

# Minnesota DHIA News

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## Veterinary Student Scholarship Application Now Available

Applications are due **December 31, 2025**, and can be found on our website: [www.mndhia.org](http://www.mndhia.org)

### Minnesota DHIA Annual Meeting – January 29, 2026 – Buffalo, MN

The annual meeting will start with a meal at 12:00 PM. The afternoon program includes the annual report from staff and directors, in addition to time to interact with directors and ask questions. Unlike the previous annual meetings, we are in a new governance format without elected delegates—all members are welcome, but an RSVP is required by January 26 to be sure we have food and space available. Please email [NancyZ@mndhia.org](mailto:NancyZ@mndhia.org) if you wish to attend.

Dear Members,

As we turn the calendar toward a new year, many of us find ourselves in that familiar rhythm—sharpening pencils, reviewing budgets, and mapping out the goals that will help our herds and our businesses thrive. It's a season of planning, and with that comes an important reminder: now is the time to schedule and commit to monthly DHIA testing for the year ahead.

I'd like to share a short story you might relate to. Not long ago, I visited with a producer who had thought he'd be money ahead by testing bimonthly. Inevitably, the plan resulted in many cows not tested until 60+ DIM. Their peak production went uncaptured. By fall, he found himself **wondering why some lactation curves looked suspiciously flat, why comparisons between cows weren't ranking animals like they used to, and why his early-lactation ration changes didn't seem to have a clear result.** After a season's worth of frustration, he committed to monthly testing. The difference—he told me—was like turning the barn lights on after dusk. Suddenly, things were clearer, decisions were easier, and **the numbers worked.**



**Monthly testing provides clarity, consistency, and confidence.** Here's 8 reasons why incorporating DHIA testing into your 2026 plan matters:

#### 1. Capture every cow's peak production

Monthly testing ensures no peak data slips through the cracks. Missing a peak can flatten a lactation curve, making cow-to-cow comparisons less meaningful no matter the stage of lactation.

#### 2. Evaluate fresh cow health by 30 days

A test in the first month is essential for assessing the success of dry cow treatments, monitoring transition diseases, checking fat-protein ratios, and evaluating the diets of dry and early-lactation cows.

#### 3. Understand true peak milk

Regular tests give you a clean, dependable view of peak performance—valuable for both genetic and management decisions.

#### 4. Manage late lactation somatic cell counts

Knowing SCC levels near dry-off helps guide selective dry cow therapy decisions and supports udder health heading into the next lactation.

#### 5. Evaluate ration changes among pens and DIM groups

When changes are made, monthly results let you see whether the diet is performing as intended across different subsets of the herd.

*(continued next page)*

## Celebrating 65 Years of Service!

Congratulations **Ray Scherber**, Field Technician from Otsego.

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## 6. Take regular “Roll Call” of cow placement

Frequent testing helps confirm that cows are in the correct pens—and alerts you early if someone is in the wrong group or missing altogether.

## 7. Keep up with milk pregnancy testing

Monthly testing supports timely pregnancy confirmation—whether as routine monitoring, early

verification, or checking cows at dry-off.

## 8. Improve record accuracy and reduce office time

Frequent data review means problems are caught earlier, records stay clean, and your time spent sorting out errors (and the costs that come with them) is greatly reduced.

As you finalize your goals and budgets for the coming year, I encourage you to set aside room—both financially and on the calendar—for monthly DHIA testing. It’s one of the most straightforward steps you can take to strengthen herd performance, streamline management, and support better decisions all year long.

If you’d like help scheduling or tailoring a testing plan that fits your operation, our team is ready and eager to assist.

