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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**New Recommendations May Improve Dairy Cattle Reproduction Research  
Design, Analysis, and Interpretation of Dairy Cattle Research All Improved,  
According to New Guidelines Published in the *Journal of Dairy Science*®**

Philadelphia, PA, September 21, 2015 – Improving the validity of animal science research can have wide-reaching effects, including improving understanding and application of current knowledge, improving the quality of data for use in reviews and meta-analyses, and allowing other researchers to better identify questions for further study. With this aim in mind, researchers from North America and Australia collaborated to create a set of guidelines for reproduction studies among dairy cattle for the benefit of the animal research community as a whole.

Poor reproductive efficiency is a widely acknowledged phenomenon, and although many individual aspects of reproduction have been studied in isolation, some, such as environmental variables, have not been addressed. These problems are not restricted to dairy cattle, but other areas of research have adopted standards to improve the overall quality of research, such as the REFLECT statement for veterinary medical and food safety specialists or the CONSORT guidelines in medical journals.

During informal meetings at the ADSA/ASAS Joint Annual Meetings, consensus about the need for improvements in this area of dairy science grew. Because of the importance and uniqueness of dairy cattle, separate guidelines for reproductive intervention were deemed necessary, prompting action from several leading scientists.

“These recommendations are directed to animal and veterinary scientists interested in improving reproductive efficiency of dairy cattle,” lead author Ian J. Lean, of SBScibus (Camden, New South Wales, Australia), said. “This includes new and established investigators, as well as reviewers and editors. Journals could also adopt our reporting checklist as part of their submission and review process for papers on dairy cattle reproduction.”

The recommendations developed were based on the REFLECT checklist and include units of analysis, inclusion criteria, definitions, and statistical methods to be used in dairy cattle reproductive interventions. The definitions of reproductive outcomes and periparturient disorders will help elucidate differences between studies, making complex interactions during reproduction easier for researchers to explore. The recommendations are not intended to be used in their entirety, but the checklist is intended to encourage as much as inclusion of data as possible in future studies.

“Limitations will curb the amount of data that can be gathered or reported, but studies will make their best contribution when the points in our recommendations for study design are considered and comprehensively reported,” Lean added.

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## **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

### ***Invited review: Recommendations for reporting intervention studies on reproductive performance in dairy cattle: Improving design, analysis, and interpretation of research on reproduction***

Ian J. Lean, Matthew C. Lucy, John P. McNamara, Barry J. Bradford, Elliot Block, Jennifer M. Thomson, John M. Morton, Pietro Celi, Ahmad R. Rabiee, José E.-P. Santos, William W. Thatcher, Stephen J. LeBlanc. (DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.3168/jds.2015-9445>) *Journal of Dairy Science*, published in advance of Volume 99, Issue 1 (January 2016) by Elsevier.

Full text of this article is available to credentialed journalists upon request. Contact Ken Olson Ph.D., PAS at +1 630-842-5334 or [keolson@prodigy.net](mailto:keolson@prodigy.net) to obtain copies.

### ***About the American Dairy Science Association***

*Founded in 1906, the American Dairy Science Association® (ADSA®) [www.adsa.org](http://www.adsa.org) is an international organization of educators, scientists, and industry representatives who are committed to advancing the dairy industry with a keen awareness of the vital role the dairy sciences play in fulfilling the economic, nutritive, and health requirements of the world's population. ADSA publishes the *Journal of Dairy Science®*, the top-ranked, peer reviewed dairy and animal science journal in the world.*

*The organization provides scientific leadership and technical support to sustain and grow the global dairy industry through the generation, dissemination, and exchange of information and services. Members of ADSA have discovered new methods and technologies that have revolutionized the dairy industry, helping provide consumers with a safe, affordable supply of nutritious dairy products.*