

Webinar summary: Post-calving recovery – Part 1

This webinar highlights the steps needed to ensure dairy cows recover effectively after calving. Focusing on condition loss, rumen health, and the role of proper supplementation, the presentation underscores the importance of monitoring both physical and biochemical indicators to support a cow's transition back to optimal health. Using tools like rumination data, visual assessments, and blood tests, we can make informed decisions to maximise milk production and improve in-calf rates. Strategies for minimising stress and inflammation further improve the recovery process, supporting long-term productivity and health of the herd.

In this webinar:

1. Importance of post-calving recovery
 - Minimise condition loss post-calving to boost milk production and overall cow health.
 - Faster recovery leads to earlier peak milk production and improved in-calf rates.
2. Measuring recovery
 - Use rumination and eating minute data, visual assessments, and blood tests to monitor recovery.
 - A focus on cow condition, appetite, and rumen fill gives a good indicator of recovery status.
3. Rumen and gluconeogenesis
 - Rumen stability and liver gluconeogenesis are central to appetite and energy recovery.
 - Proper feeding post-calving is critical to transition cows into positive energy balance.
4. Role of stress and inflammation
 - Minimise oxidative stress and prolonged inflammation to improve recovery.
 - Antioxidants like selenium and zinc play a role in combating oxidative damage.
5. Calcium and other minerals
 - Maintaining proper calcium levels is critical for muscle function and immune response.
 - Blood tests can assess calcium, magnesium, phosphorus, and other minerals critical for recovery.
6. Monitoring cow behaviour
 - Visual scoring of rumen fill, particularly in colostrum and transition cows, is a practical tool for gauging recovery.
 - Appetite closely ties to energy production via liver gluconeogenesis, with protein playing a significant role.
7. Management tools
 - Effective use of supplements like bypass fats, calcium, and trace minerals can aid recovery.

- Stress management and proper feeding during transition and early lactation periods are key factors.
8. Blood testing
- Regular testing for metabolic markers such as NIFAs, BOHBs, and liver enzymes is important for assessing condition and liver function.

For more detailed information, you can download the slide deck and watch the webinar recording.