



Hit rate soars and workload eases after Frode Størseth starts electronic monitoring with Allflex SenseHub™

BACKGROUND

Frode Størseth runs a breeding herd in Meråker, Norway. The herd consists of 130 Simmental cows, which he sells as livestock, in addition to integrating some in his own herd. All cows and heifers are artificially inseminated. The farm also has 80 winter-fed sheep, which he breeds in the spring.

CHALLENGES

Frode got tired of spending much of his time looking for signs of heat. He felt like it was affecting his family life, and even with all the effort, he was still missing a lot of heats.

He wanted a monitoring solution that could reliably identify heats and guide him on the optimal insemination time, to relieve him of stressful and time-consuming visual observation.

With both cows and sheep breeding during the spring season, he also needed help better planning his year.

"I finally got very tired of trudging around the barn to detect heat. You want to have a family life as well, and the day only has 24 hours. I also missed a lot of heats, and I wanted to do something about it. SenseHub was the solution."

Frode Størseth, Owner, Hegnes farm

AT A GLANCE

Company: Hegnes farm

Location: Meråker, Norway

Livestock: 130 Simmental cows and over 80 sheep

Challenges

- Reduce "legwork" involved in heat detection
- Identify the optimal time for insemination
- Better plan the year

System

- Allflex SenseHub® system with eSense™ Flex neck tags

Results/Benefits

- Increased insemination success – e.g. 17 out of 20 heifers became pregnant after one insemination
- Night heats are automatically caught
- More concentrated calving, making planning easier
- Easier documentation and registration in national databases
- Rumination monitoring enables early intervention on health issues



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SYSTEM

After considering several alternatives, Frode ultimately chose the Allflex SenseHub system with cSense Flex neck tags, at first installing them on 85 animals. He took an owner insemination course to be able to flexibly inseminate at the peak of each cow's heat.

Frode admits that he was somewhat skeptical of monitoring at first, but the skepticism has turned into enthusiasm now that he sees good results in several key areas.

BENEFITS

By relying on SenseHub to identify heats, Frode can now spend his time on other, more productive work, while pregnancy hit rates skyrocket.

With the SenseHub system showing him the optimal insemination time and the flexibility of being able to inseminate animals independently, Frode has achieved excellent results. "For example, I have had very good hits on the heifers that have been inseminated since I started using SenseHub," he says. "As many as 17 out of 20 became pregnant after one insemination, and I am very pleased with that."

The system has also proven valuable for identifying night heats. "SenseHub tells me that heat is in progress, but I still don't see much of it when I'm in the barn during the day, because then the animals are most concerned with food and show few signs of heat," Frode continues. "The heat reports prove that the heat is there, and count down to the optimal insemination time, making it an invaluable aid for insemination accuracy, but also for me getting the necessary number of hours of sleep."

With two calving periods annually, as well as lambing to consider, SenseHub has also helped him plan better. "I want to plan the two calving periods as accurately as possible," says Frode. "During the calving periods I must be in the barn around the clock anyway, so the more cows that calve then, the better."

In April, the lambing of his 80 winter-fed sheep coincides with the insemination of the cows that calve in winter, making the month very stressful. But this year, Frode looks forward to this period "because I know that SenseHub monitors the heat while I receive the lambs. Now I have full control over what happens in both barns, and it will be easy to go to the cowshed when it's time to inseminate."

Another benefit has been better management of documentation for various national registers and databases. With his SenseHub system integrated with the Norwegian Beef Performance Recording Scheme, incidents that have already been entered in the registry by other sources, such as the breeding company, are automatically added in SenseHub, eliminating double-registration.

With a healthy stock, Frode Størseth has not yet received many health warnings, but one health warning did help confirm his suspicion of an inflamed teat. "SenseHub showed little rumination in this cow, which enabled me to implement measures early. So, in terms of animal wellness, monitoring can have a lot to say, and it can even avert emergency slaughter in some cases."

Frode notes that he found the SenseHub system easy to learn. "After installation, I sat down for a few evenings and pushed myself through and got acquainted with the solution." And when he has an issue, he has found Allflex to be highly responsive. "If I get stuck, I get good help, quickly, and that's almost as important as the technology itself."



About Allflex Livestock Intelligence

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Through its commitment to the Science of Healthier Animals®, MSD Animal Health offers veterinarians, farmers, pet owners and governments one of the widest ranges of veterinary pharmaceuticals, vaccines and health management solutions and services as well as an extensive suite of digitally connected identification, traceability and monitoring products. MSD Animal Health is dedicated to preserving and improving the health, wellbeing and performance of animals and the people who care for them.

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