping to set the course for future top performance early on.

But one thing is clear to him: the genetic potential of his animals is far from fully tapped.

By continuously optimising feeding – especially for the cows – and testing new concepts, he aims to further develop his herd.

With system, precision and commitment, his farm impressively demonstrates how future-orientated dairy farming can work today.