

DEVELOPMENT OF AMS IN THE NORDIC COUNTRIES BETWEEN 1996 AND 2014

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Abstract. *Since the first farms with Automatic Milking System (AMS) started in the Nordic countries there has been a dramatic change in the development of both the milking technique and the general environment for milk production in those countries. The first three AMS farms started in Denmark in 1996 and now, almost two decades later, the total numbers in all Nordic countries is 4.293 (31/12/2014) and with 6.894 AMS boxes. In Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden number of farms and no. boxes pr. farm is respectively 824 and 2.8, 904 and 1.4, 125 and 1.2, 1376 and 1.0, and 1064 and 1.7.*

The development in recent years is quite different between the Nordic countries. Especially interesting is the development in Denmark where, after the crisis in 2008, the increase has stopped and in 2012 the number of AMS farms and boxes went down. The main reason might be the big difference in dairy farm sizes within the Nordic countries with Denmark leading with 162 cows pr. farm, Sweden with 78, Iceland with 38, Finland with 34 and Norway with 21 cows on average and the total average for the dairy farms within the Nordic countries is 53 cows. When farms get bigger, other milking systems like fast exit milking parlor or rotary are more interesting. In the other Nordic countries the number of AMS farms is still increasing.

The estimated milk production in 2014, 3.453 million kg., from those Nordic AMS farms stands for 28,7% of the total milk production within those countries and furthermore that 27,8% of the cows within the Nordic countries are milked with an AMS. Despite the high ratio of both milk and cows only 16,3% of the dairy farms do have AMS in the Nordic countries but their size is much bigger than the once with other milking equipment: 91 cows on average vs. 46 cows on average.

Key words: *milking technique, Automatic milking system, milk production.*

REFERENCE

Nordic AMS statistics 2014, Unpublished data from NMSMt (Nordic Dairy Associations Committee for Milk Quality Issues, Technological Working group) (2015).