

Project Progress Summary

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| Section 1: PROJECT IDENTIFICATION Information to be provided for project identification | | NOT CONFIDENTIAL |
| Title of the project Implications of the introduction of automatic milking on dairy farms | | |
| Acronym of the project Automatic Milking | | |
| Type of contract Cost-sharing contract | | Total project cost (in euro) 3,630,104 Euro |
| Contract number QLK5-2000-31006 | Duration (in months) 39 Months | EU contribution (in euro) 2,420,001 Euro |
| Commencement date December 1, 2000 | | Period covered by the progress report December 1, 2000 – November 30, 2001 |
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| Key words Automatic milking, dairy technology, milk production, management | | |
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Month 1-12 (December 1, 2000- November 30, 2001)

Objectives:

Objectives of the project are:

1. To identify determinants for the adoption of automatic milking on dairy farms in North-west European member states;
2. To assess the implications of the adoption of automatic milking systems, in the realms of farm-level social-economic aspects, public acceptance, milk quality, animal health, animal welfare and farm management support requirements;
3. To generate solutions for any adverse effects of a widespread use of automatic milking in an early stage of adoption;
4. To disseminate results among research centres, policy makers, farmers and farmers' services, manufacturers of milking equipment and dairy industry.

Results:

The work carried out so far is done in good consultation with all partners. The atmosphere is pleasant and enthusiastic. Dynamic work plans of every work package are adjusted and discussed every 6 months at the PMC meetings.

Due to FMD, delayed appointment of personnel or other specific causes, some milestones of some work packages were delayed. Except for a slight delay in deliverable number 8 of WP4 and deliverable number 26 of WP10 no other of the total of 28 research reports are expected to be delayed. For the overall project results and the final report of the entire project, no delays are expected. All other work will be carried out according to the planned schedules. Future work plans promise results with scientific significance and results applicable in practice.

Thus far, the project has already received world-wide interest regarding the set-up and results of the project. The web-site of the project has also contributed to this interest.

The first four deliverables are finished (annex 11, 12, 13, 14). These four reports cover respectively the following topics: determinants and implications of technology adoption, public acceptance of AM, optimal cleaning of equipment of AM and a protocol on animal welfare and AM.

List of Milestones:

- 1) Projects' descriptions and data collection protocols are discussed (month 6)
- 2) State of progress is evaluated(month 24)
- 3) Symposium is held(month 36)
- 4) Integrated report is written(month 39)

Benefits and Beneficiaries:Scientific publications, presentation, communication and patent filings

Regarding dissemination in trade journals, three articles have been published. Furthermore, two scientific articles were published and presented covering results from WP3 (definition of acceptable milk quality) and WP10 (grazing and AM). All partners have agreed to write an article for a national trade journal, this will be completed in 2002. Preliminary results of WP4 have been presented at a workshop held in The Netherlands on July 5, 2001. Besides target audience such as farmers and the dairy and AM industry, (in-) directly related organisations such as cooling industry, milk control stations and consultants were informed. Furthermore, the overall project has been presented by P1 to the Dutch National Extension Service. Further dissemination through (scientific) articles and presentations will continue as soon as results are available. Thus far, no patent filings resulted from the project.

Web-site (www.automaticmilking.nl)

The web-site is continuously updated with new information. The site contains general project information, news flashes, work package descriptions, list with deliverables and a list with partner information. All dissemination coming out of the project will also be placed on the site, including articles and reports. On the news site the following items will be addressed: consultation between research partners on specific work packages, interesting meetings and conferences related to the project, abstracts on the minutes of the PMC meetings and notices of finished deliverables.

Attention of industry to results

So far the industrial partners within the project and other related industry have taken notice of the first results but have done no specific exploitation. This is due to the fact that the first results currently available are inventories. Future results are expected to have a greater impact.

Future Actions:

For the next reporting period nine more deliverables are expected. Furthermore, in month 13-24 many experiments will continue or start and available results will be disseminated to target groups.

For the two more years of the project, 4 more PMC meetings will be held every 6 months and in month 24 a workshop will be held on the overall progress.

Furthermore, for the future, the co-ordinator will guard the progress of the work and co-operation of the project management team and will co-ordinate the web-site. In January 2002, a start will be made with the organisation of the planned symposium for 2003/2004.

Acknowledgement

Van der Vorst, Y., 2001. Progress summary report Month 1-12 of the project: Implications of the introduction of automatic milking on dairy farms, Research Institute for Animal Husbandry (QLK5-2000-31006), January 2002.

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