

Dependence of the productivity of cows on their body condition before parturition and at the start of lactation

Summary

The aim of the study was to analyse the effect of the body condition of dairy cows, determined before parturition and in the first four months after calving, on productivity in standard lactation. The study was conducted in 5 barns housing Polish Black-and-White Holstein-Friesian cows with mean annual yield of about 7,500 kg of milk. The body condition of the cows in these herds was evaluated in the last month before parturition and in the first four months of lactation according to Wildman's 5-point scale. A total of 2,175 body condition scores and data pertaining to yield in 435 standard lactations were used in the analysis. It was demonstrated that the higher the body condition scores before parturition, the higher the yield of milk and its components during lactation. However, higher body condition scores in the 3rd and 4th month after calving were correlated with lower yield of milk, fat, protein and dry matter.

KEY WORDS: cows, body condition, yield