Warm regards,  
Amy Loeschke, Minnesota DHIA General Manager

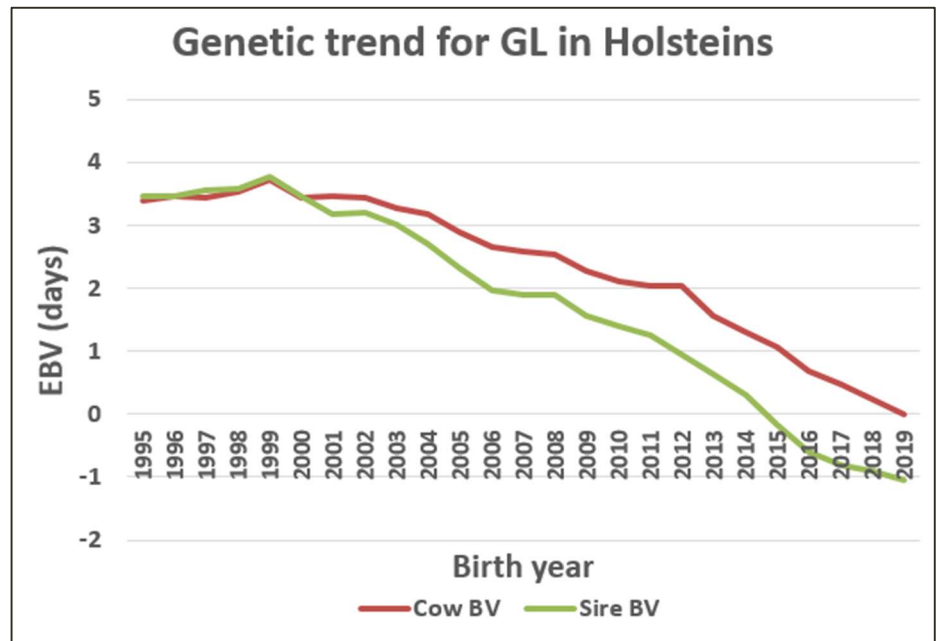
## Gestation Length is Revised, both in Reports and for Dart users

The typical gestation length (GL) for dairy cattle ranges from 279 to 287 days, although genetic, breed, and some management factors have the potential to cause variation. The baseline GLs have been in use for almost 30 years. It’s problematic because genetics and herd management have reduced GL by roughly 3 days for Holsteins (Figure-right) and similarly for Brown Swiss in 25 years. Certain European breeds and beef breeds also warrant adjustment for their especially long GL when used for crossbreeding.

The variation within a herd can be large. With a standard deviation of +/- 5 days, at least a third of the herd misses their predicted calving date by 5 days or more. The result can make transition pen sizing difficult and be detrimental to transition health and future productivity because dry periods are too short or too long.

An important role of the herd management software and reports is helping farm staff to schedule dry-off dates and predicted calving dates. **Your records that are processed at DRMS now use new formulas that consider the cow’s breed, service sire breed, and breeding values for GL to better predict calving date.** Prior to the October 2025 change, about 70% of cows calved earlier than projected. Now the distribution between early- and late-calving cows is 50:50—the balance we expect. Further, overall variation is reduced, and **6% more cows are now within ±4 days of their predicted due date after the change (71.4%) compared to before (65.5%).**

Note: All reports from DRMS now use the adjustment, as does information from Dart 8.7 and higher. However, unprocessed data and those from other software could show different predicted dates.



