

# Free day's consultation up for grabs

By Aly Balsom

*Farmers Weekly* and *Dairy Update* magazine are offering one lucky dairy producer the chance to have a free day's consultation to help highlight the main pinch-points on their system.

In response to Kingshay Dairy Manager figures, which show 69% of animals leaving the dairy herd are forced culls, *Dairy Update* is looking to help producers reduce these costly losses.

Kingshay calculations show reducing the level of forced culls by 10% across the national herd could save the industry £32m.

Whether you are unhappy with mastitis incidence or keen to boost fertility, a herd appraisal could help locate key areas for attention.

The selected farmer will be visited by Rob Mintern, 2009 *Farmers Weekly* Livestock Adviser of the Year and consultant for Agrii, who will take an overview of the herd.

"I commonly see pinch-points



Rob Mintern will visit the selected farmer and take an overview of their herd.

that could be impacting on herd performance," he says. "For example, high levels of persistent mastitis could be due to liner size, cow environment or parlour routine.

*Dairy Update* is a free magazine offering practical, technical and business advice to the UK's top dairy farmers.

» Sign up for your free digital edition at [www.fwi.co.uk/digital](http://www.fwi.co.uk/digital)

"There is room for everyone to reduce the level of forced culls and particularly first lactation culls, where most losses are seen," he says.

In support of the initiative, Andrew Davies, of Synergy Farm Health from the XL Vets network, says: "Culling cows involuntarily is costly. It also signals a failure of disease control. A planned programme of health management is key to managing culling rates." [aly.balsom@rbi.co.uk](mailto:aly.balsom@rbi.co.uk)

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED

\* Send a summary of why you want to get involved to Aly Balsom, *Farmers Weekly*, Quadrant House, The Quadrant, Sutton, Surrey SM2 5AS, or email [aly.balsom@rbi.co.uk](mailto:aly.balsom@rbi.co.uk) by Monday 16 July. Let us know what areas you would like to improve on-farm and an overview of your system.

We'll then select a farmer to be profiled. The chosen farmer will be visited by Agrii consultant Rob Mintern and *Dairy Update* editor Aly Balsom. They'll undertake a full review of the system, highlighting key areas for attention. An article on the visit will then appear in *Farmers Weekly* and *Dairy Update*.

In support of *Dairy Update*'s initiative, XL Vets is offering the selected farmer and his whole team free skills training up to the value of £500 through its award-winning FarmSkills programme. The farm will be able to choose from a range of workshops.

ALEXANDRA JOSEPH