



Ambic

Arm & Hammer

Bioret

Boumatic

GEA

Intracare

Lallemand

Le Gouessant

Neogen

Norel

Mirius

Silvateam

Special Nutrients

Wisium/Neovia

What is risk?

Risk is the possibility of losing something of value. Values, such as physical health, social status, emotional well-being or financial wealth, can be gained or lost when taking a risk resulting from a given action or inaction that can be either planned or unplanned. If we look at risk with regard to health there are numerous related factors, such as changing feeds, increasing or decreasing feed intake, high barn temperature, power failure, etc, etc.

People coming on to the farm

If we concentrate on the risk of people coming on to the farm, how we can quantify it? This risk has several components. Has the person had contact with diseased cattle or anything else that carries a disease-causing micro-organism? We can divide these into diseases that come from cattle, for example their meat, milk, cheese, blood and faeces, and those which come from dairy products and other sources. A good example is Salmonella typhimurium or foot and mouth disease.

If our person has had no contact with cattle, or products derived from them, then they will present no risk to our animals.

Risk determining factors

Next, you can consider the risk a person who has had contact with cattle places on your cows or calves and try to quantify it. Several factors come into play here:

- How many disease causing micro-organisms did they come into contact with? This can be high for a calf house which is under ventilated and is full of coughing calves.
- Contact with cows/calves. The closer they get to the cows and the longer they are in that position, the greater the number of micro-organism transfer. Likewise, when they get to your farm keep them away from your cows or minimise the time they are physically close to them.
- What is the time between leaving the sick herd and visiting your herd? Micro-organisms die off with time – so the longer the time gap before a person comes to you the better.
- What is the distance between leaving sick cows and visiting your herd? The greater the distance, the better it is for your herd. This links into time (see above).
- What are the conditions whilst moving between herds? Think of a sales rep travelling in a car with the roof down during the summer and one driving in winter. The former will have the wind blowing through the car exposing them to a variety of different micro-organisms.