



## More and better milk, and less energy consumption, with GEA's robotic milking system

The modernisation of their milking system by Anne-Dorthe and Andreas Døssing from Denmark is a lasting success at all levels. The Døssing couple took over the farm, Stakkehavegård SHG Breeding in Vojens, in Spring 2018. Since then, they have continuously optimised barn hygiene and herd management and invested in new equipment to improve the cows' welfare and increase milk yield.

The four existing milking robots were getting on in years and a new, more efficient system was needed. A visit to a reference farm in Germany convinced the couple: they decided to purchase six GEA DairyRobot R9500 milking robots and, just six months after the conversion, the advantages of the system are already paying off. Not only has the well-being of the cows increased, as evidenced by the significantly improved udder health and thus better quality milk, but the energy saving is about €1.300 less per month – underlining the success of the new investment. Additionally, the standing times in the box has been reduced by one minute, which allows 12-14% more throughput. This not only gives the cows more freedom, as there is always a box available for them, but also increases the milk yield.

"Moreover, GEA's In-Liner Everything technology was the key to harvesting excellent quality milk, while maximising the efficiency of our robotic milking facility," explains Andreas. The improved udder hygiene at Stakkehavegård resulted in almost halved cell counts and significantly fewer cases of mastitis. "Thanks to this uniform, quick and comfortable process, stimulation, teat cleaning, forestripping, milk harvest and post-dipping is performed in a single attachment. If you want first class milk, you have to go with this system," he says.

"It is also important to us that the individual animal is well. With GEA's milking robots we have a much better overview of this. The robot measures both the cow's activity pattern, eating time and rumination. This gives us a greater awareness of them and we can intervene much faster, if there is something suspicious," says Anne-Dorthe.

The GEA DairyRobot milking robots convinced the Døssing couple all along the line, which will enable them to continuously expand their herd from 240 to 320 milked cows by Autumn 2020.



## Fully automated rotary parlour increases productivity

The Agrodružstvo Blížkovice cooperative farm has been investing in livestock production with a focus on cattle and pig farming for seven years. In addition to newly built facilities, an automated rotary milking parlour from GEA, which is the first of its kind in the Czech Republic, has been in operation for a year now. Both the management and staff at Blížkovice are more than satisfied with it as it has increased both the productivity and animal welfare.

The Agrodružstvo Blížkovice cooperative farm covers a total of 4,500 ha of agricultural land, 4,200 ha of which comprises arable land. The cultivated crop structure is based primarily on securing feed for the cattle and pigs. Besides the cultivation of arable land, the focus is on the modernisation of livestock breeding. "We would like to continue breeding, so we decided to restructure the complete livestock production facilities," explains Ivo Pospíchal, livestock production manager. The long-term investment also included the purchase of the new automated rotary milking parlour.



**Ivo Pospíchal, livestock production manager at Blížkovice, checks the milking parameters.**

With the GEA DairyProQ automated milking system 650 cows can be milked completely automatically at Agrodružstvo Blížkovice. "An operator controls the robot, and monitors lots of data on each milking session and individual cows' activities. Milking is

much gentler, and both welfare and productivity have increased," explains Ivo. Each of the 28 milking stall units operates independently, accessing its own system control and MilkRack. That means milking can be carried out at all times. The entire milking process takes place in the protected environment of the liner (In-Liner Everything), from cleaning and stimulation to individual quarter milking and dipping.

"The automated milking parlour is fitted with the GEA CowScout system, which identifies individual animals and monitors all of their activities: feeding, rumination, oestrus," explains Milan Lněnička, responsible for sales of GEA Farm Technologies in the Czech Republic.

"Our goal was to ensure the health and welfare of our cows, and thereby achieve a high daily milking yield. After one year, we can say that the GEA robotic rotary milking parlour provides exactly what we expected," recounts Ivo.

*Photos: Jana Pancíková*