

BULL POWER

A key factor affecting overall reproductive performance is bull power. To calculate your bull requirements the following rule of thumb can be used

For cows – 3% + 1

For heifers – 4% +1 (when all are naturally mated.)

If you use an average conception rate to AB matings of 60%, then you calculate your bull requirements as follows:

300 cows @ 60% = 180 cows in calf.

Therefore you will have 120 cows to be naturally mated.

120 @ 3% = 3.6 +1 = 4.6 This farm would need to have 5 bulls.

For a mob of 50 heifers the calculation is as follows:

50 X 4 % = 2 + 1 = 3 Bulls.

Don't forget to have all your bulls tested for BVD, and remember that bulls can introduce other disease such as Pink eye, and Lepto, which can cause real problems in a milking herd. So make sure they are healthy when they arrive, or talk to your vet about ways to minimise the risks.