## November Milk Quality Leaders, ranked by SCC then Log SCC

Name	SCC	Cows	Name	SCC	Cows
*DENNIS AND WAYNE WOLTERS	31	149	*DAN BRASCH	76	20
ERICKSONS DAIRY	32	61	CLARK FARMS,LLC	77	796
*JIM AND MARY EVANS	33	6	COUNTY LINE DAIRY LLC	78	182
SWEET DREAMS AYRSHIRES	36	11	*MAREN & JEREMY HOLST	78	134
*MATT BERKTOLD	37	211	*MICHAEL DALQUIST	78	32
*GLEN AND BECKY CHRISTEN	37	38	VOGT DAIRY LLC	79	325
KIMM'S DAIRY	39	83	SHERDALE FARMS	80	64
*MARK KLEHR	39	58	WALTER BROS FARM	81	474
JOHNSON DAIRY	43	26	*SCHLAUDERAFF ENTERPRISE	81	646
BURKE DAIRY INC	46	197	MARSHLAND FARMS	83	105
*TREVOR DICKE	50	99	*LOREN & LUKE OLSON	83	42
HOEFS' DAIRY	51	278	HOUDEK DAIRY LLC	84	540
*JEREMY BEYER	51	38	JOHN + KARYL DIERSEN	84	198
TWIN SPRUCE	51	93	TA LEONARD REG HOLSTEINS	84	46
HARMONY HILLS DAIRY	51	56	BLUE VIEW DAIRY FARM	85	320
*FRANCIS & THERESA RYNDA	52	51	*RANDY WAGNER	86	372
RYBERG REG HOLSTEIN	52	48	MARSHALL KORN	86	59
*BILL & ALAN MILLER	54	265	*BERNARD MANDERFELD	86	120
D&L JOHNSON DAIRY FARM	56	236	RKB DAIRY	87	145
*JOE WUETHRICH	56	27	*KEN & LINDA GLISCZINSKI	87	195
DOWN N' DIRTY	57	27	*MIKE MENZE	87	89
WIRTLAND HOLSTEINS	59	527	PINE-VUE FARMS	88	104
KRAIG&RACHELLE KRIENKE	59	668	IRISH RIDGE DAIRY LLC	88	68
*DARIN WALCHESKI	59	88	AUSPICIOUS OYSTER GRANGE	88	166
KUECHLE DAIRY	60	244	*DALE MIDDENDORF	88	96
*MICHAEL BANSE	60	113	*ROBERT AND JEANNETTE SHEEHAN	89	62
*ADAM & SARAH MELLGREN	60	70	*DWIGHT + DARLA BURKHOLDER	89	55
FUNKS MIDWAY DAIRY	61	845	*CARLTON ZIMMERMAN	90	48
FLYINGCOW DAIRY	61	177	CHI-LAKES LAND&LIVESTOCK	90	6
SUNSHINE ACRES	62	204	VALLEY ACRES DAIRY	92	976
JASSEL HOLSTEINS	62	82	*MAYNARD & JEREMY SCHUMACHER	92	127
*PAUL SCHUMACHER	62	79	STELTER HOLSTEIN DAIRY	92	287
ANNEXSTAD DAIRY FARMS INC	63	208	BERANEK BROTHERS LLP	93	199
SCHULTE FARMS	63	294	HYDE-PARK HOLSTEINS	94	779
SELKE FARMS	65	270	MEYER BROS DAIRY	94	529
JM DAIRY LLC	66	375	PRIGGE FARMS LLC	95	330
TRAIL SIDE HOLSTEINS	67	756	WELGRAVEN DAIRY LLC	95	98
GLEN-D-HAVEN HOLSTIENS	70	304	IMAGE-POINT DAIRY	96	74
GEHL ACRES FARM	71	142	*SCOTT&MICHELLE HERBER	98	783
PAUL SCHILLING	71	57	INTRIGUE DAIRY	98	55
*DEVOINE KRUSE	72	241	*BRIAN AND JULIE LIBBESMEIER	99	61
FAIRVIEW DAIRY	72	211	*NICK + DENNIS TATGE	101	268
LAX-PIETIG DAIRY LLC	73	1095	*RONALD & ANN BORASH	101	44
THISTLE DEW DAIRY	74	135	STELLING FARMS	102	327
HOESE DAIRY INC.	74	128	*BOB & KAYLIE GRUBER	102	296
*CORY AND KRISTEN SALZL	74	22	*DWIGHT WENGER	102	77
RIVER VALLEY DAIRY LLC	74	121	HINCKLEY HOLSTEINS LLC	103	626
*JUSTIN THAEMERT	74	39	*KELLY AND KURTIS RONNINGEN	103	108
*ANDY AND LINDA RIEKE	75	53	DELBERT BECHTOLD	104	34
*RICHARD LAMBRECHT	76	105	RICHARD&MICHELLE SCHWEER	104	44

# Merry Christmas

• from our barn to yours •



**MINNESOTA DHIA**