

## International award for NMR



*NMR group operations manager Tony Craven and NMR laboratory manager Bridget Rymer with the ICAR Certificate of Quality for production recording – a first for a British company*

NMR has scooped a prestigious international award for its service quality – a first for a British milk recording company. Last month (June) NMR was presented with the ICAR Certificate of Quality for production recording. Only three companies worldwide hold this award among ICAR milk recording members in 46 countries.

ICAR – the international body that promotes the development and improvement of performance recording for farm animals and their evaluation – has recently updated its quality awards. A new Certificate of Quality, that sets rigorous criteria and must be audited every three years, replaces a one-off quality stamp. Producers requiring authentic milk records for management and breeding purposes must use an ICAR-approved recording organisation. “Being the first British company and one of only three worldwide to receive this new award is a feather in NMR’s cap,” says NMR managing director Andy Warne. “It reflects the £2.3-million investment we have made in new testing equipment and software systems during the past five years and our relentless pursuit of quality data throughout our systems and services.

“But most importantly,” adds Mr Warne, “is that NMR provides UK producers with a service that is world-leading. “Top quality data, and its processing, is the bedrock of successful dairy farming.

Without accurate and reliable data our dairy producers and their advisers and vets are working in the dark.”

Recognising the importance of top quality data is behind ICAR’s decision to update its quality recognition procedures.

“In order to achieve the Certificate of Quality, NMR had to demonstrate its business procedures relating to testing and data quality controls,” says NMR’s group operations manager Tony Craven, who was presented with the award at ICAR’s meeting in Niagara, Canada.

“No stone was left unturned in this procedure. Our systems and policing of testing and sampling equipment; staff training; animal identity procedures; laboratory instrument investment; and reporting methods to suit all customers, were just some of the areas that came under scrutiny.”

Attaining this quality seal is something that DairyCo’s Breeding+ director and ICAR board member Marco Winters would like to see all milk recording companies aim for.

“The ICAR Certificate of Quality is up to date and it is an assurance that will help safe-guard data quality which is used for national genetic evaluations. We rely on this to provide accurate breeding data. It is great news that NMR is the first British company and one of the first worldwide to gain this award for milk recording.”

### ‘Milk’ the sample

Speaking to more than 300 producers at a farm open day hosted by Clitheroe-based NMR/RABDF Gold Cup winners Sally and Ian Macalpine, NMR national field manager Jonathan Davies told producers to ‘milk the sample for all it’s worth’. And in return they can expect to gain more key management information that they, as well as their vets and advisers, can use to improve performance.

“Gone are the days where monthly milk records provided only yield and milk quality results,” he said. “On many farms a bulk milk sample is sent to NML’s milk payment testing laboratory every day. One sample is used for payment purposes each week while the others are available for disease or bacteriology tests.”

Likewise, samples taken for milk recording can also be used for disease testing through NML - Johne’s, Lepto, IBR and BVD, with more to be added this autumn.

“In both cases there are no further samples required by the producer. The ease, speed and cost-effectiveness makes these milk sample tests very attractive to producers and vets.”

### New NI and Scotland manager

Business expansion in Northern Ireland and Scotland is behind NMR’s new appointment of a field business manager for the areas. Chris Keys takes up the role, promoted from area field manager for Northern Ireland. A dairy enthusiast and producer’s son, Chris Keys manages the NMR field teams in both countries, ensuring a high quality of service and support for customers, making sure they get maximum benefit from their records.

*Chris Keys, NMR field business manager Scotland and Northern Ireland*

