



HOLISTIC AND PROACTIVE FOCUS NEEDED TO TACKLE MOBILITY

The results of the second Stride survey, the UK's only national mobility and foot health survey, designed to monitor these conditions in the UK dairy herd and assess producers' views, confirms that mobility is still an entrenched issue on UK dairy farms.

Founded in 2024, Stride is a not-for-profit initiative established to challenge the status quo on lameness. Its objectives are to increase understanding of the issues surrounding dairy cow mobility, to contribute to industry knowledge, and help producers to develop clear management strategies that deliver sustained improvement in foot health. The partners in Stride are Ceva, HerdVision, Hoofcount, Kersia, IVC Farm Vets, Neogen, NoBACZ Healthcare and Teemore Engineering.

"The survey confirms that compromised mobility remains an issue affecting all UK dairy farms to varying degrees," comments Matt Dobbs, chair of the Stride Technical Board. *"Poor mobility has been a challenge for over 25 years, despite advances in knowledge and technologies to help manage and reduce the problems."*

In the survey, 30% of respondents says compromised mobility and foot health are a significant or very significant issue and 90% reported that profitability was affected. There is a good level of understanding of the key management actions that can help reduce the incidence of foot problems and then treat conditions. However, there is a variable uptake of these approaches, with a tendency towards management being reactive and treatment driven as opposed to proactive and preventative approaches.

The 2026 survey confirms that while often seen as a high priority, addressing mobility in dairy herds is still a challenge for almost all producers. This suggests that different approaches will be needed to derive more from existing resources, supporting producers to make greater strides in reducing the disease.

Mr Dobbs stresses the survey highlights that improving mobility is not just a producer problem. He says producers need help and support, and the industry needs to take the lead. Advisors, vets, communicators, milk processors, industry associations and product suppliers need to be more proactive in supporting dairy farmers with the challenge of poor mobility.

"There must be a concerted push to turn knowledge into action based on lifelong education, an increased focus in colleges, better support services and easier access to information with clear messaging."

He stresses the full consequences, not just the financial impacts, of poor mobility are not well understood by producers and across the whole industry. Understanding the non-financial cost of the disease is important but is often overlooked. There needs to be much clearer demonstration of the value of preventative schemes with a better appreciation of the true cost of lameness and the ROI from investments in prevention measures.

"The focus must be on prevention and avoiding a reactive approach. Proactive strategies should all be adopted before the cow goes lame. Early diagnosis is fundamental. Identifying problems quickly with the increased use of data and technologies will underpin progress in early detection and identifying the root causes of problems. Then, treating early with pain relief will mitigate losses and hasten return to health."

"Producers must have easy and improved access to skills, training and resources. They must know where to turn for support and then be confident in the quality of the support services available. Finally, there must be increased communication of benefits of good mobility in dairy herds and improved delivery of information and guidance to deliver best practice at farm level."

"There is no silver bullet to improving dairy cow mobility, but through a better understanding of how existing and new management strategies can help and then implementing them in a structured way backed by competent, trained support, producers will have the opportunity to reduce all the consequences of compromised mobility."

"Stride will continue to be at the forefront of encouraging the industry to pull together in delivering practical solution to benefit cows and all those who work with them," he predicts.

To download the full report go to www.stridemobility.co.uk