

## Diagnosing Dairy Herd Nutrition Challenges

Problem	Items for Special Attention	Problem	Items for Special Attention
<b>Low feed intake</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Too much grain (&gt;60% of dry matter)</li> <li>Too little forage (&lt;40% of dry matter)</li> <li>Poorly fermented silages</li> <li>High levels of non-protein nitrogen or soluble crude protein</li> <li>Limited water intake</li> <li>Dirty feedbunks</li> <li>Finely chopped forages</li> <li>Reduced chewing and rumination</li> <li>Ration imbalance</li> <li>Minerals – too low or too high</li> <li>Inadequate feedbunk space</li> <li>Moldy feeds</li> <li>Overconditioned cows</li> <li>Toxic weeds</li> <li>Not enough feed fed or available</li> </ul>	<b>Low milk protein</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Low dry matter intake</li> <li>Shortage of fermentable carbohydrate</li> <li>Imbalance of protein form (undegradable, degradable or soluble intake protein)</li> <li>Lack of total protein</li> <li>Limitation of needed amino acids in the undegradable intake protein fraction</li> <li>Too much added fat and oil</li> </ul>
<b>Low milk production</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peak production not reached at proper time</li> <li>Production levels do not persist</li> <li>High incidence of mastitis</li> <li>Underfeeding grain to fresh cows</li> <li>Overconditioned cows</li> <li>Nutrient deficiency or imbalance (especially protein or energy)</li> <li>Slug feeding or not feeding often enough</li> <li>Low dry matter intake</li> </ul>	<b>Ketosis</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overconditioned dry cows</li> <li>Low fiber ration (&lt;19% acid detergent fiber)</li> <li>Post-calving stress</li> <li>Limited grain in early lactation</li> <li>Too much grain for fresh cows</li> <li>Slug feeding in the parlor</li> <li>Cows sorting feed</li> <li>Poorly fermented silages</li> <li>Protein or sulfur deficiency</li> <li>Rapid ration changes</li> <li>Depressed feed intake</li> <li>Other metabolic disorders</li> </ul>
<b>Low milkfat test</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Forage-to-grain ratio too low</li> <li>Forages chopped too fine</li> <li>Ration fiber too low (&lt;19% acid detergent fiber)</li> <li>Depressed rumen activity</li> <li>Too much grain (&gt;60% of dry matter)</li> <li>Fine or pelleted feeds</li> <li>Protein or sulfur deficiency</li> <li>Thin cows</li> <li>High somatic cells</li> <li>Too much ruminally available fat</li> </ul>	<b>Displaced abomasum</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overconditioned dry cows</li> <li>Rapid ration changes</li> <li>Lack of exercise</li> <li>Too little forage</li> <li>Finely chopped forages</li> <li>Depressed rumen activity</li> <li>Ketosis</li> <li>Milk fever</li> <li>Low feed intake</li> </ul>
		<b>Milk fever</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Too much calcium in dry period</li> <li>Too much phosphorus in dry period</li> <li>Low magnesium intake</li> <li>High potassium intake</li> <li>Narrow calcium to phosphorus ratio (&lt;1.5:1)</li> <li>Overconditioned cows</li> <li>Depressed feed intake</li> <li>High cation ratio</li> </ul>

Any one or a combination of these factors can contribute to production losses. When making changes, keep a record and don't make too many changes at once.